PhD thesis

An analysis of families of African origin, who feel at risk of accusations of abuse, whether investigated or not, and stakeholders' perspectives

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Full bibliographic citation: Mwanaka, S. 2021. An analysis of families of African origin, who feel at risk of accusations of abuse, whether investigated or not, and stakeholders' perspectives. PhD thesis Middlesex University

Year: 2021

Publisher: Middlesex University Research Repository

Available online: https://repository.mdx.ac.uk/item/18y75z

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AN ANALYSIS OF FAMILIES OF AFRICAN ORIGIN, WHO FEEL AT RISK OF ACCUSATIONS OF ABUSE, WHETHER INVESTIGATED OR NOT, AND STAKEHOLDERS' PERSPECTIVES.

A thesis submitted to Middlesex University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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January 2021

Abstract

This thesis was motivated by a desire to understand Black African children's disproportionate representation in the care system. It also explores why care leavers are overrepresented in the youth criminal justice system and in custody. The overrepresentation of African children in the social care system has been empirically linked to child abuse and neglect and the child protection team's cultural incompetence. The stakeholders respond to abuse/neglect through intervention, which, in some cases, leads to the removal of children from home. Henceforth, the thesis demonstrates that the care system has not benefited African children and revealed systematic inequalities within the social care and criminal justice system. Both the existing literature and the findings of this study offer consistent indications about parents' perception of a thin line between child abuse and discipline. Parents exceed the expected threshold while applying physical discipline, chastisement potentially reaching the abuse threshold. The research explores some of the reasons the social workers ultimately felt compelled to remove children from their homes.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted over the course of one year in first-generation African immigrant families, social workers, and other professionals involved in the multiagency concerning child safeguarding, such as the police and psychologists. Under the parenting findings, five main themes emerged, mainly about parenting methods and parent’s expectations of their children. In the context of long-established culture and beliefs, respecting one's elders was the central expectation of African families. The study highlighted the

discipline methods used by African parents on regulating children's behaviours, encouraged by cultural and Christian beliefs. It also stressed the tension between parents and their adolescent children, resulting in drawing social services' attention. African parents expressed their discontent over being stigmatised as incompetent parents within the Eurocentric approach. They argued that the system sets them up to fail because nothing prepares migrant families about the British expectations of childrearing. As a result, they believed it to be an intentional, systematic way to disempower migrant parents from efficiently raising their children without fear. This thesis exposed the tension between the parents and stakeholders, which left social workers' jobs interpreted as 'people who are purposely hunting for children and put them into the care system.' The interviews with parents emphasised the helplessness of parents, the fear instilled, and suspicions of stakeholders.

Four main themes emerged from professionals' findings, which stressed social workers' conflicts in their profession. Mainly, the conflict lies with African social workers who find it challenging to remove African families' children. Such social workers argued that such parents' child-rearing methods were the same methods which their own parents applied, and that they were convinced of the approach's effectiveness and ultimate positive outcome. Social workers were categorised into two groups, one of those in academic settings particularly social worker trainers and researchers; whose views suggested that overrepresentation of African children in the care were mainly caused by large disparities and deprivation. African children in the care as mainly caused by large disparities and deprivation. They argued that Africans were most

likely to have lived in poor neighbourhoods. Contrarily, the front liners emphasized the combination of social workers' cultural incompetence and poor parenting as a significant factor of disproportionate African children's care.

As to the disproportionate numbers of care leavers in the youth criminal justice system, psychologists suggested that such groups lacked bonding experiences with their parents. This implies that lack of attachment at an early age encourages deviant behaviour. The research exposed the tension between African pupils and teachers. Moreover, psychologists suggested that schools were seen as institutions where African children experienced discrimination at an early stage of life. Furthermore, psychologists concluded that African boys were disadvantaged in various ways, including the pressure of meeting family expectations and being prone to school exclusion or suspension. This thesis concluded the existence of Eurocentric approach on safeguarding, interventions, and cultural incompetence of some practitioners. This contributes to the overrepresentation of African children in the care system.

This study suggests that reforms in the child protection approach are unlikely to succeed without considering and rewriting laws that accommodated other cultures. African parents must be educated on the expectations surrounding child-rearing prior to any intervention. The research findings aimed to contribute to both parents' and practitioners' knowledge and the experiences of children who are involved in safeguarding concerns.

The research took a broad approach to an analysis of African origin families, who felt at risk of accusations of abuse, whether investigated or not, and stakeholders' perspectives. This research acknowledges that many people in the field of social work do outstanding work.

Glossary of Terms

Abuse= children subjected to harm under their parents or caregivers
BaD = Blind and deaf parenting which is socially constructed
CRC = Convention on the Rights of the Child
Deviant= being disobedient
DfE= Department for Education
Culture = African cultural parenting approach
Ethnicity=origin of the black people
Harm= injury inflicted on children
Neglect= children neglected by their parents or caregivers
Race = ethnical background the family belongs
Racism= discrimination which the black families are exposed to in the western countries
TA = Thematic Analysis
UN= United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNCRC= United Nations
YOT=Youth Offending Teams

Research Questions

1.To what extent does the conflict between parents' and children's rights affect children in the later life?

2. What level of understanding do Black diasporic families have of child protection system in the UK?

3. How the Black children are impacted by their parents own upbringing?

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Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I am incredibly grateful to my God, who has fulfilled this scripture Matthew 19:26; "……. but with God, all things are possible". God has made it possible for me to go this far.

I owe a very particular debt of gratitude to Professor Anthony Goodman for his steadfast support and belief in me. He has always been generous with his time and availability when I needed his support and advice. He encouraged me to believe in myself when I felt lost in my thesis, and that boosted my confidence. I am intensely indebted to Dr Angus Nurse, my first supervisor, who has been instrumental in this research since the proposal stage. Above all, he has given a meaning and shape to this thesis, for which I am grateful. I shall always remember his words, "keep on going," that gave me the energy and hope, though I had reached my limits. His intense and meticulous feedback propelled me to stretch beyond my imagination.

Without a doubt, I would like to thank all the participants who availed their time to contribute to this research. Additionally, many thanks to my social work friends Joel Abraham and Tatenda Stella Hellen Kahonde who clarified what social work entails. Many thanks to my friend Rev. Cecilia Dewu, whose prayers and encouragement were always at hand.

My sincere thanks to my sister-in-law Maggie Chamburuka Mwanaka, for continually checking on my Ph.D. progress. That encouraged me a lot, especially when the journey looked incomprehensible and lonely. That also goes to my niece and nephew Mona Lisa and Nelson

Kaguda. A big thank you to Totenda Hanna Dube my great-niece, her support was remarkable beyond her age. My cousin Charity Gwatidzo encouraged me beyond my imagination.

My appreciation goes to my siblings, Robson Mutsikira, Rev. Eunice Mutsikira Muzhari, and Florence Hilda Mutsikira Sibanda. Hilda was my cheerleader in this journey. Bishop Muzhari's words of encouragement were fuel to my vision.

I would also extend my gratitude to my five daughters: Rudorwashe Joy Mwanaka Mudavanhu, Wimbainashe Joan Mwanaka Ngnigone, Tiriwashe Johanna Mwanaka, Tendaishe Sarah Mwanaka, Hephzibah Jewel Mwanaka, and my son Joel James Mwanaka and sons-in-law, Patrick Mudavanhu and Ferl Ngnigone; for encouraging me, and frequently saying; 'mom thanks for showing us the way and you have made us proud.' Above all, Hephzibah was a Jewel in putting things together for me. During my studies, I became a proud grandmother of Jesse Patrick and Aliza Mudavanhu, Chai-Els Mwanaka, and Barak Ngnigone.

More practically, gratitude to the most vital person in my life, Rev. Patrick James Mwanaka, my husband, best friend, and counsellor. The most enduring man in this thesis's context, he put up with me, particularly in my low moments. Without his remarkable support, this thesis would not have been written. Indeed, that confirmed what friends and family always say, that I am a spoilt wife.

This thesis is dedicated to my late parents Selina Servlyn Godo-Mutsikira and Didymus Thomas Ramwiwa Mutsikira. My parents laid the foundation for my academic journey and supported and paid fees for me and my siblings, where gender inequality was rife. More so, education opportunities for Black people in Rhodesia now (Zimbabwe) were bottlenecked and scarce. Also, dedicated to my late siblings whom I know, they would have been proud of my achievements; Felicity Kate Mutsikira Mhlanga, Doris Mutsikira Munesti, Reggie Mutsikira, and James Timothy Judah Mutsikira.

Thank you!

CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

This thesis seeks to address an analysis of African origin families, who feel at risk of accusations of abuse, whether investigated or not, and the stakeholders' perspectives on cultural parenting. In the context of the present research, stakeholders include professionals such as, social services, social workers, and the criminal justice system, as they oversee children's rights. The thesis also explores the causes of black children's overrepresentation in the care system (Choate, 2021) and, consequently, the reasons for the disproportionate rates of black care leavers in the youth criminal justice system (Fitzpatrick et al., 2016). Furthermore, the research examines African diasporic communities' perceptions of social services' practices in the UK regarding child abuse/neglect cases. Professionals' perspectives have driven child neglect and abuse issues in the UK, giving rise to intense debates across generations in different sectors, including health, education, and Parliament [Dettlaff et al., 2011].

The originality of the present research, in contributing to social scientific knowledge, is identifying a fifth parenting style – in addition to authoritative (Johari Talib and Mamat, 2011), authoritarian (Baumrind, 1971), permissive (Estlein, 2016) and neglectful parenting (Baumrind, 1991) - which is evoked by fear, particularly among diasporic African parents who raise children in western countries.

In conclusion, this thesis aims to highlight or address concerns and fears within African origin families in respect to child rearing practices. The chapters presented shed light on African origin families' perceptions of raising children in the UK.

