

Communal adolescent parenting roles in Ife Area, Osun State, Nigeria: A gender perspective

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ABSTRACT: The growing concern over adolescent parenting, characterised by absentee parenting, quest for career development, economic pressure and children's exposure to societal vices, necessitates a deeper understanding of a community-based parenting approach. This paper assesses the expected and performed roles in communal parenting of adolescents in Ife South Local Government Area (LGA), Osun State, Nigeria. A multi-stage sampling technique was employed to select 160 and 12 respondents, subjected to a structured interview schedule and key informant interviews, respectively. Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The results show that most (79.51% and 81.81%) males and females were aged 46 years and above and literate. Several expected communal parenting roles and attributes were identified, but their preferred strategies and performed roles varied by gender. Also, a significant difference ($p \leq 0.05$) existed between expected and performed roles. It was concluded that leveraging the numerous communal parenting attributes and preferred strategies is imperative in any planned initiative to mitigate the challenges of adolescent parenting in rural communities.

Keywords: Adolescent parenting, communal parenting, expected roles, gender, performed roles.

INTRODUCTION

Globally, parenting is observed as a vital aspect of human life, representing one of the greatest responsibilities of mankind, particularly in the field of human development. It entails the methods, strategies, approaches and efforts of raising the next generation. Parenting is described as purposeful activities aimed at nurturing and ensuring the survival and development of children (Santrock, 2013; Clarke-Stewart, 2006). Virasiri *et al.* (2011) and Tunde-Ayomide (2016) described parenting as a deliberate activity involving parent-child relationships and interactions aimed at fostering the education of the child and ultimately promoting the child's growth, development, and overall well-being. Keller (2015) and Kilonzo (2017) described parenting as the transmission of cultural norms, values and ideas that are adaptable to particular environmental conditions to the younger generation. Thus, parenting involves any activities of building and raising the

younger ones. Therefore, the ability to help a child realise and maximise their full potential has its foundation in quality parenting. The quality of parenting largely shapes and builds the future and character of a society. The impacts of positive parenting in building a stable and cohesive society are always noticeable (Kariuki *et al.*, 2019). Parenting is perceived as a tough job because of its lifelong process, which commences from conception, continues throughout the entire life of both children and parents, and is time- and resource-demanding (Chigbu *et al.*, 2021; Kariuki *et al.*, 2019). As nurturing and training continues, the child gradually matures into another landmark phase known as adolescence. Adolescence is a critical period of transition between childhood and adulthood that is characterised by transformations in children's physical, emotional and cognitive development (UNICEF, 2018). The period of adolescence is mostly

characterised by self-will, risk-taking, autonomy, privacy, generally decision-making tendencies and represents a crucial moment in the life of the child (UNICEF, 2018; Van Duijvenvoorde *et al.*, 2022). At this stage, a child begins to demand independence, make decisions, and establish self-identities and relationships outside their families, which makes adolescent parenting more challenging. Thus, the traditional parenting system through joint community efforts known as communal parenting provided the needed support. The environment has a critical role to play in the development of adolescents. Adolescents tend to integrate and interact more with their environment (secondary form of socialisation) than with their first or primary form of socialisation (a form of socialisation occurring at the early stage of childhood) as they grow older (Sihvonen, 2023). Thus, the environment, mostly the immediate community of the child, plays a role in shaping the perspectives of the child. Therefore, community parenting is highly crucial. Community parenting refers to situations in which a child is nurtured and trained by both biological or adoptive parents and other members of the society, whether related or unrelated (Acker, 2024). Communal or community parenting, therefore, is defined as the form of parenting whereby the community is involved, and parenting is carried out collectively or by all families within a community (Kariuki *et al.*, 2019). Adolescent communal or community parenting, therefore, is an approach of bringing up adolescents by involving parents, other family and community members. Children's upbringing in traditional African societies was seen as a communal affair, and all community members participated actively (Kariuki *et al.*, 2019). In the traditional society, children and most importantly adolescents take the adults as role models and try to emulate them, even parents citing those role models as examples for their children to emulate (Centre for Parenting Education, 2019), particularly through visual arts and oral literature. The depth of collaboration among community members in child parenting is clearly exemplified in a popular African adage that "the biological parents are mere passages for children to the world; they belong to the community". Thus, crucial decisions such as marriage, career and friendship choices were undertaken for the children by their parents in consultation with the family elders whose decisions were final. Gender roles were well defined and prescribed by the traditional norms and cultural practices. Every elderly male was a father while the females were mothers to be listened to, respected and obeyed.

