INFLUENCE OF COMMUNICATING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA BY PARENTS ON THE BEHAVIOR OF THEIR CHILDREN: CASE STUDY OF TALA TOWN, MATUNGULU SUB-COUNTY, MACHAKOS COUNTY.

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DECLARATION

I declare that this document and the research that it describes are my original work and that they have not been presented in any other university for academic work.

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SUPERVISORS' DECLARATIONS:

This research was conducted under our supervision and is submitted with our approval as university supervisors.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my wife Agnes Simon for her continuous encouragement. To my children: Judy, Joy, Victor, Joshua, Mercy and Faith for their encouragement and patience, and to my friends, Priscilla Kioko for her prayers and moral support, and Jacinta Munene for her technical advice.

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ABSTRACT

The rising numbers of those who communicate through social media worldwide is of great concern since this may be affecting their other life concerns like minding of their children's behavior and this prompts the researcher to desire to conduct this study. Social media is an internet-based form of communication, whose platforms allow users to have conversations, share information, and create web content. The purpose of this study was to establish the influence of parental communication through social media on their children's behavior in Tala town of Matungulu sub-county, Machakos County. The objectives of the study were to find out the prevalence of parents who communicate through social media in the presence of their 2 to 6 years old children in Tala town, Matungulu sub-county in Machakos county; to establish the motivations for communicating through social media by the parents, and to find out the relationship between parental communication through social media and the behavior of their children. The Ecological Systems Theory by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979) and the Attachment Theory by John Bowlby (1969) and Mary Ainsworth were used to guide the study. The study employed descriptive design. A sample size of 359 parents who had at least one child of 2 to 6 years old and who communicate through social media was considered as study participants. A pilot study was carried out involving 12 participants, simple randomly sampled from a purposively selected pilot study site-Nguluni market- which neighbors Tala town and was similar to it, in both demographics and infrastructure. They were not included in the final study. Questionnaires for parents were designed to collect data. Reliability of the instruments was ensured through split-half method. Spearman's correlation formula was used to correlate the scores. Content validity was used to measure the instrument through investigating their content with considerations to the study's objectives. Data collected was analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Data was organized and analyzed using frequencies and percentages. Tables and bar graphs were utilized in the presentation of the research findings. The results from the research were expected to establish whether communicating through social media by parents in the presence of their children influences the behavior their children. This study found that prevalence of parents in Tala town with 2-6 years old children, who communicate through social media in a typical day was 87.47 per cent; 84.12 percent of the parents frequently use WhatsApp; 57.66 percent of the parents spend on average three or more hours daily communicating through social media; the parents mostly(73.82%) communicate through social media between 5pm-midnight; about 65 percent of the parents communicate through social media for entertainment; and 65.18% of them to maintain relationships. This study recommends that parents ought to spend on average less than one hour daily communicating through social media, in order to reduce children behavior outcomes especially regarding to acting aggressively, seeking for attention, acting emotionally, seeming to be anxious, looking withdrawn, showing other behaviors, and children complaining to be sick; In addition, parents ought to stop communicating through social media between 5pm-midnight, to reduce children's behavior outcomes of seeking for attention, acting emotionally, and showing other behaviors.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Child: For the purposes of this study, a boy or girl in the age bracket of 2- and 6-years

Child's Behavior: For the purposes of this study, the way a child (2-6 years old) behaves at the time he or she is under the parent's care and the parent is communicating through social media within a span of two months till the day the parent responds to the questionnaire. Such behavior may include sadness, withdrawal, temper tantrums among others.

Communication: Operationally defined as the receiving and sending of information by a parent through social media sites such as Facebook WhatsApp, tweeter, Instagram among others.

Parent: For the purpose of this study- a person, male or female, who has a child of 2-6 years old, and communicates through social media

Social Media: Internet based applications or sites used for social networking such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANU: Africa Nazarene University

APA: American Psychological Association

CAK: Communication Authority of Kenya

IM: Mobile Instant Messaging

MoEST: Ministry of Education Science and Technology

NACOSTI: National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

SIMELAB: Social Media Lab Africa

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

USIU: United States International University

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the background of the study related to parental communication through social media in the presence of their children, 2-6years old and its influence on the behavior of the children. The statement of the problem; the purpose of the study; the objectives of the study; the research questions; significance of the study; the scope of the study; limitations of the study; delimitations of the study; the assumptions of the study ;theoretical framework and the conceptual framework are discussed as well.

1.2 Background of the Study

The ease of internet access worldwide has made it one of the most popular medium of seeking information and communication (Ramamohanarao, Gupta,Peng and Leckie, 2007). The internet is now very vital in the modern world. It has become an important instrument in education and social life such that it is gradually becoming indispensable in the daily life of many people (Pew Research Center, 2014).

The internet is a global computer network providing a variety of information and communication facilities, consisting of interconnected networks using standardized communication protocols. It provides a capability so powerful and general that it can be used for almost any purpose that depends on information, and it is accessible by every individual who connects to one of its constituent networks. It supports human communication through social media, electronic mails (e-mails), chat rooms, news groups, and audio and video transmission and allows people to work collaboratively at many different locations. It supports access to digital information by many applications including the World Wide Web (Aaron M., 2022).

The internet is a highly enlightening and entertaining medium, therefore people engage in several activities in it, some of which may be potentially addictive. One such activities, is the use of social media (Kuss & Griffiths, 2011).

The introduction of social media in the last decade has largely attracted many people. This has therefore shifted their focus from mainly using just traditional media and traditional forms of social networking for social interaction (Global Webindex, 2015). Communication through social media characterizes modern lifestyles and relationships, including family interactions.

The mass appeal of social media could be an issue of concern especially with regards to the steady increase in the time users spend online. Also the qualities of social media make it a desirable escape for many of these people increasing their dependency on it; thereby contributing to the growth of social media addiction phenomenon worldwide (Brewer, 2013).Kim and Jung(2017) say that, " the power of mass media increases only when individuals have reasons to increase their dependence on the mass media. People's dependency on social media occurs from them relying on social media for information. As people grow increasingly dependent on social media from a day-to-day basis, social media can play a factor in their mental state, which can lead to anxiety. A great concern is on parents who communicate through social media in the presence of their children. The parents' attention is directed towards their electronic devices rather than to their children, this leads to a situation referred to as distracted parenting.

Distracted parenting is parental overuse of hand-held technology particularly cell phones and tablets, in the presence of children. When parents' eyes are on their phones, they are not on their children. Distracted parenting has been found to have an impact

on children's social and emotional development. Infants, for example, look to their care givers' faces and eyes in particular, for social cues. When the caregivers' eyes are focused on their phone, the infant is not receiving those cues.

Studies have indicated that, when parents are distracted by technology, they are more likely to respond harshly to their children's behavior. While some children appear to accept their parents' inattention, others display escalating misbehaviors, and the parents who keep their gazes primarily on their devices are most likely to respond harshly to their children (Radesky et al, 2014). In a study in the journal of pediatrics (2014), about parents dining with their children in a fast food restaurant, the researchers noted about a third of the parents spent their entire meal fully absorbed with their mobile devices, with no attention given to their children. The study, also found out that, the children who sought attention from their parents were often ignored by their parents who were engaged only with their devices.

Effective parenting is considered a major influencing factor in children emotional, cognitive and linguistic development and is contingent upon the parent's active interaction with the child. A lack of response for the child's needs and contact seeking behavior is associated with a higher risk of developing problematic behavior in children (McDaniel and Radesky, 2018). Problem behaviors are continuous behaviors that hinder social relations, communications and learning of a child and cause harm to them, their families, their peers and other adults.

Studies in behavior problems during early childhood have shown that parents responding with intimidation, aggression, or avoidance towards the child's emotional

expressions leave the child to try to understand emotional rules on their own, and that may in turn, lead to problematic child behaviors (Marcone, Affuso and Borrone, 2017).

Social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and mobile instant messaging services (IM) such as WhatsApp, Viber and IMO and Video Calling services like Skype have become a popular means of communication in the past few years. Social media use is an ever increasing phenomenon of the 21st century. The total number of people using social media globally grew by 9.2 per cent between April 2019 and January 2020(Global Web Index, 2020). Since January 2020, active social media usage has increased by 13 per cent and almost all social media users access platforms via mobile devices (Digital, 2021). Currently 58.4% of the world's population uses social media. The average daily usage is 2 hours 27 minutes (Digital, 2021).

With the ease of internet access, the number of active social media users in India stood at 330 million in 2019. 290 million active social media users in India access the social media networks through their mobile devices. In 2020 there were around 926.8 million (65% of Chinese population) social media users in China. In the United States of America (USA), 7 of 10 individuals use social media to communicate (Pew Research Centre, 2018). Additionally, another research showed that parents of minor children, in the USA, at home were considerably more likely than non-parents to use computers and go online. Parents of younger children were more likely to use the internet than parents of older children according to Pew Research Centre (2002).

Africa is currently the world fastest growing market for mobile communication and access to information technology (UNICEF, 2018) study exploring the social

networking habits of young people. Mobile technology, the internet and social networks are in the rise in Africa. Studies suggest that when Africans go online, predominantly with their mobile phones, spend much of their time on social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp) and this means that more people, both parents and children, are communicating through social networks and spending more time in the same, thereby reducing the physical contact hours between parents and children. In Eastern Africa, men were more present on social media than women, this is according to a report by Statista (2022). A survey conducted by a non-profit group, Child Online Africa, revealed that social media consumes about 24% of the productive hours of Ghanaian parents. Adtani (2019), has it that parents use of social media is an increasing phenomenon especially in urbanized community like in Kampala- Uganda. The research was on social media usage and parent-child bonding.

Kenya is the leading country in social media usage in Africa. According to a report by the Communication Authority of Kenya, in 2018, the number of mobile data subscription in Kenya currently stands at 40.7 million, 38 percent more than in the same period the previous year, with internet penetration in the country at 83 percent based on the internet world statistics (CAK, 2019). This indicates that a majority of Kenyans have access to the internet through their mobile phones, computers, and internet enabled devices.

This has led to the growth of internet consumption in Kenya at home (70 percent), at the office and on the go. Access to the internet is almost at par both in the rural and urban areas both averaging between 40-50 percent with the majority of Kenyans spending between 30 minutes and three hours on the internet daily. The most active age group on social media in Kenya by age is 26-35 years according Social Media Lab

Africa (SimLab Africa, 2019). This is the group majority of whom have children aged 2-6 years, the children the researcher is interested in.

According to the report by SimeLab Africa (2019), the males in Kenya are generally more active in social media platforms compared to the females. There is heavy use of social media platforms among those with college level education, while the least are primary school graduates. Heaviest consumers of social media are Protestants, but the use cuts across all religions (SimeLab Africa, 2019).

The report further indicates that, night is the time when the vast majority spends most of their time on various social media platforms. This is followed by evening hours. Both night and evening hours are times of the day when most of the Kenyans are at home after their day's work. This is the same time these parents are expected to be with their children who had spent their day in school.

Parents need to typically interact with their children for obvious reasons as attachment, behavior modification, modeling, but their involvement in social media may lead to 'present- absent' mode before their children, hence distracted parenting. Ralston (2012) describes distracted parenting as being a threat to child welfare as parent are often more engaged in their devices as opposed to supervising their children closely.

Machakos County, where Tala town is located, has not been excluded in this information about Kenya, on internet and social media involvement, cutting across all age groups, religions, education levels, statuses, urban and rural alike and the time of the day the consumers are most involved with social media and the time spend on social

media. It is demographically characterized as Kenya and communicating through social media by her residents through various technological devices has been reported in a by the University of Nairobi. (UoN, 2017) on the role of social media in interpersonal communication among secondary students in Machakos County.

Tala town in Matungulu sub- county, Machakos County is a small town in a rural setting, and it may not have been left out in the communication through social media by parents, but there seems to be no record of a study focusing on the relationship between parental communication through social media and their children's behavior about the town. This study therefore intended to find out the influence of communicating through social media by parents in the presence of their children on the behavior of the children in Tala town, Matungulu Sub-county of Machakos County.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Social media, a computer-based technology that facilitates the sharing of ideas, thoughts, and information through virtual networks and communities is internet based giving users quick electronic communication of content, such as personal information, documents, videos, and photos, has become a global phenomenon and a very important means of communication among peers; families and all manner of persons. Social media has been described as a highly addictive behavior such that many users are overly concerned about it, in that they are driven by an uncontrollable urge to log onto or use social media, and devoted so much time and effort to social media that, to some extend it impairs other important life areas.

Globally, regionally and locally many parents are communicating through social media and in the presence of their children, they are spending more time on social media than they are doing with their children. Research has shown that 73 per cent of parents were engaged in phone use during time spent with their children in a restaurant(Radesky et al, 2014), 35% of care givers were found to spent 1 out of every 5 minutes or more on their phone while at the park with their children(Hiniker, Sobel, Suh, & Sung, 2015), 65% of mothers reported technology intruding upon parent- child interactions during play time with their young child.(McDaniel, B. & Cogne, 2016), and some are concerned that the increase in child injuries may be due to parent smartphones use (Palsson, 2014).

Young children need the parent to teach them to manage their emotions, but if parents themselves are often on devices this guidance are not always available. Children need their parent's attention and will misbehave to get it if needed. Studies show that, parents who are constantly checking their phones for texts, email and social media updates are more likely to have children who misbehave than people who are able to step away from their screens. (WebMed, 2017). According to Healthday (May 2017), children whose parents are constantly distracted by the alerts on their technology in general are more prone to misbehaviors, such as whining, sulking, and temper tantrums.

In Kenya, the number of social media users has been in the increase. There were eleven million social media users in Kenya in January 2021. The users increased to eleven million by 2.2 million between 2020 and 2021 (Digital, 2021). This may imply that many parents communicate through social media in the presence of their children and this may have an influence in the children's behavior.

Tala town in Machakos County in Kenya is one among many areas that may be affected by the rising cases of parental media communication in the presence of their children. However, there seems to be no documented information showing the prevalence of parents that communicate through social media in the town, motivations for communicating through social media by parents, and how the communication through social media by parents has influenced the behavior outcome of children. Consequently, there was need for the current study to be conducted.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to find out the influence of communicating through social media by parents in the presence of their children on the behavior of their 2-6 years old children in Tala town, Matungulu sub-county, Machakos County. In this regard, the study examined the prevalence of parents that communicate through social media in the presence of their children, the motivations behind communicating through social media by the parents and the relationship between parental communication through social media and the behavior outcomes of their children aged 2-6 years, in Tala town, Matungulu sub-county, Machakos County.