1.1 Research Context

On 25 February 2000, an eight-year-old, Victoria Climbié, died following weeks of unspeakable maltreatment and neglect at the hands of her great-aunt, who had been entrusted to her by Victoria's parents (Laming, 2003). Additionally, On 3 August 2007, a 17-month-old boy, Peter Connelly, died following similarly appalling treatment by his mother and two men living in her household. Victoria Climbié and Peter Connelly are by no means the only children to have died in deeply troubling circumstances in England over the last decades. However, these deaths both captured the public imagination and have served as catalysts for change (Laming, 2003). Although all the adults who were directly involved served prison sentences for murder or causing or allowing a child's death, the ensuing public outcries focused on the professionals who held responsibilities to prevent such tragedies (Laming, 2003). These reports prompted an extensive programme of change in both the structure and delivery of services in the UK, to safeguard and promote children's welfare, especially those likely to suffer significant harm (Laming, 2009).

The inquiry following the death of Victoria Climbié, and Baby Peter Connelly's high-profile case brought attention to several long-standing problems, continually raised by numerous child

abuse investigations, which included the following: poor coordination between services; a failure to share information between agencies; the absence of anyone with a strong sense of accountability; front line services trying to cope with staff vacancies; poor management; and lack of collaboration and inadequate training (Laming, 2003).

These were not new issues, as the HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (2002) had observed. However, the Victoria Climbié and Baby Peter Connelly inquiries brought them into severe focus, prompting a nationwide review of child protection services in 2011, namely, the Munro Review, which is a series of proposals for reform of the practices of professionals involved in child protection, so that they can make the best judgements in the interests of the child and their families (Department for Education May 2012).

The thesis also investigated balancing the protection available to children of 'abusive' family members and the professional interventions that might be perceived as interfering with family life. The research also scrutinises the Children Act 1989 and its impact on children, parents, and some of the agencies involved in safeguarding children. Furthermore, an outline of how far the apparent shift from parental authority to parental responsibility may be interpreted as criminalising parents in the present 'age of human rights' is also evaluated. The professional investigations are largely on abuse and neglect which are harmful to the child.

The thesis engages with important key themes, such as culture, 'race' and ethnicity, racism and harm which are discussed throughout. Moreover, harm has been classified into two

categories, as significant harm and the likelihood of harm. The concept of harm is important to this thesis because it is the central argument of child abuse investigations.

1.2 Concept of Harm

The World Health Organization (WHO) describes harm on a child as child maltreatment (Gonzalez, et al., 2020), manifested in all forms of physical and emotional mistreatment. This includes neglect, abuse, and exploitation that result in harming or potentially harming the child's health, dignity or development. Harm in the form of abuse is an act of commission, whereas neglect is an act of omission in the care of a child leading to actual harm or potential harm (Gonzalez, et al., 2020). Russell-Johnson (2017) defines harm according to the European Council 1986 as physical violence afflicted on someone. This includes actions that inflict harm or deliberately fail to prevent injury to a child (Pitts, 2017). In the perspective of the present research, harm is an affliction inflicted by a parent or caregiver on a child interpreted as child maltreatment. Furthermore, this includes family members' actions that undermine life, psychological or bodily integrity. In addition, harm could seriously impair the development of the child's personality (Searing, 2017). Conversely, this research shows that the notion of harm and what this entails are differently viewed from cultural parenting and social services perspectives.

1.3 Concept of Culture

Generally, culture is viewed as a way of life for a particular people classified in a group, for example, race, community, class, and the society which one belongs (Schwartz, 1990). It

encompasses perceptions and values which characterise cultural community groups that also clarify the motives of certain human behaviours. Oberg (1960) claimed that any person's culture is a result of history, built over a period of time primarily through some processes beyond an individual's awareness. Once a culture is adopted and observed, it becomes the fabric of life. The present research defines culture with respect to parenting, and analyses how parenting is modelled through different cultures, religions, communities, races, societies, class and generations. 'Cultural parenting' is termed as historical traditions or beliefs, transmitted from the previous generations to the present generation, involving the nurturing of a child throughout childhood and their teenage years (Bornstein, Yu and Putnick, 2020). Culture is composed of standards, values, traditions, norms and beliefs acquired over a period of time, through socialisation, interactions and parents (Higa, 2021). Culture is not just constructed by individuals, but also created by a particular generation and particular cultural groups, communities and societies grounded on the value attached to the family (Higa, 2021).

In this study, cultural parenting is also found to be childrearing through behavioural patterns and beliefs within one's social or community group. Cultural parenting is largely noticed through how a parent interacts with their child or how discipline is employed. Some of the African parents in the UK abdicated their parenting methods to conform to the cultural environment of the host country. This research proposes that cultural parenting is subject to change especially if it is carried out in different cultural environments or at a particular period

of time. Parenting is not only observed through the lenses of culture but also individuals' ethnicities and 'race'.

1.4 Concepts of 'Race' and Ethnicity

Both ethnicity and 'race' are terms that are featured more broadly in this thesis regarding the overrepresentations of black children in the care system and black youth in the criminal justice system. On some occasions, 'race' and ethnicity seem to be interchangeable, yet they have different definitions. 'Race' is used to define individuals' biomedical properties, based on a group's shared physical traits, for example, facial features, skin colour and hair textures (Ross, et al., 2020). On the other hand, ethnicity is used to distinguish different people according to shared cultures, beliefs, values, traditions, celebrations, history and in some cases language (Ross et al., 2020).

Ethnicity is inherently linked to individuals' identity and culture (Kumar and Naik, 2020). Here these authors explained ethnicity by giving an example of Britain, suggesting that people who live in that country are identified as British. However, they are comprised of subgroups such as English, Welsh, Irish or Scottish and these are classified as ethnic groups. Ethnic identity is potentially formed by blending in a particular group (Kumar[1] and Naik, 2020). Ethnicity has been used as an umbrella term to cover some phrases, historical memories, shared cultures, specific territories, and having a sense of a common language including the name of individual

groups (Kumar and Naik, 2020), such as the Zimbabweans or Zambians, for example. Ethnicity is felt more when a similar group of people with the same ancestral values, cultures, or history are immigrants in a foreign country. Although, in the host countries they try to assimilate, researchers such as Robert Park, an American social theorist, suggests that Africans cannot assimilate with white culture (cited in Kumar and Naik, 2020: 6134). Robert Park (cited in Kumar and Naik, 2020: 6134) saw that ethnicity minority groups assimilated as a response to racism and being discriminated against. In the context of the present research, racism was found to be one of the elements which was responsible for the disproportionate representation of black youth in the criminal justice system and of the overrepresentation of black children in the care system.

1.5 Concept of Racism

Racism is conceptualised differently by different researchers and individuals, in different periods of time (Glasgow, 2009). Racism can be defined as one ethnic group viewing themselves as more superior and having more appropriate morals (Mahmood, 2019) than the other ethnic group. Glasgow (2009) stated that racism was largely a violation or motivational act of moral inhumanity on people of different 'race' or colour. Racism emphasises three conceptions, which are, motivational, behavioural and cognitive features (Glasgow, 2009). Consequently, motivational racism is the application of unequal consideration on other people motivated by the desire to control other races. However, the motive is contradictory to the

values and principals of equality across all races (Glasgow, 2009). The concept of racism looked at in this thesis is the behavioural concept. Behavioural racism fails to provide equal considerations based on 'race' only (Glasgow, 2009). Lastly, the cognitivist theory suggested that racism is unequal consideration based on believing that the other 'race' is inferior (Glasgow, 2009). Other authors such as Urquidez, (2018) argues that racists are those who are disrespectful to racialised people. This might explain the reason why black children are overrepresented in the care system (Dominelli, 2019), since they would seem to be victims of institutional perpetrators within the social care setting – as investigated in the current research.

1.6 Research Aims and Objectives

Much has been written on the overrepresentation of Black children in the care system in the UK (Dominelli, 2019) but, notably, parents' views and experiences are less well documented. While there have been allegations of abuse and neglect, nonetheless we must acknowledge that the impact of removing children from the home seems to be long-lasting – following their time in care, some of these youths end up committing crime (Fekete, 2018). Statistics demonstrate that care leavers are overrepresented in prisons, as reflected in The Laming Review (2016). While a greater emphasis is placed on child abuse and neglect, little has been discussed about the underlying factors that account for the overrepresentation of Black African children in the UK care system. These underlying factors must be examined and understood to minimise the number of children in care. Recognising and understanding the experiences of Black African parents is essential to such an endeavour. Hence, the focus of the current research.

The main aim of the current research was to identify the complex cultural perceptions and expectations of Black diasporic families as they bring up children in the UK. The study explores the established parenting practices of first generation Black African families in the UK, the tensions that can arise in the professionals' understandings of Black parenting, and how Black African families can adapt their parenting styles to meet the expectations of the host country.

The four key objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To critically evaluate the legislative and policy framework in the UK on child abuse investigations

2. To analyse social service's approach to cultural practices within ethnic minority households on child rearing.

3. To critically evaluate whether and how social workers are able to understand the challenges faced by African families in bringing up their children.

4. To understand the relationship between race, poverty, care, and youth criminal justice systems.

In recent years, Black African families in the UK have had their children taken into care because of alleged violations of children's rights (Devine, 2016). Furthermore, The UN

Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 must be analysed, as it conflicts with parental authority and responsibility.

Though this study's unearthing and analysis of these issues might not be necessarily new, the researcher believes it is particularly timely. It involves issues that have been persistent, yet, have not always been explicitly focused on. The study provides an opportunity for the first Black African generation of immigrant parents' lived experiences and parenting practices to be documented and discussed. This project further analyses the consequences of placing African origin children into the care system in the UK.

Several studies have indicated that children who have passed through care are over-represented in the punitive criminal justice system. For instance, the Prison Reform Trust Laming Review (2016) suggests that looked-after children (LAC) in England are six times more likely to be convicted of a crime than their counterparts who live with parents. Statistical evidence shows that LAC frequently end up in the criminal justice system. The Laming Review (2016) indicated that the overrepresentation of care leavers varies and that care systems have considerable influence on deviant behaviours (Fekete, 2018). Since care leavers are significantly overrepresented in the youth criminal justice system, it can be argued that the social workers' inadequacy in establishing the extent of damage on the child during assessments can lead the child into criminal behaviour (Tedam, 2014).