However, adolescent parenting has undergone significant changes in recent time. The nuclear family, totally different from the ancient landmark (Kariuki *et al.*, 2019; Bitrus, 2017) emerged to shoulder the responsibilities of child parenting with obvious parental gaps, particularly, in response to broader political, economic and social transformations (UNICEF, 2018; Harsha *et al.*, 2020). Due to parents' numerous demands

to overcome economic challenges and meet household needs, their primary roles of parenting are more in the hands of others such as schools, peer groups and more worrisome, the social media space. This further separates them from their families leading to arrays of unacceptable behaviours and character defects, further leading to several social vices including drug and substance abuse, increased crime rates, cultism and terrorism (Cluver *et al.*, 2017; Kariuki *et al.*, 2019; Kuppens and Ceulemans, 2019). Hence, the urgent need to reconsider the community-based parenting model known as communal parenting to mitigate parenting challenges. Several literatures have highlighted and advocated communal parenting in children upbringing and others focusing on the benefits of communal parenting. Despite all these, there is dearth of empirical evidence on the involvement of community members in communal adolescent parenting; most importantly from a gender perspective. Therefore, this paper aims to bridge the knowledge gap through gender assessment of communal adolescent parenting roles in Ife South Local Government Area of Osun State.

METHODOLOGY

Study area and sampling techniques

The study was conducted in Ife South Local Government Area of Osun State, with a total land area of 730 km², population of about 135,338 and located within 7°11'00"N 4°42'00"E coordinates (NPC, 2006). It is predominantly a rural area with a strong sense of community and kinship ties, making it an appropriate setting for the study on communal parenting. The LGA is inhabited by the Yoruba people and highly agrarian. Adult community members including traditional rulers, age grades, social clubs, healthcare service providers, peer groups, women organizations, law enforcement bodies, and youth leaders were the sampled population for this study. A multistage sampling procedure was used to select the respondents. At the first stage, Ife South Local Government Area was purposively selected based on its degree of rurality. At the second stage, four communities (Olode, Oke-Owena, Ifetedo and Ayeoba) were purposively selected based on their rurality, shared community ties and involvement in agriculture. At the third stage, males and females were selected using snowball techniques to locate a total of 160 respondents from the 4 communities. Interview schedule was then used to collect quantitative data from the respondents while Key Informant Interview (KII) was used to collect qualitative data from 12 community dwellers across the study area.

Measurement of the dependent variable

The dependent variable was conceptualised as the extent

to which male and female effectively performed the six categories of expected communal parenting roles (shaping personal and cultural identity, promoting family social identity, transition of children to adulthood, influencing children's health status, promoting skill acquisition and promoting children's engagement in agriculture). It was measured on a 5-point scale of 0-4 to rate performance in 34 parenting responsibilities (Never Performed (NP) = 0; Rarely Performed (RP) = 1; Occasionally Performed (OP) = 2; Performed (P) = 3; and Performed Regularly (PR) = 4). The grand mean score for each of the six roles was calculated, and this formed the role performance score for the male and female respondents. The expected individual obtainable maximum and minimum scores were 4 and 0, respectively. An equal interval approach was used to determine the extent of community members' role performance as outlined by Deji *et al.* (2023) and Famakinwa *et al.* (2023). The equal interval approach allows for dividing the range of values into two equal parts. In this case, the range of performance grand mean scores were maximum score (4.0) and minimum score (0). This was divided into two to obtain 2.0 (the mid-point). Scores above and below the mid-point were categorised as high and low extent of male and female communal adolescent parenting roles performed, respectively.

Data analysis

Quantitative data were collected and analysed using IBM SPSS version 23 to obtain the frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation and ANOVA analyses were used to draw inferences, while excerpts from the KII were used to support the results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Personal and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents

The results in Table 1 show that 51.9 per cent of the respondents were male and 48.10 per cent female. This provides equal opportunities for both males and females to be interviewed, bearing in mind that the role of gender is critical to understanding communal adolescent parenting. The rural communities are generally acclaimed for preserving the traditional and cultural norms and values (Rodionova *et al.*, 2020), particularly the patriarchal system, which clearly differentiates gender roles in rural households and communities in general. The results further revealed the mean age (46.69 ± 9.50 and 55.88 ± 11.89) for the male and female respondents, respectively. Thus, most of the respondents in the study area were in the middle age category known to be active, agile, highly productive (Kayode, 2022), mostly well