1.5 Objectives of the Study
1.5.1 General Objective

The purpose of the study was to find out the influence of communicating through social media by parents in the presence of their children aged 2-6 years on the behavior of the children in Tala town, Matungulu sub- county, Machakos County.

1.5.2 Specific Objectives

The study intended:

1. To find out the prevalence of parents, with 2-6 years old children, which communicate through social media in the presence of their children in Tala town, Matungulu sub county, Machakos County.

2. To establish the motivations for parental communication through social media by the parents.

3. To find out the relationship between parental communication through social media and the children's behavior outcomes in Tala town, Matungulu sub-county, Machakos County.

1.6 Research Questions

1. What is the prevalence rate of parents who communicate through social media in the presence of their 2-6 years old children, in Tala town of Matungulu sub-county, Machakos County?

2. What are the motivating factors that lead the parents to communicate through social media in the presence of their children?

3. What is the relationship between parental communication through social media and the behavior outcome of children in Tala town, Matungulu sub-county, Machakos County?

1.7 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study may increase the existing knowledge related to communicating through social media by parents in the presence of their children and its effects on the behavior of their children.

Parents may gain more understanding of the importance of spending more time involved physically and emotionally with their children than they are involved with social media, and therefore make necessary adjustment on their screen time so as to

accommodate their children attention for them and hence help their children develop well socially.

Parents may gain insight on which social media sites are interfering with their parent-child quality interactions and at what time and therefore learn to control their involvement in such sites.

Parents and teachers may gain knowledge on the various behavioral maladjustment on their children that may be associated with the parental social media involvement and therefore learn how to handle their children behavior while well informed.

The findings may be used by the Ministry of Education (MoE) to improve and emphasize to schools the necessity of teaching some activity areas and subjects like life skills which will help a child learn to cope behaviorally with their parental inattention as the parents are involved with social media.

1.8 The scope of the Study

The research was carried out in Tala town of Matungulu Sub-county, Machakos County, among parents, both male and female, with at least a child aged 2-6 years. A sample of 359 participants was randomly selected from parents in Tala town with different occupations who have at least a child aged 2 to 6 years. This number was determined based on the understanding of the difficulty in recruiting participants to the study due to time and the costs involved. The sampled-out respondents filled up a questionnaire with items based on the study objectives, the prevalence of parents that communicate through social media in the presence of their children, the motivations for communicating through social media and the influence on their children's behavior.

1.9: Delimitations

The study was specifically conducted in Tala town of Matungulu Sub- county, Machakos County. The respondents were 359 selected parents, both male and female, from diverse occupations. The research focused on the influence of parental communication through social media in the presence of their children on the behavior of the children. The children of interest were aged between 2 to 6 years.

1.10: Limitations of the Study

Limitations of the research are primarily related to the respondents. Some respondents were unwilling to disclose their social media involvement and how it relates with their children behavior. The researcher replaced the unwilling respondents and assured the others that the information would be confidential, the respondents were asked not to write their names or contacts on the research tool. Participants were tempted to also provide answers to the questions which sounded good whether they were applicable to their actual day to day life in the specific way they claim or as often as stated. The researcher encouraged the respondents to give honest answers to given questions through explaining to them that the research was purely for academic purposes and not otherwise.

1.11 Assumptions of the Study.

The study assumed that social media involvement by parents is real and required a deliberate effort of the user to balance it with other life concerns like minding of their children behavior. The study also assumed that the respondents gave honest responses to the questionnaire items. It was also assumed that the parents sampled for study were a representation of others, the target population, and were with 2 to 6 years old children and also communicated through social media in the presence of their children in Tala town, Matungulu sub-county, Machakos County

1.12 Theoretical Framework

1.12.1 Introduction

Several theories have been used to interpret the use of social media and its outcomes. Such theories as the Social Cognitive Theory of the Internet and the Uses and Gratification Theory on media choices have been used. However, this research has made use of the Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory and the Attachment Theory by John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth.

1.12.2 The Ecological Systems Theory

The ecological systems theory was developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner in 1979. The ecological systems theory, argues that the environment in which one grows up, affects every facet of their life. Social factors affect the way she thinks, her emotions, her feelings, and her likes and dislikes. (Renn, K.A & Arnold, K.D, 2003). The theory focuses on the quality and context of the child's environment. Bronfenbrenner states that as a child develops, the interaction within these environments becomes more complex. This complexity can arise as a child's physical and cognitive structures grow and mature. This theory suggests that children develop with a complex system of relationships within various levels of their environment. Bronfenbrenner's theory defines complex "layers" of environment, each influencing a child's development (cognitive, social &emotions, speech& language, fine& gross motor development).

This theory has recently been renamed "Bioecological Systems Theory", to emphasize that a child's own biology is a primary environment fueling her development. The interaction between factors in the child's maturing biology, his immediate family/community environment, and the societal land scape fuels and steers his development. Changes or conflict in any one layer will ripple through out other layers.

The systemic contexts through which individuals develop include: the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, the macrosystem and the chronosystem.

The systems approach has been used in studies on its influence on technological use in schools. It has also been used on other studies on technology use, internet use during childhood under the Ecological Techno-subsystem and the impact of technology use by children on their behavior. The Ecological Techno-subsystem is a dimension of the microsystem.

The techno-subsystem includes child's interaction with both living (such as peers) and non-living (such as hardware) elements of communication, information, and recreation technologies in immediate or direct environment. From an ecological perspective, the techno-subsystem mediates bidirectional interaction between the child and the microsystem.

The current research has made use of the systems approach to find out the relationship between parental social media involvement in the presence of their children and the behavior of the children. The two systems most relevant to the role of media on parenthood and children behavior are the microsystem, which encompasses the relationships and interactions a mother, her partner, and her child have with their immediate surroundings (for example, the interaction they have at home), and the mesosystem, which represents the connection between the mother (parent) and the institutions with which she interacts (for example, Connection between social media networking sites and the mother).

Bronfenbrenner sees the instability and the unpredictability of family life we have let our economy create as the most destructive force to a child's development (Addison, 1992). Children do not have the constant mutual interaction with important adults that is necessary for development. Families represent not only environments wherein their members live but also whole complex social systems. According to the family systems theory perspective, family functioning refers to processes and interactions in which the members of the system are involved to meet their needs, make decisions, define goals and establish rules for themselves and for the system as a whole (Calvin, Dickson, Marrow, 2006). The social media as used by parents has interfered with this mutual interaction, parent-child interaction, and therefore has broken the very vital relationship in the immediate microsystem for child's development.

According to the ecological theory, if the relationships in the immediate microsystem breakdown, the child will not have the tools to explore to other parts of his environments. Children looking for affirmations that should be present in the child-parent relationship, which is now lacking at the advent of social media, for the parent is in the "present-absent" mode, look for attention in inappropriate places and inappropriate ways. Such inappropriate ways are anti-social behaviors, lack of social discipline, and inability to provide self-direction (Addison, 1992).

Since the highly needed parental attention by the child has been drawn away by the social media as used by the parent in the presence of the child, the child has no option but to look for the very attention in inappropriate ways. Since we have no direct method of observing a person's mind in action, we observe the behavior of the person. Many researchers have noted the correlation between environmental elements and behaviors.

We can observe the response of an individual to a stimulus and we can see the individual learn from the incident and repetition of similar incidents. The social media involvement by the parent is an environmental stimulus or incident which will call for the child's response behavior in pursuit of parental attention. On noticing the absence of the attention, the child will have to react against, with the aim of calling back the parent. It is hereby the behavior of the child likely to be influenced by the parental social media involvement in the presence of the child, the relationship of which the researcher intended to establish. So, this theory has contributed immensely in providing light into this research.

1.12.3 The Attachment Theory

Attachment theory is a psychological, evolutionary and ethological theory concerning relationships between humans. This theory focuses on relationships and bonds (particularly long-term) between people including those between a parent and child and between romantic partners (Kendra, C.,2022).The most important tenet is that young children need to develop a relationship with at least one primary caregiver for normal social and emotional development. The theory was mainly coined by psychiatrist and psychoanalyst John Bowlby (1969) and developmental psychologist Mary Ainsworth (1973), who both arrived at similar ideas at separate ways.

Within the attachment theory, infants have an innate need to form an attachment bond with a care giver. This is an evolved response that increases a child's chances of survival; infant behavior associated with attachment is primarily the seeking of proximity to an attachment figure in stressful situations. Infants become attached to adults who are sensitive and responsive, in social interactions with them, and who remain as consistent care givers for some months during the period from about six

months to two years of age. During the latter part of this period children begin to use attachment figures (familiar people) as a secure base to explore from and return to. Parental responses lead to the development patterns of attachment, this, in turn lead to internal working models(secure/insecure) which guide individuals' feelings, thoughts and exceptions in later relationships. Bowlby believes that "giving time and attention to children means sacrificing other interests and other activities for the child" (Bowlby, 2005).

The attachment theory has been used in studies on parental social media use and its impact on parenting styles as well as attachment styles. Other studies are on the relationship between attachment styles and use of social networking. Andangsari et al (2013) believe there may be an interaction between attachment style and use of social networking, though their relationship is found to be opposite. Those individuals who have acquired an anxious or avoidant attachment style through infancy by neglect or distrust are more likely to turn to the use of Facebook to fulfill an attachment need. Therefore, this shows the relationship between attachment style as a child and later use of social media, whereas the present research study focuses more on current use of social media of parents and later attachment style in the children, that may influence their behavioral outcome.

Often, parents in this digital era are surprised at the level of attention needed to raise children. The parents are already dependent on the use of social media to communicate and share with family members, and others, in different social media sites, and may find themselves having to sacrifice that time to social interaction rather than interacting with their children. Social media dependence is a form of psychological or behavioral

dependence on social platforms, similar to gaming disorder, internet addiction disorder and other forms of digital media overuse. It is defined by being overly concerned about social media driven by uncontrollable urge to log onto or use social media and devoting so much time and effort to social media, that it impairs other important life areas (Hiniker et al, 2015)

There may be a conflict then between the amount of time needed to care or mind about their children and the amount of time the parent wants to devote to their own social, emotional, and entertainment needs. At the same time attachment is seen as being an important determinant in parent- child relationship and happiness. The parent-child relationship consists of a combination of behaviors, feelings, and expectations that are unique to a particular parent and a particular child. The relationship involves the full extent of a child's development of the many different people form over the cause of life span, the relationship between parent and child is among the most important. Bowlby describes that a child's attachment is "activated especially by pain, fatigue, and anything frightening or also by the mother being or appearing to be inaccessible" (Bowlby, 2015).

When parents are on social media they may be present-absent in the face of the present child who has just come from school and would be escaping school fatigue, majority of 2-6 years old are preschoolers, and in high need of parental comfort and attention, since the mind of the parent is occupied by the chat more than attending to the child. In this case the parent is inaccessible to the child. Wallis, (2010) notes that the increased usage of social media has led to a world in which individuals are "always elsewhere"- always distracted or distractive from the social and physical presence of here and now to a more appealing attentional target (in this case, social media). This supports the claim that

social media involvement by parents in the presence of children leads to distracted parenting and changes parenting styles and techniques which may influence certain behaviors in their children. Leung and Lee (2005) believe that internet activities are diminishing family and leisure time and keeping them "plugged –in" more often, creating less face to face interactions. Recent studies have suggested that mobile technology use around children is associated with fewer parent-child interaction (Radesky, Miller, et al, 2015), lower responsivity to child bids (Hiniker et al, 2015), and qualitative observations of parent hostility in response to child's bids for attention. Therefore, children are apt to notice when their parents have conflicting demands and are unable to focus their entire attention on the child's pressing needs. This would call for a behavioral response by the child in pursuant of the highly needed parental attention. The children who experience parental attention distraction of their parents may be less likely to share their needs and desires with their parents, hence these children's actions and behaviors would shift to draw the parental attention. The desire to draw the parents' attention by the child is likely to influence the child's behavior. This theory immensely illuminated the researcher in finding out the influence; parental social media involvement in the presence of the child had on the behavior of the child.

1.13 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework below shows a collection of the study assumptions, concepts, and expectations of the relationship between parental communication through social media and the behavior outcome of their children at the time the children are at their parents' care.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE   **DEPENDENT VARIABLE**

PARENTAL COMMUNICATION VIA SOCIAL MEDIA
1. Prevalence of parents communicating through social media in the presence of their children
2. Time of the day parents are communicating through social media
3. Number of hours parents are taking communicating through social media in the presence of their children
4. Motivation of parents for communicating through social media

CHILDREN BEHAVIOR
Indicated by:
1. Child acts aggressively
2. Child seeks for attention
3. Child acts emotionally
4. Child seems to be anxious
5. Child looks withdrawn

Figure1.1: *Conceptual framework showing relationship between parental communication through social media and their children's response behavior.*

The conceptual diagram (Figure 1.1) shows the relationship between parental communication through social media in the presence of their children and the children behavior outcome. Parental communication through social media is the independent variable. It may result in a negative change in the behavior of a child. Thus, the child's behavior is the dependent variable.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on the prevalence rate of parental communication through social media, the motivating factors for communicating through social media, and the relationship between parental communication through social media and the behavior outcome of their children. The research Knowledge Gap and the Summary of the Literature Reviewed is also examined.

2.2 Review of Literature

2.2.1 Prevalence of Parental Communication through Social Media

Social media is an internet based form of communication. Social media are generally defined as 'internet- based', distrained, and persistent channels of mass personal communication facilitating perceptions of interactions among users, deriving value primarily from user- generated content or social media can be any form of computer mediated communication where individuals not only set up profiles to present who they who they are, but also generate content of their own, see, and interact with content of their friends or other users online. Social media platforms allow users to have conversations share information and create web content (Carr and Hayes, 2015). Social networking sites entail the creation of and maintenance of online relationships, both personal and professional via various platforms (Schauer, 2015). The social media platforms have become some of the most significant interactional tools in the world, made up of a number of popular platforms that include Facebook, WhatsApp, Snapchat, Instagram, Telegram, Twitter, YouTube, among others. Together, these various platforms have vastly improved communication and interaction, involving both access and scope of its users. Increasingly, social media interaction is carried out through

personal technological devices that continue to increase in user convenience (Correa, Hinsley, Zuniga, 2009). Mobile technologies like cellphones, tablets and others are such technological devices that are used to access platforms via the internet.