Devine (2016) argued that removing children from their parental home has many risk factors, including neglect and abuse in the care system, and may add to the pain of a child who is

already psychologically affected. Birth complications and maternal rejection at age one can potentially drive a child to engage in violent crimes (Raine, 1994). Furthermore, Hirsch (1969) argued that removing children from home potentially contributes to criminality. The attachment hypothesis (Bowlby, 1988, cited in Bretherton, 1992: 768) suggests that a lack of attachment of children to parents increases delinquency chances. To some extent, the care system can be viewed negatively as an arena where adverse outcomes outweigh benefits (Devine, 2016).

The research analysed factors that might explain parents' shortcomings in their parental practices, such as an ignorance of the law, cultural and religious practices, and other environmental factors. There is no process to educate immigrants about childrearing expectations as codified by the UK's legislation and child abuse threshold. Such a vacuum results in ignorance among first generation Black African parents as to the distinction between discipline and abuse. Cultural and religious practices in raising children have a significant impact on child protection (CITATION). The gap between childrearing expectations across different cultures results in behaviour that might seem to be abusive to people of a different culture (Sigman, 2015).

Clement and Bouchard (2003) and Zolotor (2014) commented on the thin line between discipline and abuse in child-rearing. This distinction is examined and judged during child abuse investigations after a child has been physically punished. The evidence from the present

research strongly argues that there should be clear, well-publicized stipulations for what is acceptable in a disciplinary situation.

1.7 Structure of Thesis

This thesis is composed of ten chapters

Chapter One: Chapter one introduces the current study, outlining the research context, identifying key concepts of relevance to the current study and presenting the main aim and objectives of the research. The chapter concludes with the Thesis structure.

Chapter Two: Chapter two describes the current legislation on children's rights. It starts by outlining Articles that are listed by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as a guideline for assessing issues that affect children. Furthermore, it discusses UN Conventions' requirements on children's rights, 1989 Article 19 that requires State parties to adopt the necessary legislative, administrative, education, and social measures to protect children from all types of abuse and neglect. The chapter highlights section 1 of The Children Act 1989, a legislation adopted in the United Kingdom that safeguards and promotes children's welfare. The chapter also points out the European Convention on Human Rights Article 8 (ECHR), which emphasises every human being's rights, such as the right to private life, whereby private life constitutes family life and children's rights. Furthermore, the chapter discusses the history of child abuse, child protection, agencies working together, and cultural differences in raising

children. Finally, the chapter concludes with obligations assigned to social workers and police in child abuse allegations.

Chapter Three: Chapter three outlines the concept of child safeguarding as a response to child abuse and neglect in England, and how high-profile cases such as that of Victoria Climbié (The Victoria Climbié Inquiry report led by Lord Laming, 2003) drew the attention of the public. The chapter also explores how black Africans in the UK are overrepresented in the care system. It analyses child protection legislation processes, and the involvement of numerous English agencies. This chapter offers more detailed discussion on the social worker's engagement during child safeguarding and intervention procedures. It also outlines other elements that lead to removing children from their families and placing them into the care system and the impact that this has on the child. In this chapter, social workers' experiences and work ethics have also been discussed. Moreover, deprivation, race, care and criminality were found to be linked in different ways, as indicated in this chapter. Furthermore, some psychological effects on mothers who were separated from their children due to child protection were discussed.

Chapter Four: This chapter explores the problem of balancing the protection available to children with possible infringement of their family's rights. It also describes how the Convention on the Rights of the Child came into existence. Children's rights are examined, highlighting the impacts their enshrinement may have on children. Furthermore, a case study on the consequences of the rights of a child is provided. This chapter explores the conflict experienced by the first generation of African families as they raise their children in the UK.

The chapter establishes cultural differences and the broader influence of significant conflict in bringing up children. Cultural conflict is reflected in this chapter, as is the manner in which Articles 12 and 13(1), which advocate for the best interests of a child, send conflicting signals on children and parental rights. First generation Black African parents in the UK find it challenging to employ a cultural childrearing approach which focuses on a child's best interest, because the western conception of children's rights conflicts with their traditions. The chapter explains the reasons for the rise of African religious and advocate organisations, in response to the overrepresentation of black children in the care system.

Chapter Five: Chapter Five analyses the impact of cultural parenting within first generation Black African families. This chapter also reveals four different methods of parenting and their impacts on children. Juvenile delinquency is also discussed to enable us to understand what drives children into criminality. The chapter mentions that institutional racism has a part to play in parenting methods which are detrimental to children, leading to state interventions. Black boys' predicaments, such as school exclusions and stop and search, are debated in this chapter.

Chapter Six: This chapter addresses the methodology used and justifies the techniques employed, documenting the whole research process and the challenges encountered. The chapter lists the number of participants interviewed and why the qualitative method was the

best choice among other methods. The analytical approach adopted, and the limitations of the study were discussed.

Chapter Seven: This chapter starts by defining parenting in a general way as it is universally perceived. It explores different practices and cross-cultural concepts of parenting among African groups living in Western countries, particularly the UK.

In this chapter, several critical themes emerge through interviews with members of first-generation African parents in the UK. The chapter explores parental practices and concepts in the context of culture and beliefs. Parents expressed how they value their norms, cultures, beliefs, and values to be transmitted to the next generation. The chapter lays bare the conflict which arises during this process, arising primarily from the professionals.

The findings also confirm the tension which arises between the children and the parents due to cultural clashes. The disciplinary methods that parents received from the previous generations, which were held with high esteem, were explored. The chapter relayed a resistance to such disciplinary methods by the second generation raised in this country. One of the central themes in this chapter was the controversy of physical chastisement, which the professionals view as child abuse. From the perspective of the parents, it was found that African children have no

voice. The disciplinary dilemma parents face in the UK was articulated. A minister of religion answered controversially by supporting the 'spare the rod and spoil the child' philosophy. The power imbalances and dynamics between the professionals and parents were also mentioned. The chapter elaborates on the impact of colonisation on the African families in their childrearing. Both African mothers and boys were highlighted as victims of discrimination. In conclusion, this chapter expresses that the school exclusion of Black boys is one of the critical factors contributing to the disproportionate youth justice system. In conclusion, the flaws of social workers and Eurocentric polices were unearthed, contributing to removing children from their home.

Chapter Eight: This chapter explores the findings of professionals concerning child protection. The professionals include teachers, medical doctors, social workers, schoolteachers, child psychologists, and religious ministers. Several key themes emerged during the interviews. The participant child psychologists emphasised the need for children to bond with their parent/s to minimise deviant behaviours, which some children exhibited in the care system. Academics and social workers had a different perspective on abuse and the removal of children from their home. Parents contested the impact of children's rights, in so far as they are seen as undermining the authority of the parents. To conclude this chapter, it was expressed that Black boys suffered the most due to discrimination and labelling.

Chapter Nine: Chapter nine discusses the findings of the interviews within the context of the literature. Suggestions of how African parents value their cultures and beliefs are discussed in

detail. Henceforth, the findings centre on the professionals' notion of child protection when dealing with African families. Five different levels of parenting styles were analysed: authoritative, authoritarian, neglectful/uninvolved, permissive and 'blind and deaf' parenting. Respect was found to be a paramount expectation of most African parents regarding their children. UK policies and legislation regarding child safeguarding have been viewed as having a negative impact on African families. Ultimately, the benefits of the removal of children into the care system are outweighed by the negative impacts.

Chapter Ten: Chapter ten concludes this thesis as it highlights some recommendations. It is found that there is a growing need to educate African families on British expectations regarding childrearing. Further research was recommended to be conducted with the second generation of Africans in the UK. After acquiring pertinent information, the practitioners discover that the behaviour which they considered harmful towards the child was, in fact, ultimately beneficial. This is based on interviews with the first-generation African parents, who did not feel resentful about the way they were parented. In overall conclusion, the government should educate the parents after they enter the country on what is expected of them in the same vein as they inform them about the recourse of public funds and immigration matters.

The nine chapters of this thesis brought to attention the needs of Black African families as they raised their children in the UK. Furthermore, the thesis highlighted the conflicting attitudes and perceptions of African families towards the social workers. The thesis has revealed how African parenting was socially constructed, leading the parents into failure of reaching their

expectations in childrearing. The research method employed sheds light on the feelings and wishes of the African parents in the UK as they narrated their experiences. Additionally, the research exposed several factors which contributed to overrepresentation and disproportionality of African children in the care system. The next chapter begins by explaining the legislation and polices which govern the professionals regarding children's rights and child safeguarding.

CHAPTER TWO: Legislation on Children's Rights and Child Safeguarding

2.0 Introduction

This chapter is triggered by the need to understand what made the professionals interfere with private lives. It also critically analysed the legislative and policy framework in the context of what constituted the removal of children into care. Firstly, it outlined current legislation stipulated to protect children and explored The Children Act 1989. These included articles listed by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as guidelines for assessing issues that affected children. UN Conventions on children's rights, 1989 Article 19 requires state parties to adopt all necessary legislative, administrative, education, and social measures to safeguard children from all sorts of physical or mental violence, abuse or injury and neglect. Importantly it set the framework for understanding how the United Kingdom legislations in promoting child safeguarding. Secondly, it explored cultural factors in childrearing and how they could conflict with the expectations of the UK government. The concept of child abuse and neglect, as perceived by the stakeholders, was also outlined. Thirdly, it determined the causes of abuse as these were relevant to combatting child maltreatment. The chapter concluded with explaining what safeguarding a child entailed and explained the involvement of the government guidance for working together.

2.1 The Children Act 1989

The Children Act 1989 is United Kingdom legislation, section 1 is for the safeguarding and promotion of children's welfare. Section 1(5) stipulates that the court should have no order

without considering the child's best interest. It also centres on the notion that children should ideally be cared for within their own families. The law permits assessment in partnership with children and their parents (Kim and Kelly, 2014).

Section 2 considers parental responsibility, which places the parent in the same category as any other carers. Swindells et al. (1999) commented on family lawyers' growing concerns of taking children's interests to the point where they override parents/families' human rights. McGlynn (2001) pointed out that, as in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (CRC), children's best interests are only expressed as 'primary' consideration, unlike under the Children Act 1989, where consideration is paramount. He argues that the covering of the Human Rights Act calls for a review of the relationship concerning parents' and children's family law interests. Laming (2003) echoed that it is impossible to isolate children's safeguarding from the comprehensive support of the families implying the needs of children and their families are integral.