respected and often seen as elders by the younger ones. Also, the majority of male and female gender belong to different religious organisations, with 42.17 and 54.55 per cent of male and female practicing Christianity, respectively; 39.76 and 41.56 percent practicing Islam and 16.87 and 3.90 male and female respondents practising Traditional religion, respectively. The role of religion in community development is crucial; it is believed to be a source of spiritual guidance and moral compass (Abumoghli, 2023) for rural dwellers. Religious leaders teach values, provide support for families and also educate their followers, most importantly the younger ones (including the adolescents), on the need to be morally upright, patriotic and responsible community members. The result further shows that nearly all (96.40%) male and all (100.00%) female respondents belong to the Yoruba ethnic group, the dominant ethnic group in South-western Nigeria and complemented by migrants from other ethnic groups in the country. While the male highest educational attainment was secondary education (42.17%), the female attainment was at the primary level (49.35%). This implies disparity in access to educational opportunities in favour of males, a trend that had been reported by Charles *et al.* (2025). Further analysis of the results revealed that farming activities were the main source of earning for more males than females (73.70% and 55.84 %). This characteristic is typical of rural communities where Agriculture provides a means of livelihood for 70% of the rural population (FAO, 2020). Also, the majority (97.59% and 79.22%) of male and female respondents were married. Marriage is a very important institution in Africa, Nigeria inclusive. Married people are believed to be responsible and are highly respected in their communities as important voices in community activities (Syarifah and Karim, 2024), including parenting. In addition, the average years of residency by the male and female respondents were 44.83 ± 11.30 and 45.59 ± 9.70 , respectively. This implies that they have grown up in these communities to uphold the core value system, norms and traditions and were likely to have benefitted from communal parenting.

Family-related variables

The result in Table 2 shows the average household size for both male and female respondents was 10 ± 4 , which is a very large household size. The average number of children for both respondents was 7 ± 4 , with the average number for the adolescent children being 2 ± 1 . This result implies that the majority of the respondents have very large household sizes; having many children was an age-long tradition where such children were used as a labour force for agricultural purposes; a pattern that has existed for a long time (Shi *et al.*, 2026; Kim and Zepeda, 2004). However, things have changed; most children now attend schools while their parents engage in farming and other

Table 1. Gender disaggregated data on personal and socio-economic characteristics.

Variable	Male (83)		Female (77)		Mean±SD
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	
Age (in Years)					
≤ 40	12	14.46	5	6.49	Male 46.69±9.50
41 – 45	5	6.02	9	11.68	
46 – 50	19	22.89	12	15.58	
51 – 55	28	33.73	14	18.18	Female 55.88±11.89
56 – 60	12	14.46	36	46.75	
>60	7	8.43	1	1.30	
Religion					
Islam	33	39.76	32	41.56	
Christian	35	42.17	42	54.55	
Traditional	14	16.87	3	3.90	
Ethnicity					
Yoruba	80	96.40	77	100.00	
Igbo	3	3.61	0	0.00	
Educational status					
Not literate	20	24.10	8	10.40	
Primary education	25	30.12	38	49.35	
Secondary education	35	42.17	28	36.36	
Tertiary education	3	3.61	3	3.90	
Source of income					
Farming	59	71.08	39	50.65	
Trading	6	7.23	35	45.45	
Artisan	15	18.07	2	2.60	
Public servant	3	3.61	1	1.30	
Marital status					
Married	81	97.59	61	79.22	
Widow	2	2.41	16	20.78	
Years of residency					
≤ 30	8	9.64	12	15.58	Male 44.83±11.3
31-40	10	12.05	13	16.88	
41-50	24	28.92	29	37.66	Female 45.59±9.70
51-60	7	8.43	8	10.40	
61-70	7	8.43	1	1.30	

Source: Field survey, 2023.

money-generating activities to meet the family needs. Therefore, caring for many children could become an unbearable burden without communal parenting support, especially in the absence of biological parents. Also, many (79.52% and 93.51%) male and female respondents had about two extended family members living with them permanently. This implies that communal parenting was practised in the study area. Furthermore, some male and female (54.21% and 66.23%) respondents were visited by

their extended family members occasionally, 39.80 and 28.57 percent regularly, while the majority (86.75% and 79.22%) respectively actively involved extended family members in child parenting. This implies that communal parenting existed in the study area, and the involvement of extended family members in parenting provided support to bridge the gap in adolescent parenting, particularly in the absence of the biological parents, to mitigate adolescents from societal vices (including drug addiction and truancy).

Table 2. Gender disaggregated data of respondent's family-related variables.

Variable	Male (n=83)		Female (n=77)		Mean±SD
	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent	
Household size					
≤5	9	10.84	5	6.49	10±5
6-10	43	51.81	44	57.14	
11-15	9	10.84	23	29.87	
≥16	22	26.51	5	6.49	
Number of children					
≤ 5	41	43.37	45	58.44	7±4
6 – 10	30	36.14	32	41.56	
11 – 15	10	12.05	0	0.00	
≥20	2	2.41	0	0.00	
Number of adolescents					
≤ 2	24	28.92	21	27.27	2±1
3 – 5	15	18.07	8	11.70	
Number of Extended family in residence					
≤ 2	66	79.52	72	93.51	2±1
3 – 5	16	19.28	4	5.19	
Extent of family members visit					
Regularly	33	39.80	22	28.57	
Rarely visit	5	6.02	3	3.90	
Occasionally	45	54.21	51	66.23	
Don't visit at all	0	0.00	1	1.30	
Extent of extended family involvement in parenting					
Actively	72	86.75	61	79.22	
Passively	11	13.25	12	20.78	
Not at all	0	0.00	0	0.00	

Source: Field survey, 2023.