Social media usage has increased exponentially in modern years (The Nielsen Company, 2009). Communication which once was in-person or by telephone now can be done online without physical contact or connection. Individuals spend countless hours of their lives attached to devices with the intent of communicating with others, sharing their daily lives and acquiring new information. Many of these individuals can neglect other aspects of their lives by spending more time on social media and social networking sites.

Nearly Fifty-eight per cent of the world's population uses social media, with an average daily use of 2 hours and 27 minutes (Global Webindex, 2021).

According to Pew Research Center (2015), parents of younger children were more likely to use the internet than parents of older children. Eighty-one per cent of parents with 11years and younger and 75 percent with 12-17 years were online. In 2015, nearly two-thirds of all American adults and three- quarters of internet users were using one or more social networking sites (Perrin, 2015). Another study by Pew Research Center (2015) showed that, 91% of parents in the United States of America (USA) used the internet.

Further, according to the research, among the internet using parents, social media use across variety of platforms was common, with 83% of parents using social media. It was also discovered that almost three- quarters of online parents, 74% used Facebook.

Mothers were more likely than fathers to use Facebook at 81% and 66% respectively. Online mothers were more likely to use Pinterest than online fathers, some 40% of the mothers do so compared with 15% of the fathers. Younger parents (those under 40) were more likely to use Instagram than are older parents at 33% and 18% respectively. Among parents who only had 5 year olds or under, 35% used Instagram. Among parents who used Facebook, 75% of them logged on daily, including 51% who do so several times a day. Mothers who use Facebook were more likely to check the platforms several times a day compared to fathers at 56% and 43% respectively. Younger parents, below 40, were more likely to use Facebook on a daily basis than were parents ages 40 and older. Some 82percent of parents below 40 logged on daily against 68 percent of older parents (pew research center, 2015).

In 2002, 70 per cent of parents in the USA used internet compared to 53% of non-parents; 79% of parents used computers compared to 63% of non- parents (Allen and Raine, 2002).As of January 2017, mothers in the USA spent an average of 211 browsing the internet on a daily basis compared to only 138 minutes of television consumption (Statista Research Department, 2017).Internet access among households with children has been found to outpace access among households without children in Canada and England (Statistics Canada, 2010; UK Statistics Authority, 2010).

In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), the average number of hours per day spent on the internet is five hours from the laptop or desk top devices and three hours if it accessed through a mobile device. On time spent on social media, the KSA people spent 2-8 hours per day daily (Kemp, 2014).

A report by Statista (2021) has it that, the number of social media users in Sandhya, India in 2020 was 518 million, with Facebook being the popular choice among the social media platforms. Another survey indicated that Indian mothers spend close to 2-3 hours every day on the internet.

In 2021, 159 million people used social media in Brazil. Facebook was the most popular social network among the Brazilians. (Statista Research Department, 2021).

A survey conducted by a non-profit group, Child Online, (2022) revealed that social media consumed about 24% of the productive hours of Ghanaian parents. As of 2021, around 13 percent of adults surveyed in Tanzania used social media as a news source every day. There were 831,730 Facebook users in Rwanda in January 2021, which accounted for 6% of the entire population. Men were the majority at 68.9%.

Wamuyu P.K (2020) reported that 80% of respondents in a research in Kenya accessed social media using mobile phones. The number of WhatsApp was 90% in 2020 and Facebook was 81%. People in Kenya accessed social media from different physical locations like in their homes (86.1%), offices (22.6%) and cyber cafés (13.4%). And that, on average, a vast majority of Kenyans spend more than one hour daily on social media.

Twenty- eight percent of social media users in Kenya spend more than two hours interacting with the social media on a daily basis. A majority (52.2%) of Kenyans spend more time on social media at night and in the evening hours. The top most used social media in Kenya in 2020 were WhatsApp (89%), Facebook (81.7%) and YouTube (51.6%) by people 14 years and above. Snapchat, Tik Tok, and Pinterest were much

more likely to be used by users who were 14-20 years old, while 21-35-year olds used

Instagram, Snapchat, Telegram, Linkedln, Skype and Twitter. 35-45-year olds used

Facebook and WhatsApp and those above 45 years used WhatsApp and Skype. Parents

form a large group of social media users in Kenya.

2.2.2 The Motivating Factors for Communicating through Social Media

Social media can be any form of computer mediated communication where individuals

not only set up profiles to present who they are, but also generate content of their own,

see, and interact with content of their friends or other users online (Carr & Hayes,

2015).Social media is internet based and gives users quick electronic communication

for content such as personal information, documents, videos and photos.

Users engage with social media via computers, tablets, or smartphones via web-based

software or applications. Social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter

and others allow users to have conversations, share information and create web content.

Social media can be used for a variety of reasons, including to keep in touch with

friends, to connect with others with shared hobbies or interests, to follow celebrities, to

find romantic partners, to seek out new information, to express ones' thoughts, feelings

and identity; and share good and bad news (Boyd & Ellison, 2007; Ellison & Boyd,

2013; Smith, 2011). 74 percent of respondents in a survey conducted by Statista

Research Department (2015) reported that they received support from their friends

through social networks.

Lonely individuals seek out social support on social media (Song, Zmyslinski-seeling,

Kim, Drent, Victor, Omori, et al, 2014). There is a link between negative emotional

experiences such as loneliness and depression and phone use. Human beings desire to feel connected to others and therefore at times turn to phone use and internet use, especially social media use, when they are feeling disconnected or lonely (Kim, Rose and Peng, 2009; Takao, Takahashi and Kitamura, 2009).

Mothers of young children especially first-time mothers of infants have been shown to turn to social media and blogging in an attempt to connect with family, friends and others (Bartholomes, Schoppe- Sullivan, Glassman, Kamp and Sullivan, 2012). Mothers who their children are more difficult have also been found to be more likely to engage in phone use during meal time (Radesky et al, 2018). Experiencing greater parenting stress may increase parental phone use in the presence of the child which exacerbates stressful child's behavior (McDaniel &Radesky, 2018).

According to Lompe, Ellison, and Steifield (2006), people use social media to obtain information about others. The information obtained helps them maintain relationships as indicated by Seidman (2013), thus helping them fulfill their need to belong (Ballmeister& Leary (1995). Other people use social media to meet like-minded individuals as well as to receive companionship and social support (Wellman & Gulia, 1999). Jung and Sundar (2016) found that senior citizens over 60 years old used social media, specifically Facebook, for social bonding, social bridging, curiosity, and as a vehicle for responding to family member requests.

A research done in 2013, Whiting and Williams (2013), identified social interactions, information seeking, passing time, entertainment, relaxation, communicating utility, convenience utility, expression of opinion, information sharing, and surveillance or

knowledge about others as motivation for using social media. Jaison (2008), identified seven motivations for Facebook use among college students: social connection, shared identities, photographs content, social investigation, social networking surfing, and status updates. Additionally, the author found that entertainment- related content motivated younger users to spend more time on Facebook.

The social media as a learning environment has been found to bring about many opportunities, such as encouraging peer collaboration, informal learning and peer autonomy (Bingham &Conner, 2010; Collins & Halverson,2010; Greenhow et al., 2018) and promoting collaboration between instructors and students (Harper, 20018).

Due to evolution realized on the social networking sites over the past 12 years the motivations are advancing in salience. Entertainment, medium appeal, and self-documentation have become more prevalent and predictive of usage patterns among Facebook users (Alhabash, Chiang, & Huang, 2014; Karlis, 2013).

Sheldon and Bryant (2016) found that Instagram users place less emphasis on connecting with other people and more on personal identity and self- promotion, in addition to other motives, including surveillance and knowledge gathering about others, documentation of life events and general coolness, which includes self- promotion and displaying creativity such as photography skills.

Waddell (2016) indicated that Snapchat's photographs were found to afford users capacity to establish and maintain connections with family members, friends, or significant others regardless of geographical distance. Most Kenyans are on social

media for social issues, entertainment, education, jobs, politics, sports, religion and environment (Wamuyu, 2020).

The current research intended to find out the motivations for communicating through social media by parents in Tala town, Matungulu sub-county in Machakos County.

2.2.3 The Relationship between Parental Communication through Social Media and the Behavior of their Children.

Emerging mobile and digital technologies such as smart phones, tablets, and other mobile devices are now embedded throughout the daily lives of young children and their families. These multimodal devices with their access to unlimited internet content, social contacts among others have revolutionized the ways in which people interact with digital technology and the way they interact with each other (Campell, Ling, and Bayer, 2014, Katz, 2002). Despite the significant benefits that individuals reap from their use of technology such as increased social support (McDaniel. Coyne and Holmes, 2012) and the ability to work from home (Chesley, Slbak and Wajcman, 2013), sociological and psychological research has highlighted the potential for disruption of in-person social dynamics when mobile and digital technologies are in use, described as "absent-present mode" (Gergen and Gergen, 2002).

The technological devices facilitate the access of social media, through social media sites such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, Linkedln and the like. Heavy parent digital technology use has been associated with sub-optimal parent-child interactions. The parent is physically present but emotionally distant. The parent fully engages himself with the device such that, he completely disappears emotionally from the present child who for that time they are together is requiring parental attention and

warmth. This highly sought for parental attention is never given to the child, whenever needed, for it is stolen away by the social media content the parent is involved in. Excessive use of social media may affect a strong bond between a parent and a child. Parents are more distracted and less in tune with their children if they are constantly focusing attention on their devices. Parents who spend an excessive amount of time on social media sites may be prone to neglecting their children or leaving them unsupervised for short periods of time while they become immersed in the information shared through social media. Research has established that parents' use of mobile technology around young children may cause internal tension conflicts and negative interactions with their children in that parents feel like they are in more than one place at once while parenting (Radeskey, et al; 2014).The central issue with parents of younger children is the time social media steals away from their children. Children need attention and more often than not, parents don't give them enough attention due to work and several other factors. Studies show that, parents who are constantly checking their phones for texts, email and social media updates are more likely to have children who misbehave than people who are able to step away from their screens. Parent's social media addictions can influence their child's behavior in a negative way and cause parenting problems. Many times the temper tantrums, whining or hyperactivity is a trying to get their parent to look at them rather than their cell phone. More attention-seeking behaviors from children when care givers are heavily attentive to their mobile devices, which prompts negative interactions, such as snapping at children has also been reported in other studies.

Marie Haaland (2019) has it that, parents only spend 24 or more minutes with their children than their phones. A survey of 2000 parents of school- aged children, 5-18

years, found that half of respondents had been asked by their children to put their phone away. 62% of those surveyed admitted to spending too much time on their cell phone while with their children. 69% felt addicted to their devices.

Children need attention. When parents try to do other things, the child in need of attention may develop very manipulative behaviors to attract interaction. Some children would become extremely demanding and aggressive, others would become passive and helpless. They would do whatever works for them. The central issue with parents of younger children is the time social media steals away from their children. Effective parenting is considered a major influencing factor in children emotional, cognitive and linguistic development and is contingent upon the parent's active interaction with the child. The parent- child relationship consists of behaviors, feelings, and expectations that are unique to a particular parent and a particular child. The relationship involves the full extent of a child's development. A lack of response for the child's needs and contact seeking behavior is associated with a higher risk of developing problematic behavior in children (McDaniel, et al, 2018).

Excessive involvement in social media may affect a strong bond between a parent and child. A strong relationship bond between a parent and their child is a unique bond that nurtures the holistic growth and development of a child. It lays the foundation for their behavior, personality traits and values. Children who have strong bonds with their parents can stablish secure bonds and friendships with peers; are better at regulating their emotions when faced with stress and helps them exhibit positive social behaviors. Parents are more distracted and less in tune with their children if they are constantly focusing attention on their devices. Parents who spend an excessive amount of time on

sites such as Facebook, YouTube and so on may be prone to neglecting their children or leaving them unsupervised for short periods of time while they become immersed in the information shared through social media. Regardless of the space of time, unsupervised children can get engaged in behavior or activity which may be considered potentially dangerous to self or others. Studies of behavior problems during early childhood have shown that parents responding with intimidation, aggression or avoidance towards the child's emotional expression leave the child to try to understand emotional rules on their own, and that may, in turn, lead to problematic child behaviors. (Marcone, Affuso&Borrone, 2017).

Social media involvement by parents in the presence of their children creates an avoidance scenario which is associated with an increase in problematic behaviors in the children. Problematic behaviors are continuous behaviors that hinder social relations, communications and learning of a child and cause harm to them, their families, their peers and other adults. They may show themselves as tantrums and tendency to violence or like long sobbing fits. Problem behaviors prevent the child from using his current skills. Children with behavioral problems bear the risk of losing their skills because of not putting them into practice. A child that has problem behavior may naturally not fit into his environment. Repetitive behaviors like screaming often, making noise by hitting objects, trying to hurt people, badly affect the child's adaptation to his environment. This may create a major risk in terms of social development of the child. McDaniel, (2018) described this technological disruption of interaction as 'technoference' which might consequently result in less prosocial behaviors or an increase of internalized and externalized behaviors in children. Technoference is defined as everyday interruptions in interpersonal interactions or time spent together

that occur due to digital and mobile technology devices (McDaniel & Coyne, 2016) as in parent- child distraction. Technological devices include any technological device that distracts parental attention from their child such as a cellphone, smartphone, or a tablet. Such interruptions may occur during face- to-face conversations, routines such as meal times or play, or the perception of an intrusion felt by an individual when another person interacts with digital technology during time together.

 Internalizing behaviors are behaviors that result from negativity that is focused inward. People with internalizing behaviors have difficulty coping with negative emotions or stressful situations, so they direct their feelings inside. Such behaviors include and are not limited to social withdrawal, feeling of loneliness or guilt, unexplained physical symptoms such as headaches, stomachaches not due to medical conditions among others. Externalizing behaviors on the other hand are defined as aggressive oppositional, and delinquent behavior (Ihle et al, 2000). Externalizing behaviors are behavior problems directed outwardly towards others and the social environment. They are characterized as an under-controlled and out-directed mode of responding. Rule-breaking behaviors or acts that violate social norms such as physical aggression and defiance are examples of externalizing behaviors. They stem from externalizing emotions like anger and hostility.

Externalizing behaviors typically emerge in the second year of life (Baillargeon et al, 2007) and then decline steeply in frequency between toddlerhood and the transition to formal schooling(Miner &clark- stewart, 2008; NICHD, 2004; Shaw, Gilliom, Igoldsby, &Nagin, 2003; Timblay, 2006). Children who do not show such a decline are likely to have ongoing problems related to their behaviors as they are at risk for negative long- term behavioral and emotional outcomes (Moilaren, Shaw, & Maxwell,

2010).Whereas externalizing behaviors are easily observable by others, internalizing behaviors are not.