When focusing on children's rights and interests, one must consider that family is the first port of call for support (Henricson and Bainham, 2005). They reported that it is equally wrong for the government policies regarding families to emphasise children's rights and best interests, ignoring parental feelings. Henricson and Bainham (2005), suggests that the United Kingdom needs to keep its commitment to children while doing the same to families. Considering these arguments, it is imperative to balance the policies that support the holistic family, since

Government legislations and policies affect the entire family in different ways, either direct or indirect.

In the work of Henricson and Bainham (2005), the Government policies on looked after children by the State are subject to criticism for disregarding parents and families' fundamental rights such as Article 8: Respect for your private and family life. Suggestions should be made to the state for its policies, which affect families and children, to comply with international conventions obligations. This section has explored the European Convention on Human Rights Article 8 (ECHR) (Thym, 2008).

2.2 European Convention on Human Rights Article 8 (ECHR)

Every human being is born with an equal set of natural rights, such as the right to live and behave as one wishes except where this infringes on others' rights. Some of the legislations have been created to enhance those rights, whilst other rights are suppressed (Connelly, 2008). ECHR Article 8 states everyone has a right to private life and family life.

Henricson and Bainham, (2005), suggests that Article 8 is based on Article 12, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, though it differs in wording. Article 12 states that no one should be subject to arbitrary interference with one's family, privacy, home, or correspondence, nor attacks upon one's reputation and honour. The state should balance the conflicting rights, where the level of individual rights to private life is broadly upheld. At the same time, infringement might be experienced on family life rights, as in cases where children would be endangered.

Connelly (2008) suggests that applying the approach to a particular complaint entails three essential questions to be addressed in the state's interfering with an individual private life.

Private life covers a broad conception of individual autonomy that includes dignity, where one has the freedom to pursue or develop personal fulfilment (Goffin, 2012). As stated in Article 8, the right to private life gives individuals the right to order their lives with minimum interferences. Right The right to respect is also considered, as stipulated in Article 8.

2.4 Respect

Article 8, paragraph 1, protects individuals from indiscriminate public authorities' interference in their private or family life. Forder (1990) suggests that any interference justifiable under paragraph 2's provision is not arbitrary. However, if it transcends the limits, it is deemed a violation of one's right to respect an individual's private life. Article 8 tends to be a subject of controversy regarding respect. Connelly (2008) pointed out that in the event of the state interference between mother and child, the public authorities should consider what is envisaged by Article 8, allowing concerned parties to lead an everyday family life, that is, respecting family life. Connelly (2008) further argues that if the law fails to observe Article 8, it is deemed an outright violation of paragraph 1. Henceforth, there are different ways to interpret Article 8, which are apparent in the Court and Commission's case-law.

Connelly (1986) suggested that the right to respect for private life comprises a certain level, including the right to develop and establish relationships with other human beings, mainly for emotional development and fulfilment of an individual's personality. The method used to

define rights by itemisation is relatively specific and helps identify some elements within the private sphere (Connelly, 1986). Connelly (1986) went on to say that a specific approach draws support from or is influenced by the wording of some rights guaranteed by the Conventions, such as Article 9. Article 9 states that the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, followed by Article 10, which covers the right of freedom of expression. Article 11 supports the right to freedom of peaceful assembly, including the freedom to associate with others. Connelly (1986) pointed out that the right to freedom of expression comprised freedom to hold opinions and to receive and communicate ideas and information without public authority's interference irrespective of frontiers. However, Connelly (1986) explained that the state could interfere with the contact between the child and the parent subject to conditions of Article 8 paragraph 2, though it was not so explicit. On the other hand, acknowledged that the right of access should imply the provision of contact between a child and parent in domestic law. This covered the right to family life, which was one of the core arguments for this research in order to keep children in their families.

2.5 Concept of family life

What constitutes family life can be arguable across generations and cultures. The general definition would be a family is a component that comprises the father, mother, and children. However, in these contemporary times days, the meaning has shifted in various directions, incorporating adopted family, foster family and gay families. The family may broaden to the

polygamies polygamous, single-parent nuclear, extended families, each of which has profound implications for the rearing children.

In the case of Marckx v. Belgiu, 1979 cited by (Forder, C.J., 1990), the Strasbourg Court noted that marriage is assumed to be between husband and wife irrespective even if the couple does not set up a home together, but that would be considered the formation of a family. However, in Serife Yigit v Turk's case, 2009, it was found that where there are children from birth, family life exists between parents and their children regardless of the mother and father's marital status. The international treaty law views the family as the primary component of society and conceptualises it as a transitional development (Van Bueren, 1998). Nevertheless, the fundamental issue surrounding family definition still had to be determined by individuals or societies. In this thesis, a family is considered as a composition of parent/s and child/ren.

Fenton-Glynn, (2014) states that adoptive parents are placed in the same position as biological parents of having to protect the family life, even where there is no contact with the adopted child/ren or where there is a contest. In some situations, the relationship between grandchildren and grandparents may be protected under Article 8, although in the case of distant relatives, this may not apply. Furthermore, this research highlighted rights in the context of family leading to children's rights.

2.6 Definitions of rights

Wenar (2015) defines rights as protected freedom including rights to freedom of religion and speech. Rights are legal, ethical, or social and principles of entitlement of liberty. Rights can

be fundamental normative laws and rules regarding what human beings can be expected to behave according to the ethical theory, social convention, and legal system (Wenar, 2015). Wenar (2015) said that rights are essential to civilisation and are considered established pillars of culture and society. Furthermore, rights are fundamental in some disciplines, such as ethics and laws, particularly deontology and justice theories. Additionally, Wenar (2015) stated that rights structure the contents of laws and governments and shape social morals.

All human beings are entitled to the right of primary care and the right to acquire the necessary skills essential for survival in the context of one's culture (Flekkoy and Kaufman, 1997). They articulated that several centuries ago, English children had the same rights as adults in restricted areas, such as rights to own a property, although they were prohibited from disposing of it. Henceforth, the formalisation of human rights for children became possible by putting together legislation regarding children, the emergence of child evolution as social science, and human rights development. In that era, the emerging of these three concepts established children's rights, especially following World War II (Flekkoy and Kaufman, 1997).

Article 12 stipulates those children who can express their views have the right to communicate whatever concerns them. The opinions of the children are considered according to their age and maturity. Some concerns include the economic resources sufficient to meet them, and the political and social consequences of providing such a right (Franklin, 2005). Rights can be put into two categories: legal and moral rights; and welfare and liberty rights. Legal rights entail rights acknowledged (Franklin, 2005), and implemented by the current law. They also entail

those enforced rights which children possess (Franklin, 2005). Moral rights are commonly known as natural or human rights and these rights do not require any legal endorsements (George,1999). Ladd (1996) suggests that moral rights by their nature belong to all humankind.

Rogers and Wrightsman (1996), stated that welfare and liberty rights had conflicting priorities and labelled it as a centre of a controversy regarding children's rights. Welfare rights revolved more around the provision for the needs of children and their protection (Rogers and Wrightsman, 1996). These rights award children rights to health, shelter, education, and most basic living standards. Archard (1993) noted that liberty rights prioritise free will as one of the children's rights. These rights allow the child to make decisions and choices, though the choice might not be in their best interest (Eekerlaar, 1994). The claims for liberty rights require the individual child to have the capacity to make choices (Archard, 1993).

Locke (1964) contended that children were not rational and were sometimes incapable of making reasonable decisions, implying that the right to autonomous decisions come with child's age and maturity. As (Locke 1964) describes children's wisdom to be so essential and void of understanding, which is earned through life experiences. Consequently, children are prone to make blunders. Society is alleged to protect children only from the dangerous consequences of their adults' incompetence (Locke 1964).

2.7 History of children's rights legislation

This subtopic sought to understand the child protection roots and how that would enlighten us on the current child safeguarding. The outcry related to child cruelty led practical people such

as evangelical philanthropists Shaftesbury to fight for the Factory Acts through Parliament. The evangelicals' uproar resulted in the establishment of the Factory Act 1802. Factories were obligated to improve the working conditions and reduce working hours for children, especially in mines and cleaning chimneys (Bilston, 2006).

As documented by Bilston, (2006), some reformers such as Whatley Cooke-Taylor challenged the traditions of child neglect. In response to child cruelty instances, the first local Societies for Prevention of cruelty to children was established (Bilston 2006) in Liverpool in 1883, later followed by an establishment in London a year after. Five years later, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) was established (Dibb, 2010).

As a result, in 1834 and 1839, the Custody of Infancy Act was introduced, which accorded custody of children under 7 to their mothers. The first Barnardo's home for destitute children was established in 1870, and the same year a law was passed for compulsory education for young children aged 5 to 12 years old (Barnard, 2000). The age consent was raised in 1885 to 12 to 16 years and later followed by 1889, the first Act of the 'Children's Charter,' which prevented cruelty. The Protection of the Children Act was then passed in parliament. This first Act of parliament was designed to prevent child cruelty. The police were henceforth authorised to arrest any perpetrator maltreating or endangering children (Bilston 2006).

The Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act was amended in 1904 to afford the National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) a statutory right to interfere in protecting children via the power to remove them from abuse and neglect. The church had a right to deal

with sexual abuse of children perpetrated by family members until 1908, when it became a legal matter, and by then, juvenile courts had been established. The Children and Young People Act (CYPA) introduced the supervision orders for children at risk in 1932. The local authorities were authorised to claim full responsibility for the children, which formed the foundations of the current Local Authority Children's Services (Bilston, 2006).