This result is in line with the findings by Nwanmuoh *et al.* (2024), who posited that extended family members play critical roles in providing support and assistance to the youth, offering guidance and mentorship to young people as well as contributing to the overall cultural preservation and identity. The following excerpt from KII sessions further affirms the finding:

"I don't know how the couples of nowadays who must work to make ends meet could have coped without the help of family members like parents-in-law and others, especially in the monitoring and caring for their adolescent children when they are not with them" (A leader in Olode Community, Ife-South LGA).

Characteristics of communal adolescent parenting

The results in Table 3 show the identified characteristics of communal parenting by the respondents. Most male and female respondents identified 12 and 13 attributes, respectively, while all the female respondents identified all the 18 attributes of communal parenting. Importantly, the wide recognition of the characteristics of communal parenting implies they were the common attributes they might have heard about, seen, experienced or practised. These characteristics were identified as communal parenting attributes needed for the holistic parenting of all children and adolescents in particular. It takes place everywhere by everyone, promotes constant supervision,

Table 3, Gender disaggregated data on characteristics of communal adolescent parenting.

Characteristics of communal parenting	Male [F (%)]	Female [F (%)]
Communal parenting is an integrated parenting style	83(100.00)	77(100.00)
It takes place anywhere in the community	83(100.00)	77(100.00)
It focuses on commitment to the betterment of other people's life	80(96.38)	70(90.90)
It is done by everyone in the community	82(98.79)	77(100.00)
It is indigenous	83(100.00)	77(100.00)
It prevents social vices since children are constantly observed by adults	83(100.00)	72(93.50)
It emphasizes moral behaviour	83(100.00)	77(100.00)
It promotes the culture of working hard by every member of the community	83(100.00)	77(100.00)
It promotes harmonious living	81(97.59)	77(100.00)
It focuses on all round training of adolescents	83(100.00)	77(100.00)
Provides succour for children in distress (loss of parents, special needs)	83(100.00)	77(100.00)
It is a strict parenting style	82(98.79)	70(90.90)
Some decisions infringe on individual human right	81(97.59)	72(93.50)
It socializes adolescent into culturally prescribed roles	83(100.00)	77(100.00)
It socializes adolescent into family trades	83(100.00)	75(97.40)
It socializes adolescents into farming	82(98.79)	77(100.00)
It provides check and balance on parents' performance of parenting roles	83(100.00)	77(100.00)
It prevents placement of children in foster homes or homelessness	83(100.00)	77(100.00)

Source: Field survey, 2023.

monitoring, moral behaviour, hard work, harmony, as well as socialisation into culturally prescribed roles, family trades and farming. It also focuses on parents' performance of their parental roles but is widely acknowledged as a strict type of parenting which sometimes infringes on the individual fundamental human rights. These characteristics of communal parenting revealed its many benefits and very few disadvantages (Sihvonen, 2023). Therefore, the widely acknowledged attributes of communal parenting imply the readiness of community members to benefit from many of these to mitigate the challenges of adolescent parenting if moderated to exclude the few negative aspects. The following excerpt from the KII sessions conducted corroborates the findings:

"Without doubt, the positive aspects of communal parenting are more than the negative. Therefore, throwing away this indigenous practice is like throwing away the dirty water with the child after bathing, is it right?" (KII excerpt from a retired principal in Olode Community).

Male and female preferred communal adolescent parenting strategies

The result in Table 4 shows that several (42) communal adolescent parenting strategies were available for use in the study area, but the respondents' preferred choices varied significantly by gender. Females had a preference

mean score of 4.0 out of the expected individual maximum obtainable score of 4.0 in seven of the nine strategies (use of body language to pass information, ensuring adequate health care for the adolescents, engaging children in community activities, ensuring respect for elders, taking custody for non-biological children, use of common family names and sending siblings to monitor each other). They also scored between 3.35 and 3.96 in 26 other strategies. The male respondents similarly scored the maximum obtainable score (4.0) in five of the strategies listed above and also scored between 3.50 and 3.99 in 24 others. These results showed that though both male and female genders scored above the mid-point (2.0) of the expected individual obtainable maximum score in most of the strategies, the female scores outnumbered their male counterparts. Evidently, they differed in number and preferred strategies. In addition, the females scored below the mid-point in 9 strategies while the male scores were in 13 strategies. This implies that these strategies were least preferred and less used in the study area. Thus, the respondents' preferred choices followed a gender pattern. Despite the observed differences, both males and females had a preference for most of the strategies, while only a few were either used sparingly or might have been discontinued. The various preferred strategies could provide opportunities to both males and females in the communities to complement the efforts of the nuclear family to achieve a more robust approach to adolescent parenting.