It has been discovered that, parents use cellphones when they are around their children because they may have strong habits, cannot resist their cellphone notifications, or are bored, which may result in an increase in the child's problematic behavior (Radeskey, Kistin, Zuckerman, et al, 2014). The 'fear of missing out' may also encourage parental use of cellphones around their children. Overuse of these devices in the home, interferes with crucial early learning of children. A recent study showed that, there was an association between maternal problematic use of electronic media and interruptions of parent- child interactions, which, in turn were associated with more difficulties in 1 to 5 year-old children (McDaniel et al, 2018). Similar to the media use of children and mothers dysfunctional parent- child interactions have been shown to be associated with behavioral difficulties in young children. Furthermore, infrequent interactions between parent and children could be linked to lower prosocial behavior in children, whereas positive parenting and parent- child attachment has been shown to be related to more social competence (Neppel T. K., Wedmore H., Senia J. M.,Jeon S., Diggs O., 2019) Neuroscience has shown that people need to interact with other people to develop into healthy human beings. Dysfunctional parent- child interactions, as created by parental social media involvement, have been associated with behavioral difficulties in young children (Zhao J., et al, 2018). Externalizing and internalizing behaviors often present in toddlerhood, and ecological factors such as dysfunctional parent- child interactions and family stress (Campbell, Shaw and Gilliom, 2000) appear to increase the risk of problematic presentations of each of these symptoms.

Intervention targeting ecological factors such as dysfunctional parent- child interaction and family stress as propagated by parental involvement with social media during child's early years may prevent a child's externalizing and internalizing behaviors from progressing beyond typical frequency or severity and causing impairment during times of increased social, behavioral and academic demands.

This study intended to establish the influence of communication through social media by parents on their 2-6 years old children's behavior in Tala town, Matungulu sub-county in Machakos County.

2.3 Summary of Review of Literature and Knowledge Gap

Research on social media can be focused on a variety of different factors including the children's ability to socialize, the parent's ability to focus their time and energy on their children, and how social media in general affects those two relationships at once. By surveying parents, with young children, and who communicate through social media, importance can be placed on the need for constant attention in children, and improvement of parent- child interaction time and these two affects their future behavior. Parent mobile technology use around children is associated with fewer parent- child interactions, lower responsivity to child bids and parent hostility in response to child bids for attention. The parent adopts a present-absent mode and therefore appearing to be inaccessible to the child. Therefore, the children are apt to notice when their parents have conflicting demands and are unable to focus their entire attention on the child's pressing needs. Due to this, there is a likelihood that the child's behavior and actions would shift to draw the highly needed parental attention.

Such ecological factors as dysfunctional parent-child interactions are highly promoted by too much involvement with social media and may have an impact on both externalizing and internalizing behaviors of their children which often appear in toddlerhood to school age period, that is, 2 to 6 years of age. From the literature, externalizing and internalizing behaviors typically emerge in the second year of life and then decline steeply in frequency between toddlerhood and the transition to formal schooling (Baillargeon et al., 2007) and ecological factors such as dysfunctional parent-child interactions and family stress appear to increase the risk of problematic presentations of each of symptom domains. The ecological factors such as dysfunctional parent-child interactions could be orchestrated by children involvement with technology or social media, and/or the parental social media involvement.

This research intended to establish the influence of parental communication through social media in the presence of their children aged between 2 and 6 years on the behavior of their children, of parents in Tala town, Matungulu sub-county in Machakos County, for there seems to be no such a research on record.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses how research was undertaken. The areas discussed are: research design, research site, target population, study sample, data collection, data analysis & presentation and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

Ogula (2005) describes a research design as a plan, structure and strategy of investigation to obtain answers to research questions and control variance. Additionally, a study design is the plan of action the researcher adopts for answering the research questions and it sets up the framework for study or is the blueprint of the researcher (Kerlinger, 1973). This study employed a descriptive survey research design.

Descriptive survey research designs are used in primary and exploratory studies to allow researchers to gather information, present and interpret for the purpose of clarification (Orodho, 2003). Mugenda and mugenda (2003) on the other hand give the purpose of descriptive research as determining and reporting the way things are. A descriptive survey study is one in which information is gathered without altering the surroundings. It provides information about the behavior and attitudes of a particular group. It is done to reveal interaction between things in the environment (Orodho & Kombo, 2002). Descriptive studies are usually the best methods for collecting information that will demonstrate relationships and describe the world as it exists. The design was therefore used by the researcher to enable him to collect information from parents in Tala town, Matungulu sub-county, Machakos County about the behavior

demonstrated by their children at the time the parents are communicating through social media in the presence of their 2-6 years old children.

Katrina (2012) explains that descriptive survey study is used because it enables the researcher to interact with the participants. In this case, the researcher was able to interact with parents who are in Tala town of Matungulu Sub-county in Machakos County, and have children of ages from 2 to 6 years and the parents communicated through social media in the presence of their children.

3.2.1 Variables

The variables of this study included parental communication through social media (independent variable) and the children behavior outcome (dependent variable).

The Independent Variable- "Parental Communication through Social Media" conceptually defined as the usage of social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Telegram, and others by parents through a variety of devices (cell phones, tablets, computers, among others) which would be determined by;

1. The prevalence of parents that communicate through social media while caring for their children, which were determined by the number of parents that communicate through social media in reference to the number of times one communicates in day ranging from 1-2 times a day, 3 or more times a day, constantly, never.

2. The motivations that lead the parents to communicate through social media which were determined by a five-point scale of; not applicable awarded 0 points, rarely applicable awarded 1 point, occasionally awarded 2 points, frequently awarded 3 points, always awarded 4 points based on the following reasons; entertainment, meeting new people, social events, maintain relationships, create media content and share opinion.

The Dependent Variable- " Behavior outcome of children of parents who communicate via social media in their presence" was the dependent variable and was determined from parents questionnaire ratings based on a three point Likert scale of, not true awarded 0 points, sometimes true awarded 1point and very true awarded 2points, defined by the way a child (2 to 6 years old) behaves in the situation where his or her parent is being involved in social media interaction in the child's presence, now or within the past two months. Such behavior includes: The child: Acts aggressively, Acts emotionally, Seems to be anxious, Complains to be sick (somatic complains), Looks withdrawn, Shows other behaviors, and Shows no change in behavior. Items of the questionnaire were informed by, and reworded from the Child Behavioral Checklist (Achenbach & Rescola, 2000).

3.3 Research Site

The study was done at Tala town of Matungulu sub-county in Machakos County. Tala town is 65 Kilometers east of Nairobi City and 40 kilometers north of Machakos Town. The town is 7 kilometers west of Kangundo town.

Tala town hosts several financial institutions such as banks and micro-finance institutions. There are several learning institutions in and around the town. Several medical facilities, both public and private, such as Kangundo Level 4 Hospital are available in and around the market. Law firms are not uncommon, Kangundo law courts is in the vicinity of this market. Tala town is a transport hub with matatu terminus, and basically because it is a town it comprises various other business enterprises. Churches and mosques are several in and around the market. A police post is also available in Tala town and it's a host to many other offices.

Many of the people who serve and are served in these social facilities find their residence within Tala town with their families, either in rental houses or owned homes.

This town is well served with internet, mobile and digital technologies by telecommunication service providers like Safaricom, Airtel, and Telecom among others. Mobile and digital devices are easily accessible in the market due to its nearness to Nairobi City.

Radeskey, Schumacher and Zuckerman (2015), would say "Emerging mobile and digital technology such as smart phones, tablets, wearables, and other mobile devices are now embedded throughout the daily lives of young children and their families". These multimodal devices with their unlimited internet content, social contacts, work duties, information and personal data, have revolutionized the ways in which people interact with digital technology and with each other (Campbell, et al., 2002). The people of Tala town are not an exception to these.

The internet has become an important instrument in education and social life such that it is gradually becoming indispensable in the daily life of many people (Pew Internet Research, 2004). And majority of Kenyans have access to the internet through their mobile phones, computer and internet enabled devices. This has led to the growth of internet consumption in Kenya at home (70%), at office and on the go using mobile internet access or public WIFIs (58%). Access to the internet is almost at per both in rural and urban areas, with majority of Kenyans spending between 30 minutes to three hours on the internet daily (SimeLab Africa, 2019; CAK,2019). Machakos County where Tala town is located is in Kenya and characterized as above.

This information motivated the researcher to purposefully choose Tala town, Matungulu sub-county in Machakos County as a study area on the influence of parental communication through social media in the presence of their children on the behavior of the children, since the town meets the threshold for such a study.

3.4 Target Population

According to Ogula (2003), population refers to any group of institutions, people or objects that have common characteristics. The target population is the group of individuals that the researcher intends to conduct research in and draw conclusion from. The target population for this study will be calculated as 47 percent of 11446, the total population of Tala town (Kenya Population and Housing Census volume II, 2019) as reported by Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS, 2019), since 53 percent is the estimated Kenya's child population (KNBS, 2010). The target population for this study was therefore, 5380 parents, male and female, with at least a child who is 2 to 6 years old, and the parents communicated through social media in the presence of their children and reside in Tala town, Matungulu Sub-county of Machakos County.

3.5 Study Sample
3.5.1 Sampling Procedures

Sampling is a procedure, process, or technique of choosing a sub-group from a population to participate in a study (Ogula, 2005). It is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals selected represent the large group from which they are selected. The study sample is therefore the specific groupof individuals that data will be collected from. It usually less than the total population. Purposive sampling and simple random sampling was used to select the respondents.

Purposive sampling was used to determine the study area (Tala town) and simple random was employed to select the respondents.

The sampling formula below was used to get the study sample in an adequate representation of participants

$nf = n/1 + n/N;$

Where nf= the desired sample size (when the population is less than 10,000),

n= the desired sample size when the population is more than 10,000, in this case the recommended as the desired sample size is 384,

N= the estimate of the population size (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003:43).

3.5.2 Study Sample Size

To get a representative sample size, this study used a formula used by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003).

n=z^{2}pq/d^2

Where, n is the desired sample size (if the target population is greater than 10,000),

z is the standard normal deviate at the required confidence level

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

q = 1-p

d is the level of statistical significant set.

Since the target population is less than 10,000, the final sample estimate (n$_f$) was calculated as follows:

$$n_{f=\frac{n}{1+\frac{n}{N}}}$$

Where nf= the desired sample size (when the population is less than 10,000),

n= the desired sample size when the population is more than 10,000, in this case the recommended as the desired sample size is 384, when the population is more than 10,000 people, 384 of them are recommended as the desired sample size,

N= the estimate of the population size (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003:43).

The accessible target population in this study was 5380 (less than 10,000), hence the above formula was applied as follows:

n=384; N=5380

$$n_f = \frac{384}{1 + 384/5380} = 358.4177$$

, which was approximated to 359 since human beings were the respondents. In order to get the 359 respondents from the target population the researcher carried out a simple random sampling.

3.6 Data Collection
3.6.1 Data Collection Instruments

The researcher adopted open and closed ended questionnaires to source for primary data. Questionnaires were used in the study because (a) it is potential in reaching out to a large number of respondents within a short time, (b) it is able to give the respondents adequate time to respond to the items (c) it offers a sense of anonymity to the respondents and (d) it is an objective method hence no bias is resulting from personal characteristics as in an interview (Owens, 2002). Additionally, the questionnaires enabled easy collection of information from parents in a short period and also consistency of questions, thus allowing greater uniformity of information by each set (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The questionnaires were divided into the main areas of investigation except the first part which captures the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Other sections were organized according to the major research objectives.

The questionnaires were designed to capture information on the prevalence of parental communication through social media in five themes: the number of times a parent communicates through social media in the presence of their child, ranging from 1-2 times in a day, 3 or more times, constantly and never; social media sites the parent is subscribed to- two items, devices used to communicate- one item, time a parent spends communicating through social media in a day – one item and the time of the day the parent is involved in social media- one item; the motivations for communication through social media: one item with a list of reasons for which a parent communicates through social media with a 5-likert scale of not applicable-1 point to always-5 points and the effect on child's behavior with a 3-likert scale of not true awarded 0 points to very true awarded 2 points (see Appendix A).

3.6.2 Pilot Testing of Research Instruments

A pilot study is a small scale study conducted prior to the main study to enable the researcher to determine whether the research method and instruments are precise and whether the research will be easy to replicate. Piloting of instruments was done at Nguluni, a neighboring market to the study site. This market bears similar demographic characteristics as Tala town. The pilot study site was purposively selected. Through simple random sampling, 12 participants were selected to be included in the study since Julious (2005) has it that, sample size of 12 per group rule of thumb for a pilot study is appropriate.

Pilot testing is important to establish the content validity of scores on an instrument, to provide an initial evaluation of the internal consistency of the items; and to improve

questions format and instructions. Pilot testing also provides an opportunity to assess how long the study took (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) piloting is necessary because it helped in checking the validity of the instruments. Piloting the questionnaire detected the unclear directions, insufficient space for writing responses, clustered questions and wrong phrasing of questions and therefore corrective measures were undertaken.

3.6.3 Instrument Reliability

The reliability of test refers to the degree to which the test is consistent and stable in measuring what it is intended to measure. To ensure that the tools provide stable and consistent results as Phelan and Wren (2005) would advise, the researcher verified the reliability of the instruments through split-half technique.

The questionnaires were administered once to 12 selected participants who did not participate in the main study. The pilot survey results was divided arbitrarily into two halves and the correlation of the scores on the scales from the two halves were calculated using the Spearman's Correlation (rho) formula to compare association between the two sets in order to establish per item consistency and overall instrument reliability.

Split-half is a statistical method used to measure consistency of the scores of a test. It is a form of internal consistency reliability. The method involved splitting a test into two halves and correlating examinees' scores on the two halves of the test. The resulting correlation is then adjusted for test length using the spearman's formula (SAGE, 2018).

The closer the correlation between the two versions, the greater the internal consistency of the survey or instrument and for this study the Spearman Brown coefficient for equal length was 0.713 and similarly the Spearman Brown coefficient for unequal length was also 0.713. The reliability of the survey was determined by applying the Spearman's-Brown formula (APA, 2022). Since, the values for the two halves where equal, and then it means that internal consistency of the survey instrument was very great.