However, in 1933, the CYPA was amended to incorporate all laws protecting children into a single piece of legislation (Bilston, 2006). The same year, society saw criminal responsibility being raised to 8 years and hanging for criminals below 18 years olds abolished, while leaving school age was raised to 14 years of age. Following the death of the 13-year-old boy, Dennis O'Neill, in the care of his foster parents, in 1945, the parliamentary care of children committee was established as articulated by Bilston. In 1948 the Children Act abolished the law on looked-after children from the Poor-law since its existence in 1601 (Bilston, 2006). The local authority was responsible for establishing a Children's Committee and commissioning a Children's Officer. Then in 1970, the local authority social services and social care services were unified to form the social services departments under the Local Authority Social Services Act (Bilston, 2006). Bilston (2006) confirmed that Maria Cowell's death at her stepfather's hands in 1973 exposed a high level of lack of co-ordination in child safeguarding within the Child Protection Services. The public grieved over Maria's death, which was followed by the equally shocking deaths of Heidi Kosea, Jasmine Beckford, Tyra Henry, and many others (Bilston 2006).

After this, according to Bilston (2006), a sinister and appallingly high level of child sexual exploitation erupted. The public received another blow as it witnessed social workers' failures to protect the children, and in return, the social services bounced into overreaction in an effort to cover their backs (Bilston 2006). High-profile scandals in practices were exposed. Children were removed from their families over suspicion of parental sexual abuse, such as Cleveland's cases in 1987 and Rochdale and Orkney in 1990 (Bilston 2006). The Cleveland and Rochdale case revealed that the children denied any sexual abuse consistent with a medical report. Parents and carers were accused of sexual abuse without conclusive evidence (Bilston 2006). Residential children's careers were also found guilty of corruption and neglect (Bilston 2006). In the 1970s, cover-ups around the corruption of sexual abuse were exposed, and there were some Residential Children's Homes staff convictions. In subsequent decades the death of Baby P and Victoria Climbie gave another shockwave to the professionals, particularly those who were involved with the cases (Bilston 2006). The report brought the development of the Area Child Protection Committees (ACPCs), which was formed to co-ordinate the responsible agencies and to ensure that they provide safety to the young people at risk.

In 1989 every child was given the right to protection from maltreatment and exploitation and the right to inquiries to safeguard their welfare (Bilston, 2006). However, the Act came into full force in 1991, and in the same year, ACPCs were given responsibility to investigate when a child died through suspected abuse. The system had showed many flaws in the 19th century, Ferguson (2016) arguing that the relationship of social work and its practice to child abuse was

inconsistent. However, in 1999 reviews of procedures and guidance on child safeguarding through Working Together to Safeguard Children were formed. The Protection of Children Act, 1999, was designed to prevent perpetrators such as paedophiles from working in systems that interact with children. It gave the responsibility to organisations that worked with children to whistle-blow to the department of health for anyone who may look suspicious in causing harm to children, (Bilston 2006). The research attempted to define a child/ren as from different views and explore what it means to protect a child.

2.8 Defining a Child

More importantly it is vital for this research to define what a child entails, within the context of this study. The UNICEF Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 states that a universal experience framework does not define a child. Similarly, it depends on the historical locations of individuals or societal period. Article 1 of the convention describes a child as every human being under 18 years of age only where the law applies to a particular child when the majority is attained before 18 years. Children have been defined differently across history. Franklin et al. (2005) have said that childhood can be understood as a social institution, where social relationships are constituted in a human being's early life. Flekkoy and Kaufman (1997) stated that children can be defined differently through the lens of historians, philosophers, and teachers. The teacher might see a child as a vulnerable member of society looking for freedom through learning (Flekkoy and Kaufman,1997).

Different countries have stipulated legal age limits, which were subject to change after reviews. Flekkoy et al. (1997) say that in Norway, a child's age limit was 21 until 1960, when it was reduced to 18. The United States government lowered the voting age to 16 years of age during the Vietnam War, the saying of being 'old enough to fight then old enough to vote'. Flekkoy et al. (1997), concludes by saying childhood's duration varies under different conditions and nationals. Franklin and Franklin (1990) define childhood as entailing more than a specification of a particular age of majority. The definition of childhood at any time expresses a specific society's perception and values towards children. The pivoting child rearing in this thesis was centred around how different cultures conceptualised parenthood.

2.9 Cultural Differences In Childrearing

Though the UK is governed by the Children Act 1989, this has not resolved the confusion of mixed ideologies in raising children. This is due to the characteristics of the UK, which has increasingly widened into a multicultural society. In such a society, conflicts are inevitable, and parents or children may be the victims of childrearing legislation due to cultural misconceptions.

Wikan (1985) argues that childrearing has different goals and aims in different cultures, emphasizing learning rules, values, skills, personality progress, social interaction training, and self-concept. In some cultures, what is important is to teach social skills rather than ethics and practical skills. Wikan (1985) gave the example of Egyptian culture, which promotes learning, status, respect, sharing of goods, and being hospitable and polite. In Europe, children of the

same age are overprotected and perceived to be very delicate to handle and very immature to comprehend such interactions (Wikan, 1985). This study has highlighted the cultural differences in parenting, which could be categorised as neglect.

2.10 Child Neglect

In countries like Sweden, Norway and the UK, corporal punishment on children has been banned (Solomon, 2006). Parent's and caregivers' legal rights had over smacking, slapping, whipping their children were revoked (Solomon, 2006). Cicchetti, et al. (2002) suggested that child neglect, on many occasions, is more devastating than child abuse. Neglect is experienced more at an earlier age where the caregivers fail to meet the infant's needs (Cicchetti et al., 2002). They went on to say that this might result in infants failing to develop a secure attachment. It was further argued that where the caregiver is not consistent with the baby's healthy nurturing, not meeting the child's medical and physical needs would lead to the infant developing insecurity and later exhibiting disoriented and disorganised behaviour. Brammer (2009) states that neglect can be defined in different ways, such as failing to provide enough food, shelter, and clothing, failing to protect the child from emotional and physical harm, and to ensure proper supervision. Magid and McKelvery (1987), perceived those children who went through neglect generally harboured extreme hatred and fury. They suggested that children who are beaten and neglected were affected academically and that they exhibited severe cognitive deficits. Hildyard and Wolfe (2002) noted that neglected children were more likely to show withdrawal socially and tended to internalise their problems than externalise them.

Maternal rejection at age one may contribute to violent crime participation at age 18 (Raine et al. (1994).

Henceforth, Bowlby (1988), points out that the foundation of human beings' interaction is acquired during the first year of life when the infant's needs are catered for by parents or caregivers and suggests that the infant's basic needs are food, human contact, and physical comfort. Henceforth, Bowlby (1988), reports that the caregiver is accustomed to the baby's needs, such as hunger, pain, and discomfort of cold and wet nappies in general situations. Magid et al. (2006) state that a secure attachment bond develops between the caregiver and the baby where the fundamentals for all future social connections and emotional attachments between the babies and other humans are created. Brain and behaviour development is determined by the quality of the initial attachment between the infant and the caregiver (Main, 1995). This implies that neglect undermines the child's development.

2.11 Child Abuse and its History

Child cruelty has been well-known throughout humankind's history (Bilston, 2000), and time has shown that child exploitation and neglect existed but was accepted as a norm. Although cruelty was deemed unacceptable nevertheless became a way of life in some families, schools, and institutions. Bilston, (2000), argued that the adult in question justified the cruelty in the name of discipline. Before the 1600s, the society was predominately religious, its social ethic that personified in the phrase 'spare the rod and spoil the child.' Bilston (2000) quotes a famous British preacher, John Wesley's mother, a great advocate for such discipline, accompanied by

a whip when raising her children. She defended herself by stating that 'to make the child do as he/she is told, if the child is whipped ten times running to effect it' (Bilston (2000). The history of intervening in child protection is recorded back to the pre-1600's. In this era, the church had the responsibility for orphans, and ensured safeguarding and sending the children for training as apprentices. In 1601 the law of the basic security system was introduced, formalising the apprentice system for the children. Bilston reported that historical Europe participated in child labour since the Roman Empire, through the Middle Ages to the industrial revolution up to the end of the 19th century. Children were full-fledged workers from six years, in shops, farms, professions, and factories. Girls were potential maids from eight onwards while boys were engaged as apprentices. Flekkoy et al. (1997) says that children had a price tag, a pragmatic value based on what they could contribute to the family in the 1700s. However, as the world drifted towards modernisation, the legal age limit became the subject of change across different countries. Records showed that in 1739 Thomas Coram established the pioneering hospital for the deserted young people's education and upkeep (Pugh, 2011). It was not only child protection from physical harm the infants subjected to but also routine child exploitation. Child exploitation was convenient for the adults because child labour was versatile and cheap, while parental rights were paramount (Pugh, 2011). The assumption was that parents knew best for their off-springs and responsibility where delegation or allocated to the children Pugh (2011). Physical punishment was essential for emphasising obedience, and that was normal. Families were laws unto themselves, and there were no legislations to intervene. Studies suggest that children are the most criminally victimised beings in society and are exposed to maltreatment

in different forms, like physical abuse from family members and being the prey of paedophiles (Finkelhor 2008).

Handling child neglect and abuse issues includes the challenge of protecting some of the family members without intruding upon the family's privacy and overregulating the family support in need (Bueren, 1998). Finkelhor (2008) argued that traditionally it had been overly stressed to respect the family element's integrity to ensure that children have a healthy environment in which to grow. However, neglect and abuse have invited the law into the family privacy sphere. UN Convention on the Rights of a Child 1989 seeks to safeguard children's economic and social vulnerability and enable them to live within the family without fear of physical or emotional harm. Article 19 (1) mandates the States Parties to employ all suitable legislative, social, administrative, and educational actions to safeguard children from all sorts of neglect and abuse, such as physical, mental violence, maltreatment, negligent treatment or exploitation, and sexual abuse while in the parents' or legal guardians' care (Helfer and Kempe, 1998).

Neglect and abuse share the same schedule of deliberate refusal or inability to care for the child to harm the child. Brammer (2009) states that there are distinct forms of abuse, including hitting, suffocating, shaking, poisoning, and burning a child. These constitute a deliberate action intended to induce pain in a child. Additionally, emotional abuse is the persistence of verbalising a child's worthlessness, restraining the child from expressing oneself, and making fun of what they say or look like.

2.12 Causes of Abuse

Browne (1995) identified five explanations of child abuse, which include the following:

- Psychopathic- which North American studies propose to be an organic disorder suffered by known offenders.
- Social or environmental-this explanation recognises that not all maltreatments result from psychiatric difficulties, but other factors such as unemployment, housing, and other social stressors can trigger abusive behaviour.
- Special Victim- highlights problems faced by some parents with learning disabilities or difficulties.
- Psycho-social-exhibiting some factors such as hostility, stress, hopelessness and depression.
- Psychological and social factors -which interact to predispose some individuals to violent behaviour.