Table 4. Gender disaggregated data on preferred strategies of communal adolescent.

S/N	Strategies used	Mean (83)	Rank	Mean (77)	Rank
Positive strategies					
1	Using body language for communication	4.00	1 st	4.00	1 st
2	Ensuring adequate health care	4.00	1 st	4.00	1 st
3	Engaging children in community activities	4.00	1 st	4.00	1 st
4	Ensuring respect for elders	4.00	1 st	4.00	1 st
5	Taking custody of non-biological children	4.00	1 st	4.00	1 st
6	Use of common family names	3.99	6 th	4.00	1 st
7	Sending sibling to monitor each other	3.99	6 th	4.00	1 st
8	Joint responsibility to meet child's needs	3.98	8 th	3.96	8 th
9	Involving adolescents in community meeting	3.93	10 th	3.95	10 th
10	Instilling fear on consequences of wrong behavior	3.89	11 th	3.75	18 th
11	Use of music to teach good behaviours	3.84	13 th	3.71	20 th
12	Socializing the adolescents into religious belief	3.84	13 th	3.84	16 th
13	Monitoring peer group of adolescents	3.82	15 th	3.87	15 th
14	Handling over a child to law enforcement agents for wrong behaviour	3.60	17 th	3.66	21 st
15	Funding of formal schooling	3.54	18 th	3.49	28 th
16	Promoting community heritage	3.45	21 st	3.51	26 th
17	Use of music to discourage unacceptable behaviour	3.43	22 nd	3.53	23 rd
18	Engaging the use of taboo as social control measures	3.35	24 th	3.51	26 th
19	Counselling children to prevent unacceptable behaviour	2.94	25 th	3.53	23 rd
20	Use of folklores/story telling	2.63	27 th	3.21	31 st
21	Use of kinship networking	2.61	28 th	3.94	11 th
22	Allowing others to discipline and send children on errand	1.33	29 th	2.77	34 th
23	Enrolment as apprentice to acquire skills	1.19	30 th	1.09	35 th
24	Socializing into family skills	0.83	34 th	1.08	36 th
25	Organizing competitive games at the community level	0.73	35 th	1.00	37 th
26	Close monitoring of male and female interaction	0.57	37 th	3.75	18 th
27	Promoting leadership by example	0.43	38 th	3.96	8 th
28	Making enquiry on children based on religious beliefs	0.43	38 th	0.23	40 th
29	Involvement of children in community festivals	0.43	38 th	0.19	41 st
30	Promoting the concept of hard work	0.22	42 nd	0.10	42 nd
Negative strategies					
31	Starving the child of food to correct wrong behaviour	3.96	9 th	3.94	11 th
32	Role differentiation between male and female	3.86	12 th	3.90	14 th
33	Invocation of curse on a child	3.78	16 th	3.30	30 th
34	Banishment of offenders from community	3.49	19 th	3.53	23 rd
35	Engaging in female circumcision	3.48	20 th	3.04	32 nd
36	Influencing choice of career	3.39	23 rd	3.04	32 nd
37	Use of tribal marks	2.64	26 th	3.84	16 th
38	Publicly disgracing children with bad behaviour to discourage others	1.17	31 st	3.42	29 th
39	Disowning a child to serve as deterrent for bad behaviour	0.99	32 th	3.60	22 nd
40	Inflicting injury to serve as deterrent	0.98	33 rd	0.92	38 th
41	Withdrawal/suspension of support for a child	0.73	36 th	3.94	11 th
42	Corporal punishment	0.35	41 st	0.39	39 th

Source: Field survey, 2023.

Table 5. Gender disaggregated data on expected and performed roles of communal parenting.