3.6.4 Instruments Validity

Instrument validity is the extent in which an instrument measures what it is supposed to. The researcher employed content validity to ensure that the instruments are applicable through making considerations that all information is consistent to the study objectives as Carter and Porter (2000) suggest to be important. In addition, content validity was used during piloting in order to gather the necessary data as well as to check the consistency of each study item in the questionnaire.

3.6.5 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher prepared questionnaires which were distributed to parents, with the help of research assistants, during the period which the research was carried out. The questionnaires were collected within a span of one week to minimize losses.

3.7 Data Processing and Analysis

Data analysis involved qualitative and quantitative methods because the two complement each other. Data obtained from questionnaires answered by parents was organized taking into account both the study objectives and research questions then analyzed using means, tallies, frequencies, and percentages. Tables, column graphs, bar graphs and pie charts were used in presentation of the findings.

Specifically, the objective on prevalence of parental communication through social media in Tala town was analyzed using frequencies and percentages. The second objective on the motivations for communicating through social media was analyzed using percentages. The third objective on the relationship between parental communication through social media and their child's behavior was analyzed using frequencies and percentages.

3.8 Legal and Ethical Considerations

The researcher obtained an authority/ introduction letter from Africa Nazarene University (ANU), thereafter obtained a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). Further permission was sought from the Deputy County Commissioner- Matungulu sub-county and from the Kangundo-Tala Municipal administrator. The researcher then got authorization from respective study institutions, like financial institutions authorities.

The researcher ensured that the study remained original in content and design, through carrying out the research directly from the identified respondents, that is collecting primary data, using the laid down procedures in here and carrying out data processing analysis as shown in this document . In this regard, other people's work would be credited appropriately through in-text citations and a complementary reference list. The respondents were made aware of the study and the researcher gave them the option of participating in the study, or not. The researcher guaranteed the confidentiality regarding the information they gave out. For purposes of anonymity the participants did not write their names on the instruments.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher presents the table of frequencies for the various variables,

before conducting the two-sample t-tests in an attempt to address the study objectives.

4.2 Characteristics of the Subject of the Study

In this section the researcher included an analysis of the demographics, the respondents,

social-economic characteristics, and the response rate

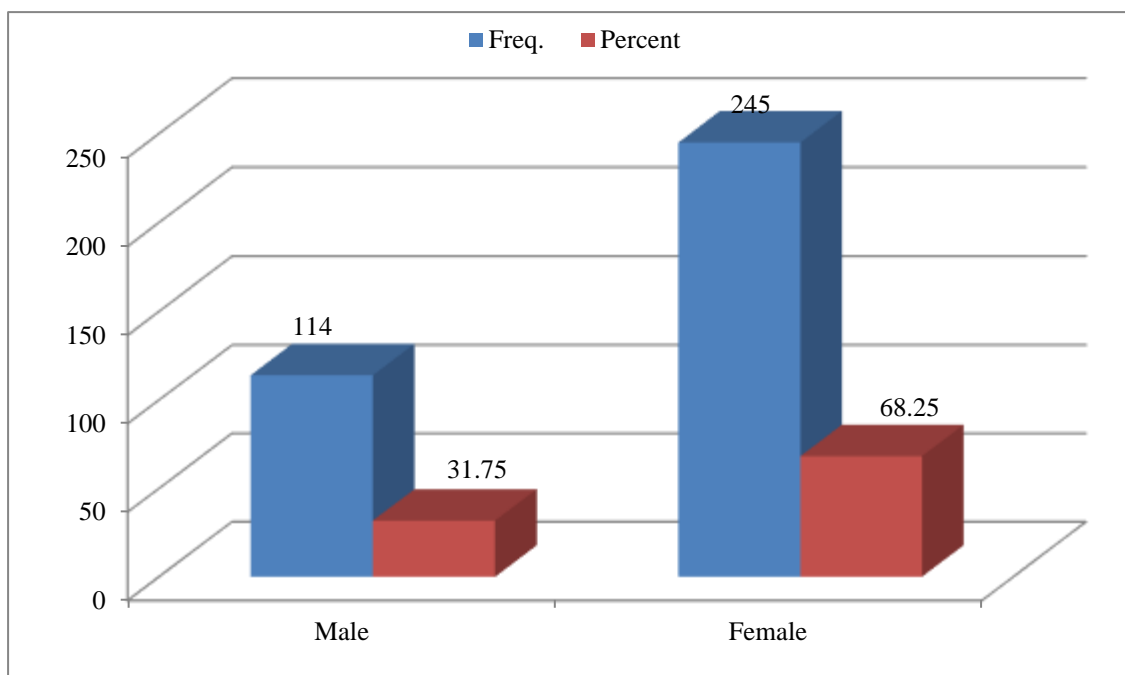## 4.2.1 Gender of the Parents

Figure 4.1: *Gender of the parents*

Figure 4.1 illustrates the gender of parents, with 2-6 years old children. The figure

shows that male parents were 31.75 per cent while female parents were 68.25 per cent.

Thus, most of the parents were female.

4.2.2 Age of the Parents

Figure 4.2: *Age of the parents*
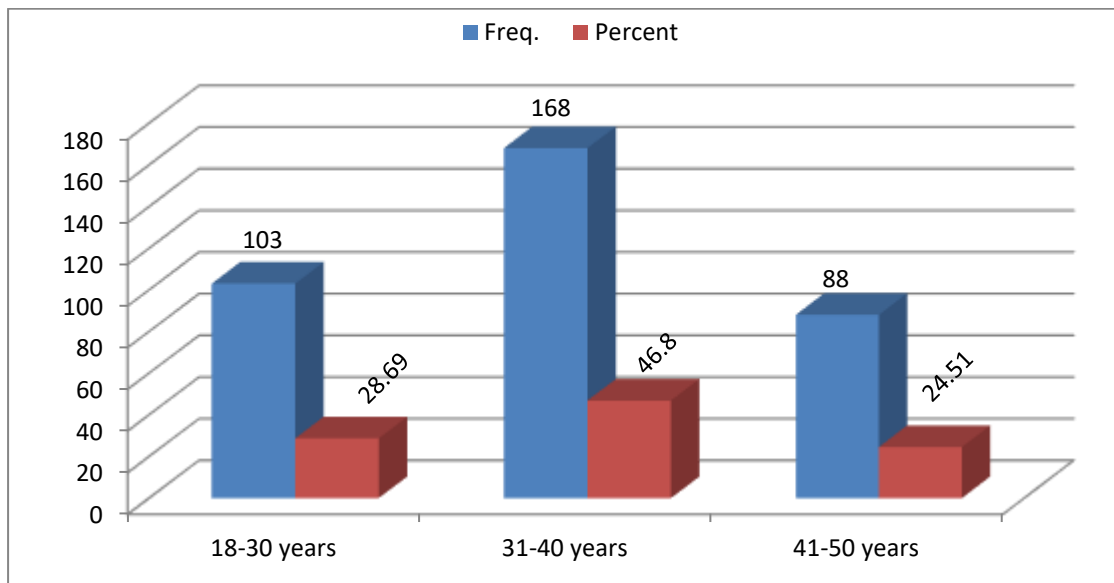
Figure 4.2 presents the age of the parents in years, with 2-6 years old children. The figure shows that parents aged 18-30 years were 28.69 per cent; parents 31-40 years old were 46.80 per cent; while parents in the age bracket of 41-50 years were 24.51 per cent. Thus, most of the parents were aged 31-40 years, in addition, more than one quarter of the parents were in the youthful stage.

4.2.3 Education Level of the Parents
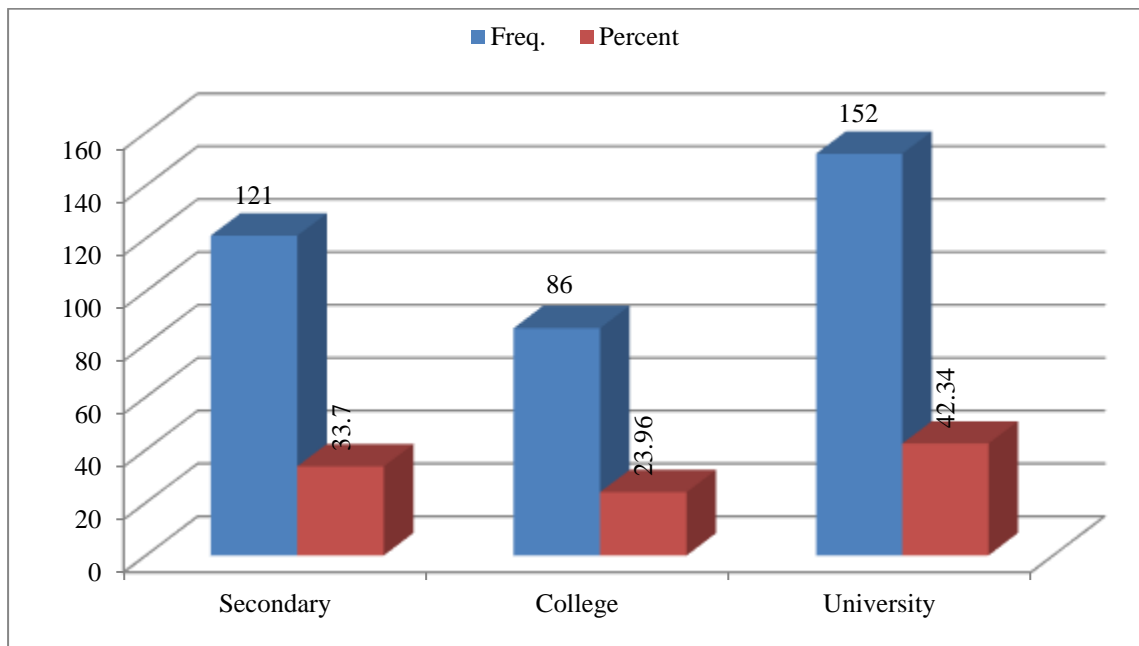
Figure 4.3: *Education level of the parents*

Figure 4.3illustrates the education level of the parents, with 2-6 years old children. The figure shows that parents with the highest education level as secondary were 33.7 per cent; parents with the highest education level as college were 23.96 per cent; while parents who attained university, education were 42.34 per cent. Thus, all the parents had at least attained basic level of education.

4.2.4 Occupation of the Parents
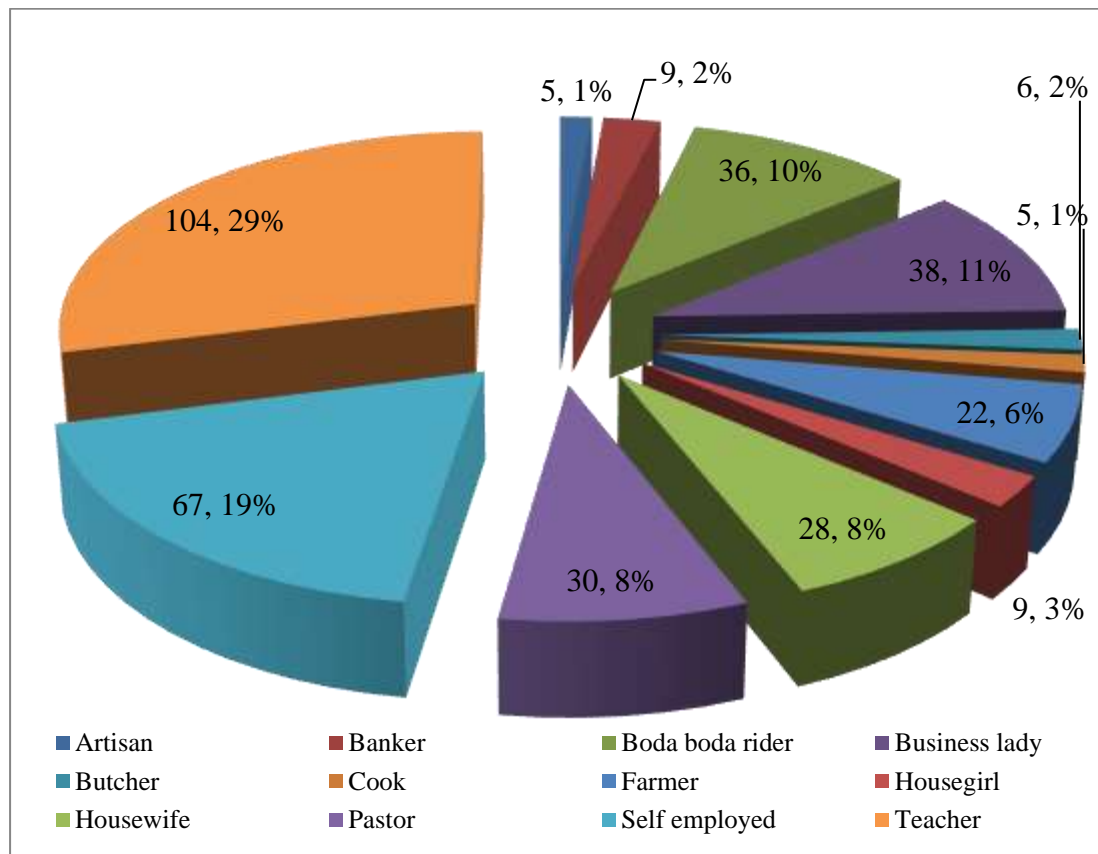
Figure 4.4: *Occupation of the parents*

Figure 4.4 is a pie chart illustrating the occupation of the parents. The figure shows that

29% of the parents were teachers, 19% were self-employed, 11% represented business

ladies, 10% were boda boda riders, 8% pastors, 8% were housewife's, while 6% were

farmers, 3% were house girls, 2% were both bankers and butchers while 1% were cooks

and artisans respectively.