When these are identified, there is a need to introduce some measures to safeguard the child.

2.13 Defining Safeguarding

The promotion and safeguarding of children's welfare encompasses several interrelated activities such as protecting children from maltreatment, ensuring their safety and wellbeing, and preventing impairment of their health Powell, (2007); HM Government, (2006). The Government guidance England for Working Together to Safeguard Children emphasises that children and young people's primary safeguarding should be accomplished by employing good

parenting. Children should be helped to attain their potential within a stable environment and should experience constant boundaries and guidance (Powell 2007).

Summary

This chapter has explored the concept of safeguarding children basing on the legislative guidelines. In this exploration more revelations were noticed that though the children were protected by the state, but the best place for them was to be with their families. It was also noticed that any assessment should be in partnership and that professionals should involve the parents. Some concerns have been highlighted over the children's interest overshadowing the parents' human rights. CRC views the children's best interest lightly in comparison to Children Act 1989 where they are considered supreme. This chapter clearly revealed that it was impossible to safeguard children without the support of their parents. It was demonstrated that there was a need to review from human rights regarding parents and children's relationship for child protection. Further revelations were confirmed that it was impossible to protect children while ignoring parent's feelings. The solution for an effective child protection was to evaluate policies which supported the holistic family.

The government was subject to criticism for overlooking the parents human rights Article 8 in relation to looked after children. However, the chapter considered the need to interfere with private life where children were potentially endangered. The chapter defined family as a composition of parents and children.

In this chapter children's rights were discussed. Basing on the welfare, rights for children included those which covered all humankind. Some children's rights brought about some controversy, particularly the liberty rights which may encourage immature children to make unreasonable decisions. In this chapter it is argued that children were capable of making blunders which could be detrimental for them or in their future.

Child protection was found to be a historical practice which came into existence as a means of protecting children from harm. Though it has been an ongoing exercise, in recent years it became more tightened and emphasised due to some unimaginable child abuses and neglect, for example the cases of Victoria Climbie and baby Peter Connelly. The definition of a child in this chapter was found to vary with different nationalities but in the UK, it covers anyone below the age of eighteen. Cultural parenting differences were found to be responsible of misconception of child abuse. More discussions have been made on neglect and abuse the central factors to call for state intervention. Neglect and abuse are described as actions taken by a parent or a care giver to harm the child. It was also seen that child abuse has a long-standing history which prompted child safeguarding as it continued till this date. Causes of abuse have been referred to, the result of environments which harm or injure a child, psychologically, physically, emotionally and sexually. In this regard this leads to more scrutiny of child safeguarding.

CHAPTER THREE: The Concept of Child Safeguarding

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the conflict inherent in the Human Rights Act (Choudhry and Fenwick, 2005), especially where interventions were called for and, at the same time, the requirements of respecting private life. Henceforth, the discussion of the ever-increasing number of Black and minority ethnic children taken into care (Dominelli, 2019). The chapter explores the reasons that lead social workers into child intervention, resulting in separating them from the family. It explains the child protection processes which take place before the removal of a child from the home. The chapter also examines three dependent factors that determine thresholds leading to the removal of children into care, such as, risk assessment, substantiation of abuse/neglect, and recommendations for interventions. Additionally, the experiences and practices of social workers in the UK will be examined. This chapter also explores the relationship between care and deprivation. In conclusion, the chapter will highlight poor parenting and how the first-generation Black African mothers are impacted through interventions. The central argument of this Thesis is on the consequences which surround the harming of a child, whether intentional or accidental. More importantly, the chapter clarifies what and how harm is determined by the social services.

3.2 Determining Harm

Certain thresholds should be reached to determine if the child has been harmed or not. In making assessments, social workers are expected to have the capacity to interpret the law

correctly, enabling them to recognise the threshold criteria of significant harm (Searing, 2017). Experienced social workers should express how they understand the responsibility of striking the right balance in judgment ((Searing, 2017). Furthermore, the pressure that social workers bear when tragic cases occur and acknowledging the need of children to have a steady and lifelong connection with their families calls for the professionals' assertiveness.

As documented in the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) (2017) report, The Children Act 1989 presented the idea of 'significant harm' as the threshold which validates enforced interference in families by the state. The intervention is justified as necessary in accordance with the law in the best interests of the child, resulting in empowering social services to carry out investigations. As stated by SSCB (2017), there are no outright benchmarks to determine what significant harm is defined by, instead, this depends on the social worker's discretion.

3.2.1 'Significant Harm'

The Children Act 1989, section 47, presented the concept of significant harm as the overriding 'threshold' that justifies obligatory intervention in private family life in the best interests of a child (Searing, 2017). Significant harm in The Children Act 1989 is the impairment of a child's health or development or ill-treatment (Searing, 2017).

Some experienced social workers, such as Searing (2017), argue over the difficulties of asserting harm as psychological, with a possibility of impairing emotional development. Searing (2017) acknowledges that social workers' evidence has the potential of divided views. Some views are drawn from their knowledge base and that which emphasises the assessment of future harm (likelihood). More importantly, the knowledge acquired should be employed efficiently and marry with the social work practices. Moreover, Collingwood *et al.* (2008) spoke of the qualified social workers' failures to integrate theory and practice. Henceforth, debating on the '(in)competence' of social workers can be the element of failing to put theory into practice – the latter might be constrained by their professional demands, such as excessive workloads and funding for resources (Collingwood *et al.*, 2008). Searing (2017) believed that the existing practices and policies for children's services in the UK were problematic for social workers to execute their duties. Searing (2017) further argued that the political and legal obligation of safeguarding has placed a heavy burden of accountability on social workers, to keep them vigilant in evidencing 'significant harm,' and abusive or neglectful parents.

The Children Act 1989 defined 'Significant Harm' as: "the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Emotional Abuse and Neglect are all categories of Significant Harm". Davis (2014) contends the inaccuracies of measuring harm by comparing with a 'similar child' of the same age, health and intellectual development. More challenging for social workers will be determining the likelihood of harm, unlike significant harm which might be evidenced through some injuries.

3.2.2 Likelihood of Harm

Social workers are required to investigate apparent physical injuries and establish the likelihood of harm. They gather facts over the informed fears or incident (Tickle, 2016). This has required gathering a complete explanation of the events surrounding the alleged injury or incident and to get information about the child's needs. The child's needs are evaluated by investigating the family composition and its dynamics, physical conditions in the house, and any relevant factors in the social environment (Tickle, 2016). In-depth judgment should be done over the quality and practices of parenting. The likelihood of harm can be measured by some behaviour of the adults in the home, such as the history and incidences of violence, teenage parents, drugs and alcohol addictions, and significant learning disabilities (Tickle, 2016). Upon establishing that children are subjected to harm, the professionals are obligated to remove the children into care. However, in the UK, the removal of children into care has been on the rise and has reached "record levels" (Tickle, 2016), as evidenced in the next section.

3.3 Statistics on Children Taken into Care

As reported by Tickle (2016) in an article in The Guardian newspaper entitled, 'Are we taking too many children into care?' UK Government statistics show local authorities care applications to be increasing year on year. The records show that in August 2015, there were 1,258 care applications, giving a 34% increase from the previous August. The annual rate also escalated to 4% in March 2014 compared to 2013, 5% in March 2015, and 15% in March 2016, making a total number of 70,440 children in care in the UK. The rise in the number of looked-after children affects not only the local authorities but also the court systems. Tickle (2016) reports on a relentless rise of family court cases widening the family court system to breaking point. Thus, in citing Dave Hill, president of the Association of Directors of Children's Services, Tickle (2016) reports that "the number of children in public care is…a national disgrace".

The latest data on looked-after children revealed an astonishing level of increase in the last ten years (Local Government Association (LGA), 2020). The LGA reveal that the latest figures show a 28 per cent increase of children compared to the past decade reaching crisis point.

The LGA (2020) also publicised the state of councils who have seen a 53 per cent increase in children on child protection plans, which was an additional 18,160 children from the previous decade. Essentially, in the past decade, there has been a 139 per cent increase in serious cases where the local authority believed a child could be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm - an additional 117,070 cases (up to 201,170 cases) (LGA, 2020:1). Moreover, the age of

children in care has been steadily increasing over the past five years. Young people over 10 years old account for 63 per cent of all children in care, with teenagers being six times more likely than younger children to be living in residential or secure children's homes, which is significantly more expensive than foster care (LGA, 2020: 1).

Tickle (2016), citing Anthony Douglas, president of the Association of Directors of Children's Services, who argued that the practices of children's social care professionals are determined by a postcode lottery whereby, in some areas, children experiencing significant harm are brought into care, whereas, in other areas, children encountering significant harm remain in the home but they are kept safe as the families are given early help services or targeted family support. These situations are witnessed across local authorities in the UK, where there is no consistency in the rate at which children are removed from the home and placed into care, ranging between 30 per every 10,000 children to 180 per every 10,000 children (Devine and McGillicuddy, 2019).

Devine (2016) argued that the variable rates of children taken into care are driven not by risk factors but by variable practices. Devine (2016) also points out that the removal of children into care is driven by fear rather than the unquestionable evidence of who is foreseen to abuse their children. Through her assessments, Devine (2016) found that the professionals demonstrate incompetence in predicting who could harm or kill their child and, as a result, in these circumstances, there is no acceptable open margin of error.