Parenting roles	Male		Female	
	Expected F (%)	Performed F (%)	Expected F (%)	Performed F (%)
Shaping personal and cultural identity				
Addressing children wrong behaviour	50(60.24)	33(39.76)	52(67.53)	25(32.47)
Providing information to children on life challenges	50(60.24)	33(39.76)	52(67.53)	25(32.47)
Instilling moral values and conduct	50(60.24)	33(39.76)	52(67.53)	25(32.47)
Socialization into religious and belief system	50(60.24)	33(39.76)	52(67.53)	25(32.47)
Regulating boy/girl interaction	50(60.24)	33(39.76)	52(67.53)	25(32.47)
Engaging in religion teachings	49(59.04)	34(40.96)	51(66.24)	26(33.77)
Percentage mean	60.04%	39.96%	67.32%	32.69%
Promoting family social identity and security				
Foster non-biological children	50(60.24)	33(39.76)	52(67.53)	25(32.47)
Stemming family crises such as sexual abuse, child neglect, divorce and death of parent	49(59.04)	34(40.96)	52(67.53)	25(32.47)
Serving as role models and mentors	47(56.63)	36(43.37)	51(66.24)	26(33.77)
Ensuring harmony among family members	49(59.04)	34(40.96)	41(53.25)	36(46.75)
Providing leadership role to children	34(40.96)	49(59.04)	36(46.75)	41(53.25)
Defending children when crisis and conflict arise	50(60.24)	33(39.76)	52(67.53)	25(32.47)
Percentage mean	56.03%	43.98%	61.47%	38.53%
Transition of children to adulthood				
Take responsibility over female transformation to adulthood	49(59.04)	34(40.96)	50(64.94)	27(35.06)
Take responsibility over male transformation to adulthood	50(60.24)	33(39.76)	52(67.53)	25(32.47)
Teaching adolescents some adult responsibilities	49(59.04)	34(40.96)	51(66.24)	26(33.77)
Preparing female for marital life	50(60.24)	33(39.76)	54(70.13)	23(29.87)
Preparing male for marital life	50(60.27)	33(39.76)	52(67.53)	25(32.47)
Promoting girls' sexual purity before marriage	51(61.45)	32(38.55)	49(63.64)	28(36.36)
Promoting boy sexual purity before marriage	50(60.24)	33(39.76)	52(67.53)	25(32.47)
Percentage mean	60.07%	39.93%	66.79%	33.21%

Community members' expected and performed adolescent parenting roles

Results in Table 5 show the percentage mean scores for the expected and performed communal adolescent parenting roles by male and female respondents in the study area. More than half (60.04% male and 67.32% female) of the respondents identified shaping personal and cultural identity as their expected role, while 56.03 and 61.47 per cent of males and females identified promoting family social identity and security as expected roles. Furthermore, results showed that 60.07 and 66.79 per cent of male and female respondents, respectively, identified the transition of children to adulthood, 60.38 and 67.39 per cent identified influencing the health status of adolescents, 60.24 and 66.23 percent identified promoting skill acquisition, while 61.85 and 67.53 per cent identified promoting adolescent engagement in agriculture as

expected roles in communal adolescent parenting. These results revealed that more females than male identified all six communal parenting roles. However, the findings on performed roles followed a different pattern. Only 39.96 and 32.69 percent performed the roles of shaping personal and cultural identity, 43.98 and 38.53 percent performed the roles of promoting family social identity and security, 39.93 and 33.21 percent performed the roles of transition of children to adulthood, 39.63 and 32.61 percent performed the roles of influencing the health status of adolescents, 39.76 and 33.77 percent performed the roles of promoting skill acquisition while 38.15 and 32.37 percent performed the roles of promoting adolescent engagement in agriculture.

The result showed that while more than half of both males and females identified the expected communal adolescent parenting roles, only about half of those who identified the roles were actually performing them. This

Parenting roles	Male		Female	
	Expected F (%)	Performed F (%)	Expected F (%)	Performed F (%)
Variables relating to health status, skill acquisition and engagement in agriculture				
Influencing the Health status				
Creating awareness on existing danger of promiscuity and communicable disease	50(60.24)	33(39.76)	52(67.53)	25(32.47)
Providing health care needs	50(60.24)	33(39.76)	49(63.64)	28(36.36)
Teaching adolescents about health cleanliness	53(63.85)	30(36.15)	56(72.73)	21(27.27)
Support for adolescent with special health challenges	50(60.24)	33(39.76)	51(66.23)	26(33.77)
Providing home remedies to illness	49(59.04)	34(40.96)	50(64.94)	27(35.06)
Assist in diagnosing of disease	50(60.24)	33(39.76)	52(67.53)	25(32.47)
Ensuring good diet	49(59.04)	34(40.96)	51(66.24)	26(33.77)
Discouraging alcohol consumption and substance abuse	50(60.24)	33(39.76)	54(70.13)	23(29.87)
Providing access to medical services	50(60.27)	33(39.76)	52(67.53)	25(32.47)
Percentage mean	60.38%	39.63%	67.39%	32.61%
Promoting skill acquisition				
Socialization of adolescents into family skills	50(60.24)	33(39.76)	52(67.53)	25(32.47)
Enrolment of adolescents into apprenticeship	50(60.24)	33(39.76)	49(63.64)	28(36.36)
Providing formal education to adolescents	50(60.24)	33(39.76)	52(67.53)	25(32.47)
Percentage mean	60.24%	39.76%	66.23%	33.77%
Promoting adolescent engagement in agriculture				
Motivating adolescent engagement in agriculture	53(63.85)	30(36.15)	56(72.73)	21(27.27)
Involving adolescents in agriculture	50(60.24)	33(39.76)	51(66.23)	26(33.77)
Teaching adolescent agricultural practices	51(61.45)	32(38.55)	49(63.64)	28(36.36)
Percentage mean	61.85%	38.15%	67.53%	32.47%