4.2.5 Gender of the Children
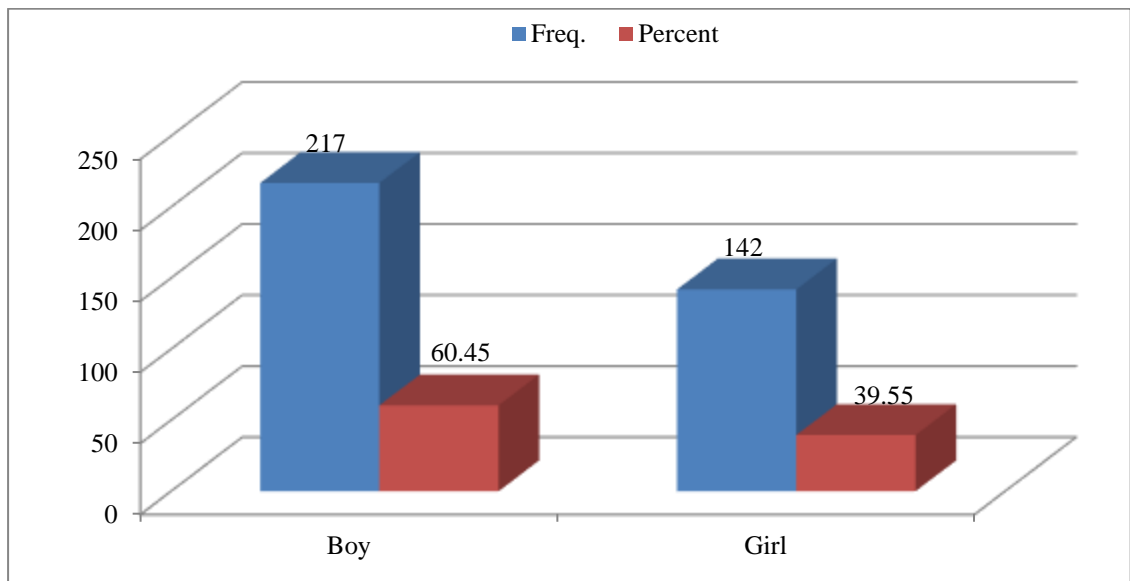
Figure 4.5: *Gender of the children*

Figure 4.5 displays the gender of the children aged 2-6 years. The figure shows that boys were 60.45 per cent while girls were 39.55 per cent. Thus, most of the children were boys.

4.2.6 Age of the Children
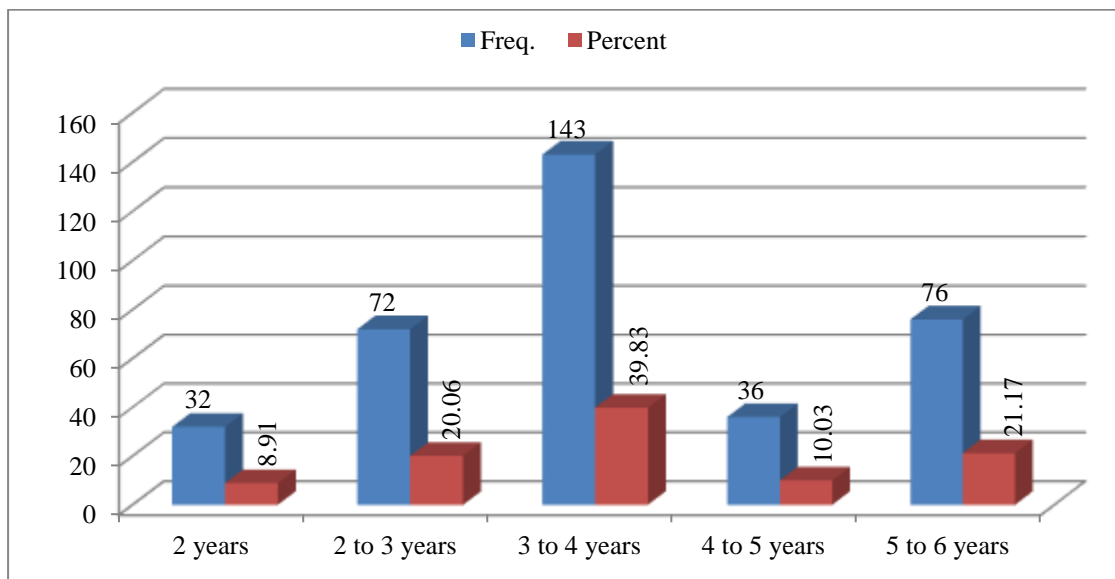
Figure 4.6: *Age of the children*

Figure 4.6 displays the age of the children in years. The figure shows that children aged 2 years were 8.91 per cent; children 2-3 years old were 20.06 per cent; children aged 3-4 years were 39.83 per cent; those aged 4-5 years were 10.03 per cent; while children in the age bracket of 5-6 years were 21.17 per cent. Thus most of the children were aged 3-4 years.

4.2.7 Response Rate

The sample for this study was 359 parents. All the sampled respondents responded to the questionnaire. This represents 100 per cent response rate which is adequate.

4.3 Presentation of Research Analysis, Findings, and Interpretation

4.3.1 Prevalence of Parents, with 2-6 Years Old Children, that Communicate through Social Media in the Presence of their Children

The first objective sought to find out the prevalence of parents, with 2-6 years old children, which communicate through social media in the presence of their children in Tala town, Matungulu sub county, Machakos County.

Table 4.1: *Communicating through social media while caring for your child in a typical day*

While caring for your child in a typical day, how often do you communicate through social media	Freq	Percent
Never	45	12.53
1 to 2 times a day	87	24.23
3 or more times a day	144	40.11
Constantly	83	23.12
Total	359	100

Table 4.1 shows that while parents are caring for their children in a typical day, 12.53 per cent of the parents never communicate through social media; 24.23 per cent of the parents communicate 1 to 2 times a day through social media; 40.11 per cent of the parents communicate 3 or more times a day through social media; while 23 per cent of the parents constantly communicate through social media. This indicates that 87.47 per cent of the parents communicate through social media in a typical day while caring for their children. Hence, the prevalence of parents, with 2-6 years old children, who communicate through social media in the presence of their children in Tala town, Matungulu Sub County, Machakos County was 87.47 per cent.

The social sites in which parents are subscribed to are shown in the fig. 4.7 below
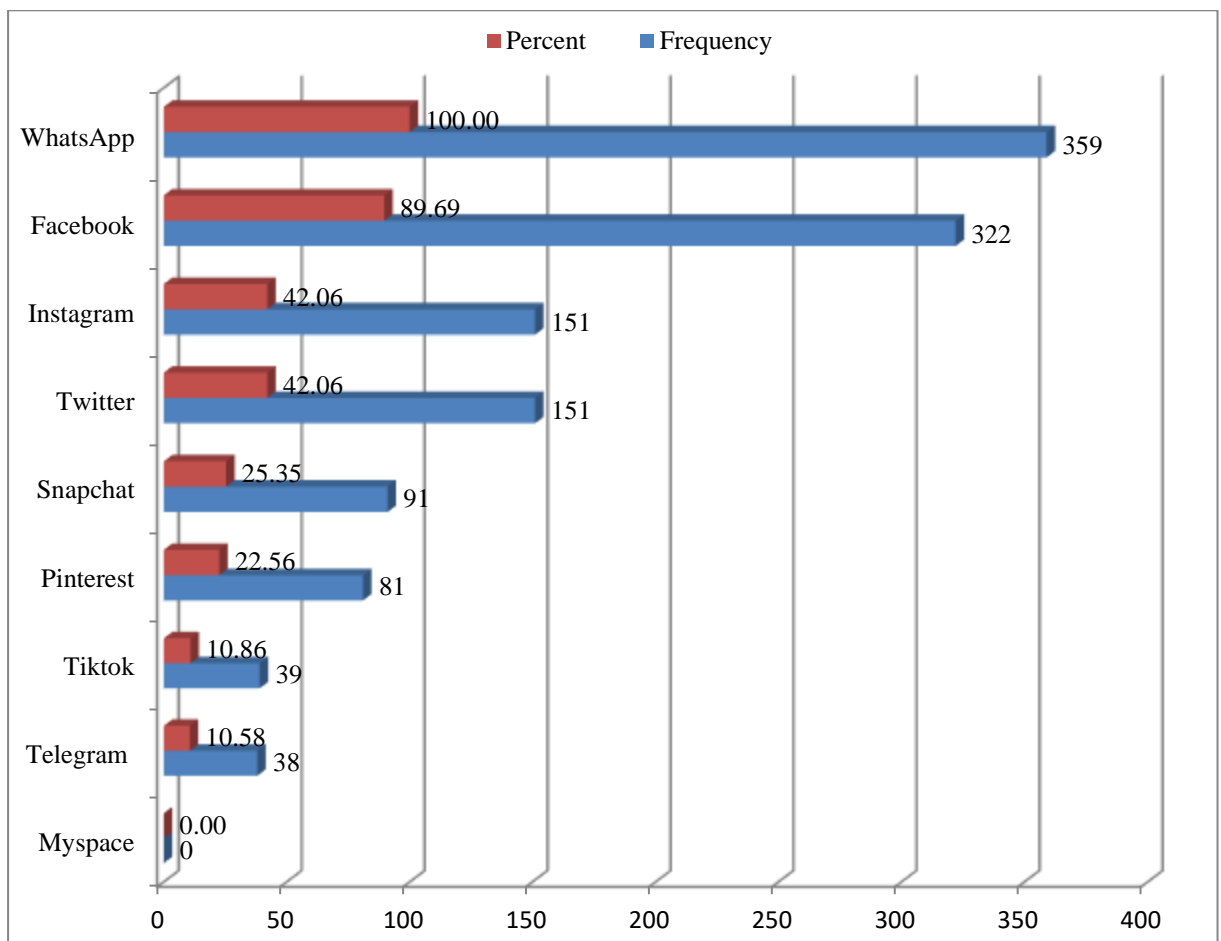
Figure 4.7: *Social sites that parents have subscribed to*

Figure 4.7 gives the social sites which the parents are subscribed to. The figure shows that 100 per cent of the parents have subscribed to WhatsApp; 89.69 per cent have subscribed to Facebook; 42.06 per cent to Twitter and 42.06 per cent to Instagram. The figure further shows that 10.58 per cent of the parents have subscribed to Telegram; 25.35 per cent to Snap Chat; 22.56 per cent to Pinterest; and 10.86 per cent have subscribed to TikTok; while none (0.00 per cent) have subscribed to Myspace. Thus most (89.69 per cent) of the parents have subscribed to WhatsApp and Facebook.

Figure 4.8 below shows the social sites that are frequently used by parents
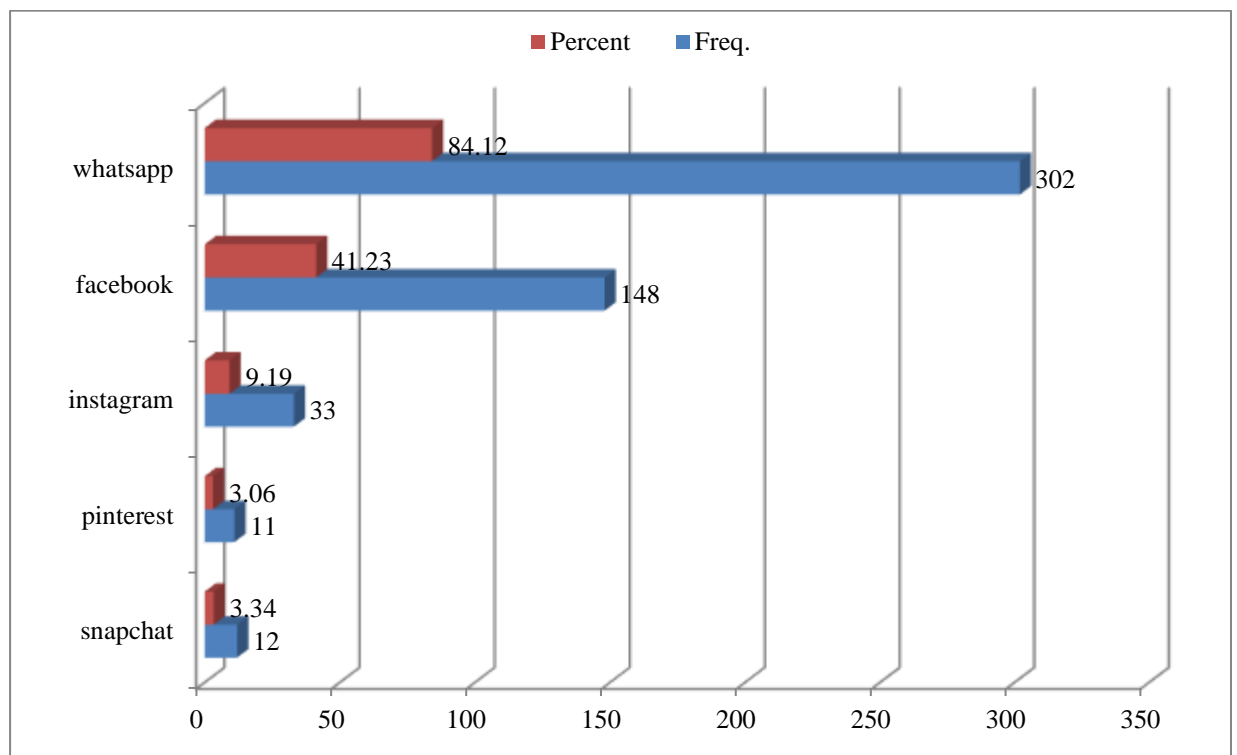
Figure 4.8: *Social sites the parents frequently use*

Figure 4.8 presents the social sites which the parents frequently use. The figure shows that 84.12 per cent of the parents frequently use WhatsApp; 41.23 per cent of the parents frequently use Facebook; 9.19 per cent of the parents frequently use Instagram; 3.06

per cent of the parents frequently use Pinterest; and 3.34 per cent of the parents frequently use Snap Chat. Hence most of the parents frequently use WhatsApp.