The public and media anxiety over the removal of children into care has become apparent, to the extent where the most unlikely platforms have published articles around the Child Protection theme (D'Urbino, 2018). In an article by The Economist entitled, 'The troubling surge in English children being taken from their parents', D'Urbino (2018) confirms the alarming number of children taken into care as troubling, and included the phrase "from cradle to court," which speaks volumes about the precarious circumstances under discussion. By contrast, in 2012, the former Minister of Education, Michael Gove, complained about local authorities' child protection services, saying that they were not meeting the acceptable standards for child protection. He argued that many children are left too long in abusive families while putting the needs of parents first at the expense of vulnerable children (Michael Gove, 2012). This reflects competing views on safeguarding children, that is, between excessive removal of children into care and leaving children in abusive families. Phibbs (2018) criticised Gove and his successor as Education Secretary on their failures in that respect, quoting the continually increasing statistics of looked-after children. Phibbs (2018) contended that from 31 March 2017 to 31 March 2018, there was a 75,420 increase of looked-after children in England. Phibbs (2018) viewed the care system as a national tragedy, suggesting that children are trapped in the system. He also pointed out the prejudices of judges and social workers who favour keeping children in the care system. Phibbs (2018) further argued that the remedy to fight crime was to promote adoption. His mentioning of crime was based on the notion that one-quarter of prisoners passed through care. This gave the care leavers more than fifty per cent probability of ending up in prison in comparison to other children at home. Unfortunately, only

six per cent of looked-after children could make it to university. It was also found that black children stay longer in care before adoption as confirmed by the UK Charity Adoption UK (Adoption UK, 2020). Moreover, Adoption UK (2020) are calling for black families to adopt vulnerable black children. The same charity gave a report which indicates that national statistical figures show that black children are overrepresented in the care system. The Department for Education revealed that; "of the 78,150 children looked after at the end of 2019, 8% were black or black British ethnicity. But just 3.7% (60) of the 3,570 looked after children who were adopted in England during 2019, were black". These reports suggest that black children are overrepresented in the statistics for looked after children, yet they are the minority of the general population.

The Care Leavers Association (2014) states that care leavers are overrepresented in custody. Fitzpatrick (2016) and DFE (1013) confirm that care leavers and children in care account for less than 1% of the general population. Lord Laming (2016) identifies that about 50% of children in custody have passed through care, whilst Berman and Dar (2013) identify that 25% of the adult prison population has passed through care. HMIP (2011) reveals that 49% of young men in the Criminal Justice System have been in the care system, and that 27% of the young men in custody have passed through care. Furthermore, Kennedy (2013) identifies that 33% of those in custody are care leavers between 15 and 18 years of age, and David Lammy's Final Report (2017) confirms that the prison/custody population is over-represented by BAME groups, comprising 40% of young people from the BAME group. From the above data, a clear

relationship can be seen between care, criminal justice, and 'race'. According to the data reflected in DfE (2018), it mirrors a disproportionality between the BAME group and the white population in the care system.

Similarly, there is a disproportionate over representation of BAME children in the UK welfare system. For instance, in 2009 black children made up 15% of the children's general population, 24% were accounted for maltreatment, and 26% were passed through care and made up 31% of the children in foster care (Rolock, 2011).

However, BAME groups being overrepresented in social settings is not just a British phenomenon but a global issue, especially in the western world (Cross, 2008; Long, 2018). Long (2018) confirms how black children's overrepresentation in the welfare system is an ongoing discussion in America throughout the decades. Long (2018) attributes blame to social services and other government agency biases in terms of the unwarranted targeting of black families. This can be summarised as state racism transmitted to institutional racism. In their work, Long (2018) refers to Font, Berger, and Slack (2012), who suggest that racially disproportionate statistics of BAME children in the care system are due to social workers' systematic bias and cultural incompetency.

Henceforth, there are huge disadvantages that black families in deprived areas face (Long, 2018). For instance, commenting on black families in the US, Long (2018) states that they are subject to continuous surveillance by law enforcement within the social services or other agencies working in connection with child welfare. This alone influences social worker

disparities leading to differential treatment (Long 2018). Discussions worldwide suggest that the longstanding problem of racial inequalities are an ongoing issue. The Department for Education (DfE) (2016) suggests that black and minority ethnic (BAME) groups are worryingly overrepresented in the care system. Moreover, Simpson (2012) has added that there are too many African children in the care system. The burden should not be on parents to figure out how to survive in a culture that was not built for them (Swann, 2019). Long (2018) claimed that many studies have failed to show any conclusive reasons why black children were in child welfare.

Moreover, nothing substantiates the suggestion that Black parents were more abusive or neglectful towards their children. The challenge lies with the social workers, as they were limited in these subjects and other variables such as their ability to meet black children's needs and a lack of culturally appropriate services (Long 2018). Although Long (2018) was writing from an American perspective, the concept of the over-representation of Black children in the care system mirrors the UK situation, as reflected in many reports that include the David Lammy Final Report (Lammy, 2018) and Dominelli (2019). However, further analysis should be made to establish why black children are ending up in care in record-breaking numbers, as evidenced earlier.

Famer *et al.* (2008) state that the professionals' decisions may influence either negatively or positively long- or short-term consequences for some children. Benbenishty *et al.* (2015) identify the leading players considered during child removal from the home as three domains;

firstly, the mother's wishes for removal, 'as case characteristic,' secondly players are practitioners who 'prioritise the child's welfare' and then the 'protective system,' which is government policy. Substantiated child abuse or neglect is that which leads to the removal of children from the home (Benbenishty *et al.*, 2015). The Children Act 1989 explains what qualifies a child in need (Jarrett, 2016), as discussed in the next section.

3.4. Children in Need

Every child has different needs, but some have more complex needs and potentially invite outsiders to intervene if the demands consistently indicate that a child is at risk (Jarrett, 2016). The outsiders' perceptions of negative things about the child's welfare drive them to alert relevant agencies such as social services and the police.

The Children Act 1989 section 17 (1) is a measure of conditions laid down to determine a child's needs, which means if those circumstances are found, the child could be classified as in need (Jarret, 2016). Section 17 defines a child in need legally (Jarrett, 2016) as children who are most likely to face maltreatment. Children in need are not expected to achieve in education, social skills and life generally, without intervention taking effect (Jarrett, 2016). Among other things, these children are perceived as those who have little or no help. They cannot maintain a reasonable standard of development or health without the local authority's interventions. Jarrett (2016) also maintains that children whose parents are in prison, youngsters engaging in criminal activities, young carers and young asylum seekers' may be viewed as children in need.

After the professionals have identified the child's needs, they are expected to draw a needs plan (Wells, 2017) and afford them appropriate support.

There are several types of support offered after the identification of the needs of a child. The Children Act 1989 section 17(1) does not set out for children to be removed from families but support and helps parents care for their children. Section 17 (1)'s provision is that the local authority provides a range of services such as: Day-cares for children below the age of 5 years; counselling, advice, and guidance; cultural, social, or recreational activities; provision of accommodation to a child and their family, and family centres.

Once the local authority is alerted of a child in need, they are obliged to step in and investigate the concerns and acquire information about a child's needs, as stipulated in the Children Act 1989. Upon establishing the certainty that the child is in danger, the authorities should escalate the case from section 17 to section 47. Section 47 is the compulsory intervention under the Children Act 1989.

The legal framework requires social workers to operate within 24 hours of guidance in the context of child protection (Munro, 2012). Cortis *et al.* (2019) perceive Munro's endorsement as resonating beyond the United Kingdom's borders and underlining the significance of the relational extents of practices on the comprehensive system's effectiveness. Broadhurst *et al.* (2010) echoed the importance of assessing human relationships and professional capability as the basis for averting harm on children and effective responses. Vincent *et al.* (2010) viewed the parent and expert's rapport as the centre of the system's effectiveness. Relationships enable

the caseworker to form a broad understanding of the circumstances that surround the family. Though some professionals make efforts to build relationships with their clients (Ferguson, 2016), this is often bypassed in preference of shortcuts required to meet efficiency urgencies. Findings show that the more the social workers visit their clients, and build a rapport, the more the administrative burden of data input will be strained (Cortis *et al.*, 2019).

3.5 Child Protection in England

In England, the responsibility for child protection lies with The Department for Education (DfE) (Lane *et al.*, 2016). The DfE's mandate is to set out statutory guidance, legislation, and policies on how the child protection system should operate. They have allocated Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) to ensure and coordinate work to safeguard and promote children's welfare. This is operated at the local level, hence, each local board comprises health bodies, local authorities, the police, education, and others such as volunteers and independent sectors (Lane *et al.*, 2016). These bodies are governed by the same legislation when it comes to child protection. The Government noted in the 'Working Together' document (DfE, 2018) that every LSCB, the local authority and its partners should agree on the categories for different valuations and services to be commissioned and provided (Baginsky, and Holmes, 2015). The LSCB is required to publish a threshold document that covers the criteria, level of need, and circumstances under which a case should be referred to children's social care for further assessment under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. More so, the LSCB are

responsible for coordinating children's assessment with the multi-agency involved in child protection (Lane et al., 2016).

Lane *et al.* (2016) stated that the Act was intended to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to improve support for children in care and care leavers. Furthermore, the Act makes requirements on the regulations of social workers. Corporate parenting principals are set for councils so that professionals can support parents in enabling them be effective in their parenting. This mainly applies to England and comprises varied provisions regarding support for children in the care and care leavers. Reviews regularly take place of monitored children under the Child Protection Act and those in care (Lane et al., 2016), following guidelines.

3.6 Child Protection Guidelines

Lynn (2014) acknowledges that a child's welfare is paramount, and guidelines should be applied. Section 17 affords the professionals to assess the following: the developmental needs of the child; the history and family functioning and the wider family and environmental factors were having on the parents' Evidence of any violence in the home; the capacity of the parents to respond to the needs of the child, and the ability of the parents to promote the child's development and health.

The Children's Act 1989 Section 47 is initiated where there are concerns about the likelihood of harm to a child or significant harm has occurred to a child. Barlow *et al.* (2012) stated children services would in these circumstances call the police for a strategic discussion. The strategic discussion determines whether the investigation be joint with the police or a single

agency, apparently, children's services. The police take the role of investigating a crime committed against the child, such as physical or sexual abuse, and the social workers investigate child protection concerns. Child protection concerns are those deemed emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect (cited in Barlow *et al.*, 2012).

Children Act 1989 s1 (3) provides a list of considerations, usually known as the 'welfare checklist' (Barlow *et al.*, 2012), to meet the requirements for child safeguarding. The list consists of the following factors: ascertainable wishes and feelings of a child in question; bear in mind the age and understanding of the child; emotional, physical, and educational needs of the child; any possible effect on the child of any changes of circumstances; the background, sex, and other child characteristics that the court can consider to be significant; indications of harm the child has suffered or is at risk of harm; the child's parents or any other people's capacity about what the court considers being pertinent for meeting his/her needs, and the range of powers offered to the court under Act 1989, in proceedings in question.