Keys: F = Frequency; Percent = Percentage (Source: Field survey, 2023).

implies that many of the traditional practices of communal parenting in rural communities have been discontinued while the child parenting responsibilities rest mainly with the nuclear family despite the parents' daily busy schedule. This corroborates the findings of Kariuki *et al.* (2019), who also discovered a significant shift from the ancient traditional practice of communal parenting to individualistic parenting as a result of the influence of Western culture, technological advancement, new religious beliefs, social, economic and political changes. The following excerpt from the KII sessions conducted across the study area also buttressed the finding:

“Child parenting is gradually becoming individual responsibility instead of the traditional method which placed every child under constant watch to guide, protect and punish by many who were not their biological parents when necessary”. (A leader in Olode Community).

These changes may have considerable parenting implications for families in rural households which have traditionally enjoyed a community support system.

Extent of male and female parenting roles performed

Results in Table 6 show the mean scores for the extent of male and female performed communal adolescent parenting in six role categories. The analysis of the results of the performed roles revealed gendered patterns. Both male and female participants similarly scored high in three roles: Promoting family social identity and security (3.52 and 3.56), shaping personal and cultural identity (3.22 and 3.45) and influencing children's health status (3.26 and 3.44). However, females generally scored higher than their male counterparts in all the expected performed roles with the exception of one (promotion of children's skill acquisition = male: 3.05 and female: 2.83). This finding aligns with the culturally assigned female child care and upbringing role in sub-Saharan Africa, especially in rural households (Liu, 2023). Notably, the promotion of adolescent engagement in agriculture by more females than males, with grand means of 1.40 and 3.41, represents a gradual shift from the traditional norm of male control over the management and ownership of agricultural resources in rural communities. This development had

Table 6. Gender disaggregated data on the extent of male and female performed communal adolescent parenting roles.

Expected communal parenting roles	Mean	
	Male	Female
Shaping personal and cultural identity	4.00	4.00
Instilling moral values and conduct	3.93	3.86
Addressing children wrong behaviour	3.53	3.47
Providing information to children on life challenges	3.53	3.90
Socialization into religious and belief system	2.94	3.65
Regulating boy/girl interaction	1.40	2.82
Engaging in religion teachings	3.22	3.45
Grand mean		
Promoting family social identity and security		
Ensuring harmony among family members	3.95	4.00
Providing leadership role to children	3.95	4.00
Defending children when crisis and conflict arise	3.95	3.30
Stemming family crises such as sexual abuse, child neglect, divorce and death of parent	3.53	4.00
Serving as role models and mentors	3.53	4.00
Foster non-biological children	2.24	2.10
Grand mean	3.52	3.56
Transmission of children to adulthood		
Teaching adolescents some adult responsibilities	3.99	3.96
Take responsibility over female transformation to adulthood	3.94	3.96
Preparing male for marital life	3.84	3.73
Preparing female for marital life	3.60	3.18
Promoting boy sexual purity before marriage	1.77	3.30
Take responsibility over male transformation to adulthood	1.24	3.30
Promoting girls sexual purity before marriage	1.19	3.21
Grand mean	2.79	3.52
Influencing the Health status		
Support for adolescent with special health challenges	4.00	4.00
Teaching adolescents about health cleanliness	3.99	3.96
Ensuring good diet	3.99	4.00
Providing home remedies to illness	3.94	2.10
Providing health care needs	3.92	3.70
Providing access to medical services	3.84	4.00
Discouraging alcohol consumption and substance abuse	3.60	4.00
Assist in diagnosing of disease	1.24	4.00
Creating awareness on existing danger of promiscuity and communicable disease	0.83	1.23
Grand mean	3.26	3.44
Promoting skill acquisition		
Providing formal education to adolescents	3.99	3.30
Socialisation of adolescents into family skills	3.94	1.23
Enrolment of adolescents into apprenticeship	1.24	3.96
Grand mean	3.05	2.83
Promoting adolescents engagement in agriculture		
Involving adolescents in agriculture	1.77	3.21
Teaching adolescents agricultural practices	1.24	3.30
Motivating adolescents engagement in agriculture	1.19	3.73
Grand mean	1.40	3.41

Source: Field survey, 2023.

Table 7. Communal adolescent parenting constraints.