Fig 4.9 below gives the type of devices that parents use to visit social media sites on daily basis
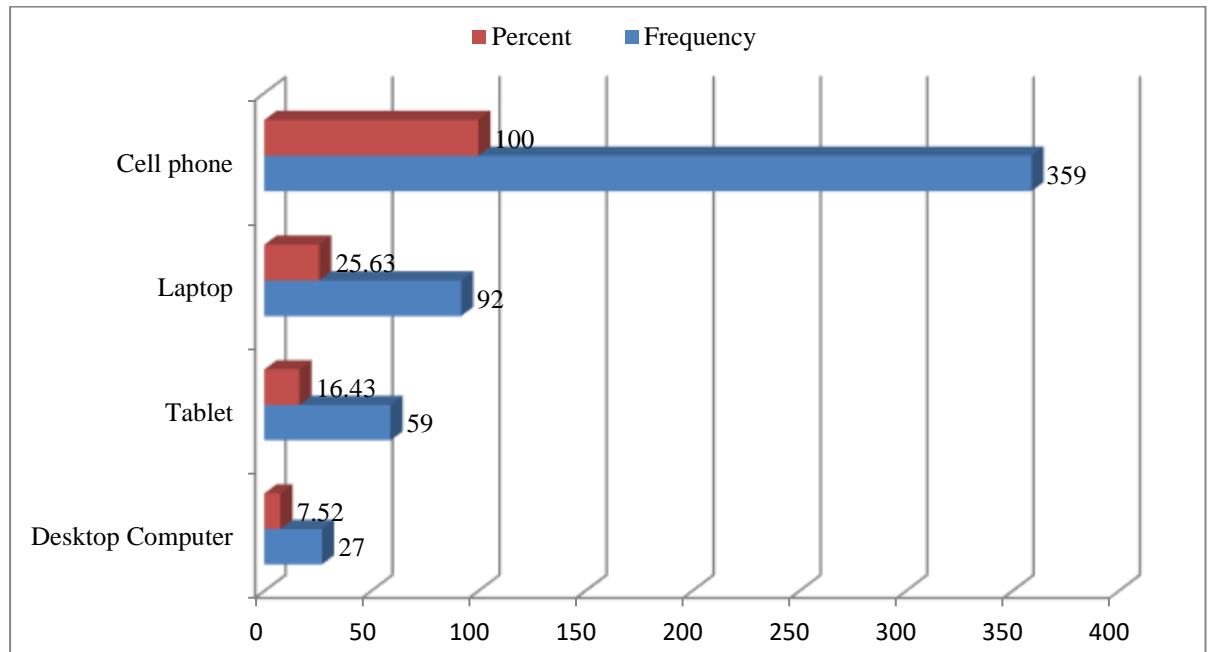
Figure 4.9: *Type of devices parents use on a daily basis to visit social media sites*

Figure 4.9 gives the type of devices parents use on a daily basis to visit social media sites. The figure shows that 100.00 per cent of the parents used cellphone on a daily basis to visit social media sites; 25.63 per cent used laptop; 16.43 per cent of the parents used tablet; and 7.52 per cent of the parents used desktop computer. This shows that most of the parents used cellphone on a daily basis to visit social media sites.

Table 4.2 below shows the time, on average, parents spend communicating through social media daily.

Table 4.2: *Time, on average, parents spend communicating through social media daily*

time you spend communicating on average through social media daily	Freq	Percent
Less than one hour	19	5.29
One hour	57	15.88
Two hours	76	21.17
Three hours or more hours	207	57.66

Table 4.2 displays the time, on average, parents spend communicating, through social media daily. The table shows that 5.29 percent of the parents spend on average less than one hour daily communicating through social media; 15.88 percent of the parents spend on average one hour daily communicating through social media; 21.17 percent of the parents spend on average two hours daily communicating through social media; and 57.66 percent of the parents spend on average three or more hours daily communicating through social media.

Times of the day parents are mostly involved in communicating through social media are shown on table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: *Times of the day parents are mostly involved in communicating through social media*

Times of the day parents are mostly involved in communicating through social media	Freq	Percent
Midnight-6am	0	0
6am-12noon	56	15.6
12noon-5pm	38	10.58
5pm-9pm	133	37.05
9pm-midnight	132	36.77

Table 4.3 gives the times of the day parents are mostly involved in communicating through social media. The table shows that 0 percent (none) of the parents noted that they mostly communicate through social media between midnight to 6am; 15.6 percent said they mostly communicate through social media between 6am-12noon; 10.58 percent of the parents said they mostly communicate through social media between 12noon-5pm; 37.05 percent of the parents opined they mostly communicate through social media between 5pm-9pm; while 36.77 percent of the parents noted that they mostly communicate through social media between 9pm-midnight. Hence, according to the results in the table, about three-quarters (73.82 per cent) of the parents mostly communicate through social media between 5pm-midnight.

4.3.2 Motivations for Parental Communication through Social Media

Objective two sought to establish the motivations for parental communication through social media.

Table 4.4: *Motivations for parental communication through social media*

		Not Applicable	Rarely Applicable	Occasionally	Frequently	Always
Entertainment	Freq	32	82	13	132	100
	Percent	8.91	22.84	3.62	36.77	27.86
Meeting new people	Freq	91	137	69	22	40
	Percent	25.35	38.16	19.22	6.13	11.14
Social events	Freq	15	60	123	117	44
	Percent	4.18	16.71	34.26	32.59	12.26
Maintain relationships	Freq	14	24	87	191	43
	Percent	3.9	6.69	24.23	53.2	11.98
Create media content and share opinion	Freq	71	119	85	62	22
	Percent	19.78	33.15	23.68	17.27	6.13

Table 4.4 gives the motivations for parental communication through social media. The table shows that parents communicating either frequently or always through social media motivated by entertainment represented 36.77 per cent and 27.86 respectively. Hence, accordingly 64.63 per cent of the parents communicate through social media for entertainment. In addition, parents communicating either frequently or always through social media motivated by maintaining relationships represented 53.2 per cent and 11.98 respectively. Hence, accordingly 65.18 per cent of the parents communicate through social media to maintain relationships.

However, parents who don't or rarely communicate through social media motivated by meeting new people represented 25.35 per cent and 38.16 respectively. Hence, according to 63.51 per cent of the parents, they don't or rarely communicate through social media motivated by meeting new people. Parents who don't or rarely communicate through social media motivated by creating media content and share opinion represented 19.78 per cent and 33.15 respectively. Hence, 52.93 per cent of the parents don't or rarely communicate through social media motivated by creating media content and sharing opinion. Table 4.4 further shows that one-third (34.26 per cent) of the parents who occasionally communicate through social media are motivated by social events, while 44.85 per cent of the parents, that communicate through social media are motivated by social events either frequently or always.

This indicates that about two-thirds (64.63 per cent) of the parents, communicate through social media for entertainment. In addition, about two-thirds (65.18 per cent) of the parents, communicate through social media to maintain relationships.

4.3.3Parental Communication through Social Media and the Children's Behavior Outcomes

The third objective assessed the relationship between parental communication through social media and the children's behavior outcomes in Tala town, Matungulu sub-county, Machakos County. In addressing this objective, parental communication through social media was assessed using three measures; namely average time parents spend daily communicating through social media, times of the day parents are mostly involved in communicating through social media, and the extent parents agree that communicating through social media in the presence of their child influence their children behavior.

4.3.3.1Average time parents spend daily Communicating through Social Media and the Children's Behavior Outcomes

Table 4.5: *Two Sample T-Test for the average time parents spend daily*

Variable name and T-statistics	Time parents spend
Acts aggressively (T-statistics, p-value)	0.95* (10.833, 0.000)
Not True	2.71
True	3.66
Seeks for attention (T-statistics, p-value)	1.24* (13.932, 0.000)
Not True	2.40
True	3.64
Acts emotionally(T-statistics, p-value)	0.75* (8.399, 0.000)
Not True	2.88
True	3.63
Seems to be anxious (T-statistics, p-value)	0.48* (4.918, 0.000)
Not True	3.62
True	3.14
Complains to be sick (T-statistics, p-value)	0.24** (2.493, 0.013)
Not True	3.17

True	3.41
Looks withdrawn (T-statistics, p-value)	0.52* (5.607, 0.000)
Not True	3.01
True	3.54
Shows other behaviors (T-statistics, p-value)	0.91* (10.334, 0.000)
Not True	2.74
True	3.65
Shows no change in behavior (T-statistics, p-value)	0.15 (1.380, 0.169)
Not True	3.27
True	3.42

Note: *, ** and *** indicates 1, 5 and 10 percent level of significance respectively

Regarding the average time parents spend daily communicating through social media and the children's behavior outcomes, the researcher proceeded to conduct a two-sample t-test for the two categories of the dependent variable namely children's behavior outcomes as shown in table 4.5. Concerning children's behavior outcome of acting aggressively, the table gives a value of 3 for not true and 4 for true, showing that parents who spend on average two hours daily communicating through social media their children did not act aggressively, while those parents who spend on average three or more hours daily communicating through social media their children acted aggressively. With regard to children's behavior outcome of seeking for attention, the table gives a value of 2 for not true and 4 for true, showing that parents who spend on average one hour daily communicating through social media their children did not seek for attention, while those parents who spend on average three or more hours daily communicating through social media their children seek for attention.

In regard to children's behavior outcome of acting emotionally, the table gives a value of 3 for not true and 4 for true, showing that parents who spend on average two hours

daily communicating through social media their children did not act emotionally, while those parents who spend on average three or more hours daily communicating through social media their children acted emotionally. Concerning children's behavior outcome of seeming to be anxious, the table gives a value of 4 for not true and 3 for true, showing that parents who spend on average three or more hours daily communicating through social media their children did not seem to be anxious, while those parents who spend on average two hours daily communicating through social media their children seemed to be anxious.

As pertains to children's behavior outcome of complaining to be sick, the table gives a value of 3 for not true and 4 for true, showing that parents who spend on average two hours daily communicating through social media their children did not complain to be sick, while those parents who spend on average three or more hours daily communicating through social media their children complained to be sick. Relating to children's behavior outcome of looking withdrawn, the table gives a value of 3 for not true and 4 for true, showing that parents who spend on average two hours daily communicating through social media their children did not look withdrawn, while those parents who spend on average three or more hours daily communicating through social media their children looked withdrawn.

In relation to children's behavior outcome of showing other behaviors, the table gives a value of 3 for not true and 4 for true, showing that parents who spend on average two hours daily communicating through social media their children did not show other behaviors, while those parents who spend on average three or more hours daily communicating through social media their children showed other behaviors. However,

in relation to children's behavior outcome of showing other behaviors, the table gives a value of 3 for not true and 3 for true, showing that parents who spend on average two hours daily communicating through social media their children showed change in behavior, while those parents who spend on average two hours daily communicating through social media their children showed no change in behavior.

The table indicates that children's behavior outcomes which were statistically significant at the one per cent level of significance included children acts aggressively, seeks for attention, acts emotionally, seems to be anxious, looks withdrawn, and shows other behaviors ($p<0.01$),while children complains to be sick ($p<0.05$) was statistically significant at the 5 per cent level of significance. Children's behavior outcomes of acting aggressively, seeking for attention, acting emotionally, seeming to be anxious, looking withdrawn, showing other behaviors, and children complaining to be sick were significantly related to the average time parents spend daily communicating through social media.

4.3.3.2 Times of the day parents are mostly involved Communicating through Social Media and the Children's Behavior Outcomes

Table 4.6: *Two Sample T-Test for Times of the day parents are mostly involved*

Variable name and T-statistics	Times of the day parents are mostly involved
Acts aggressively(T-statistics, p-value)	0.08 (0.695, 0.488)
Not True	4.00
True	3.92
Seeks for attention (T-statistics, p-value)	0.75* (6.276, 0.000)
Not True	3.40
True	4.15
Acts emotionally(T-statistics, p-value)	0.56* (5.214, 0.000)
Not True	3.63
True	4.19
Seems to be anxious (T-statistics, p-value)	0.11 (0.987, 0.324)
Not True	3.88
True	3.99
Complains to be sick (T-statistics, p-value)	0.08 (0.690, 0.491)
Not True	3.90
True	3.98
Looks withdrawn (T-statistics, p-value)	0.12 (1.136, 0.257)
Not True	3.88
True	4.00
Shows other behaviors (T-statistics, p-value)	0.48* (4.296, 0.000)
Not True	3.65
True	4.13
Shows no change in behavior (T-statistics, p-value)	0.62 (5.238, 0.169)
Not True	4.12
True	3.50

Note: *, ** and *** indicates 1, 5 and 10 percent level of significance respectively

Regarding the times of the day parents are mostly involved communicating through social media and the children's behavior outcomes, the researcher proceeded to conduct a two sample t-test for the two categories of the dependent variable namely children's behavior outcomes as shown in table 4.6. Pertaining children's behavior outcome of acting aggressively, the table gives a value of 4 for not true and 4 for true, showing that parents who are mostly involved in communicating through social media between 5pm-9pm, either their children did not act aggressively or their children acted aggressively. With regard to children's behavior outcome of seeking for attention, the table gives a value of 3 for not true and 4 for true, showing that parents who are mostly involved in communicating through social media between 12noon-5pm, their children did not seek for attention, while those parents who are mostly involved in communicating through social media between 5pm-9pm, their children seek for attention.

In regards to children's behavior outcome of acting emotionally, the table gives a value of 4 for not true and 4 for true, showing that parents who are mostly involved in communicating through social media between 5pm-9pm, their children either did not act emotionally or their children acted emotionally. Concerning children's behavior outcome of seeming to be anxious, the table gives a value of 4 for not true and 4 for true, showing that parents who are mostly involved in communicating through social media between 5pm-9pm, their children neither did not seem to be anxious, or their children seemed to be anxious.

As pertains to children's behavior outcome of complaining to be sick, the table gives a value of 4 for not true and 4 for true, showing that parents who are mostly involved in communicating through social media between 5pm-9pm, either their children did not

complain to be sick, or their children complained to be sick. Relating to children's behavior outcome of looking withdrawn, the table gives a value of 4 for not true and 4 for true, showing that parents who are mostly involved in communicating through social media between 5pm-9pm, either their children did not look withdrawn, or their children looked withdrawn.

In relation to children's behavior outcome of showing other behaviors, the table gives a value of 4 for not true and 4 for true, showing that parents who are mostly involved in communicating through social media between 5pm-9pm, either their children did not show other behaviors, or their children showed other behaviors. However, in relation to children's behavior outcome of showing other behaviors, the table gives a value of 4 for not true and 4 for true, showing that parents who are mostly involved in communicating through social media between 5pm-9pm, either their children showed change in behavior, or their children showed no change in behavior.

Table 4.6 shows that children's behavior outcomes which were statistically significant at the one per cent level of significance included children seeks for attention, acts emotionally, and shows other behaviors ($p<0.01$). Children's behavior outcomes of seeking for attention, acting emotionally, and showing other behaviors was significantly related to the times of the day parents are mostly involved communicating through social media.

4.3.3.3 Extent parents agree that communicating through social media in the presence of their child affects his or her behavior

Table 4.7: *Two Sample T-Test for extent parents agree it affects child's behavior*

Extent parents agree communicating through social media in the presence of their child affects his or her behavior	Freq	Percent
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00
Disagree	15	4.18
Agree	144	40.11
Strongly Agree	200	55.71
Total	359	100

Table 4.7 presents the two sample t-test on the extent parents agree that communicating through social media in the presence of their child affects his or her behavior. The figure shows that only 4.18 per cent disagreed; 40.11 per cent agreed; and 55.71 per cent strongly agreed that parents' communicating through social media in the presence of their child affects his or her behavior. Thus based on majority (95.82 per cent) of the parents, parental communicating through social media in the presence of their child affects his or her behavior.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses, summarizes, and makes conclusions on the findings of this study in relation to the study objectives. It also discusses the recommendations for further research as well as recommendations for policy and practice.