Constraints	Ranked	
	Male (Mean)	Female (Mean)
Increased rate of urban social vices in the rural areas	4.36	4.27
Most children spend more time in school than with their families	4.30	4.26
Adolescents tend to be more rebellious and tend to make parenting difficult	4.30	4.26
The negative effects of social media on adolescents.	2.73	3.10
Raising of child has become more of the responsibility of nuclear than extended	2.71	2.23
With the changing economic situations, fathers can no longer provide for the family as they ought to	2.27	2.19
There are more female-headed house now than it used to be in the past	2.23	2.12
Different social groups such as age grades and women associations are losing relevance due to modernization	2.23	2.09
Family members are becoming more interested in possessions and themselves rather than imbining good morals in their children	1.90	2.09
Family parenting roles is negatively affected by increasing rate of divorce	1.90	1.99
Grand mean	2.89	2.86

Source: Field survey, 2023.

earlier been observed by UNICEF (2020) and has been attributed to reasons which include rural/urban male migration for better paid opportunities. Thus, the emergence of a more female-headed household represents a significant alteration in household gender composition and roles. The following excerpts from the KII response exemplify this perspective:

“Many women now combine the roles of mother and father to raise their children in the absence of their husbands, and working on the farmland with their children when they are not in school is a necessity if they must feed and fulfil other family needs” (A leader in Olode Community)

Equal interval approach was used to categorise the extent of male- and female-performed roles into high and low. Scores above and below the mid-point (2.0) of the expected individual obtainable maximum score (4.0) were categorised as high and low extent respectively. The female scores were above the mid-point (high extent) in all the six categories of performed roles while the male was similarly scored in five roles. The findings showed a generally high extent of performed communal adolescent parenting roles along gender patterns by the few who engaged in them.

Constraints encountered by males and females in adolescent parenting

The results in Table 7 show the ranked means of 10 identified adolescent parenting constraints experienced in the study area by male and female respondents. The 3 topmost constraints experienced by both male and female respondents, respectively, were increased rate of urban

social vices in the rural areas (mean=4.36; mean=4.27), most children spending more time in school than with their families (mean=4.30; mean=4.26) and adolescents tending to be more rebellious and tending to make parenting difficult (mean=4.30; mean=4.26). They were similarly ranked highest by both male and female respondents, with scores above 4.0 out of the individual expected maximum score of 5.0. In addition, the male respondents identified and scored 2 other constraints (the negative effects of social media on adolescents (mean=2.73) and raising a child has become more of the responsibility of nuclear than extended (mean=2.71)) above the midpoint, while the females scored above the midpoint in only 1. Thus, the ranked means showed that the male gender scored above the midpoint in 5 constraints while the female scores were in 4. These represent the major constraints in the study area. Similar findings were reported by Nyakangi *et al.* (2021) and Donga *et al.* (2022), who evaluated gender differences in parenting of early adolescents in Viwandani informal settlement of Nairobi, Kenya and found that fathers had more differential parenting approaches than mothers. The other constraints (5 for the male and 6 for the female) were scored below the midpoint, representing lesser constraints. Thus, the findings suggest that the severity of constraints encountered in adolescent parenting followed a gendered pattern.

Results of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing significant difference between expected and performed roles

The results of ANOVA in Table 8 show a statistically significant difference ($F=1.466$; $df = 1$; $p = 0.038$) between

Table 8. Results of ANOVA analysis of male and female expected and performed communal parenting roles.

Parameters	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value	Decision
Between Groups	0.333	1	0.333	1.466	0.038	S
Within Groups	35.642	158	0.227			
Total	35.975	159				

males and females in expected communal adolescent parenting roles and the extent of performed roles. This affirmed the previous results in Table 6 that the extent of performed roles was higher for females than their male counterparts. This may not be unconnected with the differences in gender roles and responsibilities in the study area, which had been previously reported by WHO et al. (2018), UNICEF (2020), and Nyakangi *et al.* (2021) that adolescent parenting roles is achievable through community platforms with females as the frontline caregivers.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, the study revealed that the majority of the community members were middle-aged, married, educated, had farming as their major source of income and had resided in their host communities for more than 40 years. They also have large household sizes with extended family members actively involved in child parenting responsibilities. Most males and females identified several positive parenting attributes, but the favoured strategies followed a gendered pattern. Furthermore, there was a significant difference between the expected and actual communal parenting roles performed, with more males identifying more roles and more females than males performing the roles. This showed that many of the traditional practices of communal parenting were no longer practised. A more nucleated family system emerges with a noticeable parenting gap despite the acknowledged positive attributes and preferred strategies of communal parenting. Therefore, the adolescent stage of parenting will require a more collaborative and inclusive approach. Thus, leveraging the positive attributes and the numerous preferred strategies in the traditional communal approach is crucial to achieving better and more integrated parenting. This will necessitate a government policy to teach the African parenting system at the primary and secondary school levels. Similarly, there is a need for the National Orientation Agency to embark on a mass and social media campaign to highlight the existing parenting deficit and promote the positive aspects of the communal parenting approach. Furthermore, there should be an enforcement of Child Rights Act to protect the children against some harmful traditional societal practices in communal parenting.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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