5.2 Discussions

5.2.1Prevalence of Parents, with 2-6 Years Old Children, that Communicate through Social Media in the Presence of their Children

The first objective sought to find out the prevalence of parents, with 2-6 years old children, which communicate through social media in the presence of their children in Tala town, Matungulu sub county, Machakos County. The prevalence of parents, with 2-6 years old children, who communicate through social media in a typical day while caring for their children in Tala town, Matungulu Sub County, Machakos County was 87.47 per cent. Most (100 per cent) of the parents have subscribed to WhatsApp; 89.69 per cent have subscribed to Facebook; 42.06 per cent to twitter and 42.06 per cent to Instagram. The same findings were deduced among parents who only had 5 year olds or under, 35% used Instagram (Pew Research Center, 2015).Most (89.69 per cent) of the parents have subscribed to WhatsApp and Facebook, which is related to similar findings by Perrin, (2015), with three- quarters of internet users were using one or more social networking sites.

Hence most (84.12 per cent) of the parents frequently use WhatsApp, similar to findings by Wamuyu P.K (2020), who established that the top most used social media in Kenya in 2020 were WhatsApp (89%), and Facebook (81.7%). Most (100.00 per cent) of the

parents used cellphone on a daily basis to visit social media sites. The findings are in line with those by Wamuyu (2020), who reported that 80% of respondents in a research in Kenya accessed social media using mobile phones.

Most (57.66 percent) of the parents spend on average three hours or more hours daily communicating through social media. The study is similar to the deductions in Global Webindex, (2021) which revealed that nearly fifty-eight per cent of the world's population uses social media, with an average daily use of 2 hours and 27 minutes. Likewise, on time spent on social media, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) people spent 2-8 hours average number of hours daily (Kemp, 2014). In addition, 78.83 per cent of the parents spend on average more than one hour daily communicating through social media, which is similar to findings by Wamuyu (2020) that, on average, a vast majority of Kenyans spend more than one hour daily on social media.

About one-third (37.05 percent) of the parents opined they mostly communicate through social media between 5pm-9pm; while 36.77 percent of the parents noted that they mostly communicate through social media between 9pm-midnight. Hence, according to the research findings, about three-quarters (73.82 per cent) of the parents mostly communicate through social media between 5pm-midnight. Similar to deductions by Wamuyu (2020), were a majority (52.2%) of Kenyans spend more time on social media at night and in the evening hours.

5.2.2 Motivations for Parental Communication through Social Media

Objective two sought to establish the motivations for parental communication through social media. About two-thirds (64.63 per cent) of the parents, communicate through

social media for entertainment. The findings are in line with those by Jaison (2008), who found that entertainment- related content motivated younger users to spend more time on Facebook; similarly Wamuyu, (2020) noted that most Kenyans are on social media for entertainment among others. In addition, about two-thirds (65.18 per cent) of the parents, communicate through social media to maintain relationships. Similar findings were established by Seidman (2013) that people use social media to obtain information about others, which helps them maintain relationships, thus helping them fulfill their need to belong. In addition, this is in line with deductions by Bartholomes, Schoppe- Sullivan, Glassman, Kamp and Sullivan, (2012) that mothers of young children especially first time mothers of infants have been shown to turn to social media and blogging in an attempt to connect with family, friends and others.

5.2.3 Parental Communication through Social Media and the Children's Behavior Outcomes

The third objective assessed the relationship between parental communication through social media and the children's behavior outcomes in Tala town, Matungulu sub-county, Machakos County. Children's behavior outcomes which were statistically significant at the one per cent level of significance included children acts aggressively, seeks for attention, acts emotionally, seems to be anxious, looks withdrawn, and shows other behaviors ($p < 0.01$),while children complains to be sick ($p < 0.05$) was statistically significant at the 5 per cent level of significance. The study findings are in line with those by Marcone, Affuso& Borrone, (2017), which revealed that behavior problems during early childhood makes parents to respond with intimidation, aggression or avoidance towards the child's emotional expression leave the child to try to understand emotional rules on their own, and that may, in turn, lead to problematic child behaviors.

In the same vein, McDaniel, et al, (2018), observed that the central issue with parents of younger children is the time social media steals away from their children; and that a lack of response for the child's needs and contact seeking behavior is associated with a higher risk of developing problematic behavior in children.

Children's behavior outcomes which were statistically significant at the one per cent level of significance included children seeks for attention, acts emotionally, and shows other behaviors (p<0.01).A two sample t-test on the extent parents agree that communicating through social media in the presence of their child affects his or her behavior, shows that, based on majority (95.82 per cent) of the parents, parental communication through social media in the presence of their child affects his or her behavior. Similar study findings were established by McDaniel, et al, (2018) that a lack of response for the child's needs and contact seeking behavior is associated with a higher risk of developing problematic behavior in children. In addition, Radeskey, Kistin, Zuckerman, et al, (2014) observed that overuse of social media devices such as cellphones in the home, interferes with crucial early learning of children.

5.3 Summary of Findings

The current study was guided by three objectives namely to find out the prevalence of parents, with 2-6 years old children, that communicate through social media in the presence of their children; establish the motivations for parental communication through social media by the parents; and find out the relationship between parental communication through social media and the children's behavior outcomes in Tala town, Matungulu sub-county, Machakos County.

The prevalence of parents, with 2-6 years old children, who communicate through social media in a typical day while caring for their children in Tala town, Matungulu Sub County, Machakos County was 87.47 per cent. Most (89.69 per cent) of the parents have subscribed to WhatsApp and Facebook. Most (84.12 per cent) of the parents frequently use WhatsApp, and all (100.00 per cent) of the parents used cellphone on a daily basis to visit social media sites.

Most (57.66 percent) of the parents spend on average three or more hours daily communicating through social media. In addition, 78.83 per cent of the parents spend on average more than one hour daily communicating through social media.

About three-quarters (73.82 per cent) of the parents mostly communicate through social media between 5pm-midnight.

About two-thirds (64.63 per cent) of the parents, communicate through social media for entertainment, while about two-thirds (65.18 per cent) of the parents, communicate through social media to maintain relationships.

The average time parents spend daily communicating through social media which were statistically significant at the one per cent level of significance in relation to children's behavior outcomes included children acts aggressively; seeks for attention; acts emotionally, seems to be anxious; looks withdrawn; and shows other behaviors ($p<0.01$), while children complains to be sick ($p<0.05$) was statistically significant at the 5 per cent level of significance.

The times of the day parents are mostly involved communicating through social media which were statistically significant at the one per cent level of significance in relation

to children's behavior outcomes included children seeks for attention, acts emotionally, and shows other behaviors (p<0.01).A two sample t-test on the extent parents agree that communicating through social media in the presence of their child affects his or her behavior, shows that based on majority (95.82 per cent) of the parents, parental communicating through social media in the presence of their child affects his or her behavior.

5.4 Conclusions

From the study findings the following conclusion can be drawn:

The prevalence of parents, with 2-6 years old children, who communicate through social media in a typical day while caring for their children was more than four-fifths in Tala town, Matungulu Sub County, Machakos County.

Most of the parents have subscribed to WhatsApp and Facebook; the parents frequently use WhatsApp; and most of the parents used cellphone on a daily basis to visit social media sites.

Most of the parents spend on average three hours or more hours daily communicating through social media; and about three-quarters of the parents spend on average more than one hour daily communicating through social media. About three-quarters (73.82 per cent) of the parents mostly communicate through social media between 5pm-midnight.

Most of the parents, communicate through social media for entertainment; and to maintain relationships.

Children's behavior outcomes of acting aggressively, seeking for attention, acting emotionally, seeming to be anxious, looking withdrawn, showing other behaviors, and

children complaining to be sick, was significantly related to the average time parents spend daily communicating through social media.

Children's behavior outcomes of seeking for attention, acting emotionally, and showing other behaviors was significantly related to the times of the day parents are mostly involved communicating through social media.

5.5 Recommendations

Emanating from the study findings and the conclusions thereof, this study recommends that:

i). Parents ought to spend on average less than one hour daily communicating through social media, in order to reduce children behavior outcomes especially with regards of acting aggressively, seeking for attention, acting emotionally, seeming to be anxious, looking withdrawn, showing other behaviors, and children complaining to be sick.

ii). Parents ought to stop communicating through social media between 5pm-midnight, to reduce children's behavior outcomes of seeking for attention, acting emotionally, and showing other behaviors.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

i. There is need for a study to be conducted to ascertain the robustness of the study by replicating the study in the entire country.

ii. Future studies may be conducted to establish the policy options for reducing children's negative behavior outcomes

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1- Questionnaire

Dear respondent,

I am a student of the Africa Nazarene University conducting research on "The Influence of Communicating through Social Media by parents on the Behavior of their Children" in partial fulfillment for a Master of Art Degree in Counseling Psychology.

I will be grateful if you will answer the questions to the best of your ability. Your responses will be treated confidentially and used only for academic purposes.

Your participation is greatly appreciated.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Please fill the spaces provided. Mark (√) where applicable and specify where necessary.

Section A: Demographic Information

(a) Parent's Information:

1. What is your gender?   ∗Male [ ]   ∗ Female [ ]

2. How old are you? Age (in years):

  ∗18-30 [ ]   ∗ 31-40 [ ]

  ∗41-50 [ ]   ∗ 51-or older [ ]

3. What is your level of Education?

  ∗ Primary [ ]   ∗Secondary [ ]   ∗College [ ]

  ∗University [ ]   ∗Other [ ], specify-----------

4. What is your Occupation…………………

(b) Child's information:

5. What is the child's gender: ∗Boy [ ]   ∗ Girl [ ]

6. How old is your child's (Age in years): ⁕ 2 [ ]   ⁕ 2-3 [ ]   ⁕ 3-4 [ ]

⁕ 4-5 [ ]   ⁕ 5-6 [ ]

7. Does your child have any developmental, medical needs, or, disabilities?

⁕Yes [ ]   ⁕No [ ],   if yes specify………

Section B

Communicating Through Social Media and Child Behavior:

(a) Prevalence of parental communication through social media

1. While caring for your child in a typical day, how often do you communicate through social media?

⁕1 to 2 times a day [ ]   ⁕3 or more times a day [ ]

⁕Constantly [ ]   ⁕ Never [ ]

2. Which of the following social sites have you subscribed to? Tick (√) as many as you are subscribed to.

⁕WhatsApp [ ]   ⁕Facebook [ ]   ⁕Twitter [ ]   ⁕Instagram [ ] ⁕Telegram [ ] ⁕Snapchat [ ]

⁕Myspace [ ] ⁕Pinterest [ ] ⁕other [ ], specify..----------------

2b. which of these do you use on a regular basis--

3.What type of devices do you use on a daily basis to visit social media sites?

 ⁕Cell phone [ ]   ⁕Laptop [ ] ⁕ Tablet [ ] ⁕Desktop Computer [ ] ⁕Other [ ], specify….

 4. On average, how much time do you spend communicating through social   media daily?

⁕Less than one hour [ ]   ⁕ One hour [ ]   ⁕Two hours [ ]

⁕Three hours or more hours [ ]

5. Between which times of the day are you mostly involved in communicating through social media?

∗midnight-6am []∗6am-12noon [ ]   ∗12noon-5pm [ ]   ∗ 5pm-9pm [ ]

 ∗9pm-midnight [ ]

(b) Motivations for parental communication through social media

6. How often do you communicate through the social media for the following reasons? Tick (√)

	Not Applicable	Rarely Applicable	Occasionally	Frequently	Always
Entertainment					
Meeting new people					
Social events					
Maintain relationships					
Create media content and share opinion					

(c) Relationship between parental communication through social media and the child's behavior

7. While still caring for your child and you are in social media, in a typical day, now or within the last two months, how True would you say of the child's behavior *(please answer (√) all items as well as you can.*

That *the child:*

BEHAVIOR DEMONSTRATED BY CHILD	NOT TRUE(0)	SOME TIMES TRUE(1)	VERY TRUE(2)
Acts aggressively (e.g. screams a lot, throws temper tantrums, shows angry moods, hits others, stubborn, defiant, demanding)			
Seeks for attention (e.g. Can't sit still, restless, wanders, clumsy, shifts quickly)			
Acts emotionally(e.g. shows panic for no good reason, worries, sulks, looks upset, moody, whining)			
Seems to be anxious (e.g. nervous, fearful, sad, feeling hurt, look unhappy, conscious of self)			
Complains to be sick (e.g. headache, vomiting, stomachache, constipation, body aches, pain)			
Looks withdrawn (e.g. withdrawn, acts young for his age, avoids eye contact, doesn't answer when talked to, shows little interest, inactive)			
Shows other behaviors (e.g. chews non -food, picks skin, unusually loud, cries a lot, refuses to eat, shy, overacting, resists toilet, cruelty, help seeking, no fun, looks afraid ,hits others)			

Shows no change in behavior			

Please write in any problem the child demonstrates that were not listed above………………

8. To what extent do you agree that your communication through social media, as a parent, in the presence of your child affects his or her behavior. Kindly tick (√)

✳ Strongly Agree [ ]   ✳ Agree [ ]   ✳ Disagree [ ]   ✳ Strongly Disagree
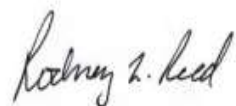
Thank you.

Appendix 2- Research Approvals and Letters

31st May, 2022

RE: TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Simon Mutune Mwanzia (**18M03DMCP022**) is a bonafide student at Africa Nazarene University, in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Counseling Psychology department. He has finished his course work and has defended his thesis proposal entitled: - *"The influence of Communicating Through Social Media by Parents on the Behavior of their Children: A Case Study of Tala Town, Matungulu Sub-County, Machakos County".*

Any assistance accorded to him to facilitate data collection and finish his thesis is highly welcomed.

Prof. Rodney Reed.
DVC, Academic & Student Affairs

Appendix 3- Research Permit NACOSTI

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: 165524

Date of Issue: **01/July/2022**

RESEARCH LICENSE

This is to Certify that Mr.. Simon mutune Mwanzia of Africa Nazarene University, has been licensed to conduct research in Machakos on the topic: THE INFLUENCE OF COMMUNICATING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA BY PARENTS: A CASE STUDY OF TALA TOWN , MATUNGULU SUBCOUNTY, MACHAKOS COUNTY for the period ending : 01/July/2023.

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Appendix 4- Map of Tala Area