Although the items specified in the list are not exclusive of other relevant factors to be incorporated, the list does not apply to emergency safeguarding issues or the child's assessment application. Nevertheless, where child protection was of concern, the professionals were expected to take relevant actions to protect the child (Barlow *et al.*, (2012).

3.7 Child Protection Process in the UK

Children's protection is crucial - it mostly refers to the actions taken to protect children suffering from significant harm and those at risk (Powell, 2007). Importantly, government guidance recommends proactive safeguarding, and promoting children's welfare could help reduce the need for professionals to intervene in protecting the child (Powell, 2007). As this might indicate that the experts' interventions in some cases potentially lacked full knowledge of the case. Cleaver and Freeman (1996) identified flaws within the social services system, stating that first investigations are undertaken without the guardian/family's knowledge. The referral made should meet the statutory threshold (Bilson and Martin, 2016), whereby the Department for education (2015b) states that statutory regulation on children's safeguarding entails the publication of the local thresholds for intervention and assessment for Early Help.

Bilson and Martin (2016) state that referrals made are assessed in either level three *('Children with complex multiple needs'*) or level four to proceed towards assessment. Level four is where there are suspicions of a child's distress, either suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This level calls for a strategy discussion, most likely an inter-agency consultation, involving the police. At this stage, the discussion helps professionals to decide if the investigation fits into section 47 of The Children Act 1989. The DfE (2015) specifies that where investigation findings indicate that the child is likely to suffer significant harm, then action to protect should be taken. At this point, a child protection conference should be held. The meeting should involve professionals who work with children and family advocates and, if appropriate, invite

the child's family (DfE, 2015). HMSO (1996) notes that during the child protection conference, the professionals ought to satisfy one of the following:

1. One or more recognisable incidents are described as having adversely affected the child, and professionals feeling that further harm is likely to occur.
2. Significant harm is inevitable basing on the experts' judgment of their findings in the current case or on research-based evidence. If there are concerns about the child's safety, further action could be obligatory. The child protection conference ensures the child's safety and promotes their health and development by making a child protection plan. Child protection matters should be viewed best in the context of children's broader needs (HMSO, 2015).

During the first inquiry of abuse, professionals are required to work together within their designated agencies. This category requires coordinated support from several agencies that include education, health, and children's social care (Bilson and Kate, 2006).

3.8 Multiagency Approach (Working Together)

'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (WTSC) is a government guide to inter-agencies to work together to promote children's welfare (Ferguson, 2002). A multiagency approach can be viewed as a division of labour in a child welfare system. Ferguson (2002) challenged the widely held view of the importance of a multiagency approach, labelling it as the networking of a faceless establishment that possesses the authority to invade people's houses and lives and rip

them apart as they take children into care. In his argument, Ferguson (2002) sees the multiagency practices with competing agendas. One which exhibits control and power and, on the same token, shows compassion, care, and helping to relieve children's suffering. There are different agencies involved in child protection which include the health personnel to determine significant harm, as discussed in the next section.

3.9 Involvement of Health Agencies and Police in Child Protection

In the care proceedings, the health workers have a role in evidence where harm or significant harm has occurred. Nursing, midwives, and doctors are vital players in child protection and promoting welfare (Powell, 2007). The medical personnel determine the injuries and examine if they are inconsistent or unconvincing (Mathews and Kenny, 2008). Similar responsibility stretches to the police, who investigate crimes imposed on a child. The police are primarily required to help other agencies in areas that concern the child's welfare, mainly where there are criminal activities involved. The local authorities should report the matter to the police, as stated in the Children Act 2004. The Children Act 2004, section 11 allocates responsibilities to multi-agencies and individuals for children's protection and welfare. Such organisations as district councils, local authorities, social services, public health, youth services, housing, NHS Trusts, and Foundation Trusts are all accountable to section 11 (Powell, 2007). This includes the police, crime commissioners, the British Transport Police, National Probation Service, and Community Rehabilitation Companies (2008). The Youth Offending Teams (YOT) and Principals of Secure Colleges are also subject to section 11. More understanding is required on

the responsibilities of social workers for promoting child welfare, in order to identify their understandings of cultural parenting of African communities.

3.10 Social Workers

The Social Work Act 2017 is intended to promote the welfare of children and their safeguarding (Barlow *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, the Social Work Act 2017 is intended to improve the support offered to children in care and care leavers. Moreover, the Act requires the regulations of social workers where corporate parenting principles are set for the local authorities. Barlow *et al.* (2012) mention the obligations placed on local authorities to investigate wherever there are suspicions of a child at risk. Section 47, being the overriding threshold for the significant likelihood of harm, justifies the intervention that interferes with private life in the child's best interest. Controversially, evidence of significant likelihood of harm presented by social workers might trigger conflicted views (Searing, 2017). The social workers should draw their assessments based on knowledge and estimate of the likelihood of harm. Furthermore, Searing (2017) argues that the existing practices and policies for children's services are challenging for social workers to execute their duties. Searing (2017) stressed that the legal obligation and political imperatives of safeguarding have placed a heavy burden on social workers' responsibility to evidence significant and likelihood of harm and abusive or neglectful parents. Other critics like Tillyard (2011) contend the challenge of measuring significance or likelihood of harm on a child. Unfortunately, Children's Acts do not explain the similarities to compare between the child in question and other children of a similar age. In this research, the definition

of harm was explored as discussed in the introduction chapter. Social workers were also driven to deliver the child's wishes and consider the child's feelings as they worked with families. This is the focus of the next section.

3.11 The Child's Wishes and Feelings

In the social worker's practice, children's wishes, and feelings should be fundamental and observed, as stated in s1 (3) of The Children Act 1989. The clarification of a child's wishes and feelings in question should be considered, alongside the child's understanding and age. Davis (2014) stated that while children do not often go to court, they depend on experts to explain and state their views on their behalf. The professionals often help courts by interpreting what the child is trying to convey through their behaviour or words. However, Davis (2014) posed an important question: *'How free is the child to express their true feelings and wishes? Are they pressurised to say what is expected?'* Children might not be able to articulate their wishes but rather might end up expressing desires contrary to their actual needs (Russell-Johnson, 2003). Upon establishing that the child is in need and requires further safeguarding, the practitioners are supposed to step into another level of child protection known as Care Proceedings (Russell-Johnson, 2003), which will be discussed in the next section.

3.12 Care Proceedings

NSPCC (2014) 'care proceedings' describes how social workers request permission from the courts to remove a child into care (Memarnia, 2014). Under these circumstances, professionals should engage with the child's family and see if the child can return home, as confirmed by the

NSPCC (2014). The child's fate is decided at the final hearing, whether the judge decides to give a full care order or not. The Children Act (1989) anticipates that the courts will award a full care order once they are convinced that their threshold criteria have been met. The final stage is when the Local Authority produces a threshold document evidencing the attainment of the threshold criteria as required by The Children Act 1989. At this point, a child's care plan should afford the local authority parental responsibility. According to Memarnia (2014), responsibilities for a child are shared between the local authority and the parents, although this is more theoretical than reality. The local authority has the power to control the extent to which the parents should be involved, and parents are to follow the rules as they are ordered (Memarnia, 2014).

However, concerns have been highlighted over the quality of social workers' intervention assessments on child maltreatment cases. Bernard and Gupta (2006) emphasised that inquiries should not concentrate purely on risk assessments but rather should be holistic for all family members. Here, the parents' needs are identified, and the social worker must make appropriate referrals to ensure that relevant services address those needs. However, if this is not followed through, there is a tendency to put parents and social workers at odds (Bernard and Gupta, 2006).

3.13 Pressure on Social Workers

It is within the social worker's interest to reduce or prevent the danger of significant harm as a measure to afford safety to children. When they fail to reduce the risk, they will often proceed

to remove the child from the home environment (Searing, 2017). Platt (2006) states that the nature of social workers' responsibility can portray them as victims of social services. While the Victoria Climbie Inquiry has been identified as an instance of 'full-blown abuse,' it has developed social workers' over-zealous tendency to wrongly convict parents, as broadcasted by the BBC (BBC, 2004). Despite social workers' praiseworthy motivations, scepticism does not spare them regarding child protection practices (Jack, 2004). Child protection's current status quo leaves experts frequently feeling pushed and pulled in various directions by political and public opinion (Jack, 2004).

Parton (2014) mentioned that social workers suffer anxiety regarding children they want to protect and their duty to protect a targeted group of families, such as the black community, as evidenced in the current research. Parton (2014) argues that the nature of social work has several weights constructed into its fabric, especially as it endeavours to mediate between the state and individual. This entails reconciling, control and care, empowerment and safeguarding. Janebova (2017) said that social workers go through personal dilemmas, experiencing conflicting responsibilities between control and support. Some have labelled social workers as agents of power, workers of social control, and viewed as a means of protecting powerful interests (Dominelli and Campling, 2016).

The conflict comes when a social worker is to decide whether to compromise between control and assistance (Fook, 2012). Banks (2012) stated that the tension between individuals' ideas being empowered lies in the balance between social altruism, human rights, and social justice

all simultaneously being satisfied. Social workers are expected to work towards the good of the community, that is, to support families (Jupp, 2005). At the same time, social workers are required to fulfil societal duties around child protection. However, social control in child safeguarding is often unclear, for example, individuals or institutions may force some clients' participation in parenting approaches (Trotter, 2006). However, social workers have been found to be manipulating some families to cooperate (Trotter, 2006). Jupp, (2005) stated that social workers are more profoundly influenced by the demands of neoliberal policies, particularly of the middle-class values and, at the same time, weaken the position of disadvantaged communities in the society.

In addition, Jupp (2005) mentioned other control factors, such that legitimacy of social work practices can be perceived as pressure from superordinate organisations or politicians responding to employers' institutional culture and superiors. Continuation of current practices comes from social workers' social conformity (Ferguson, 2004) which, knowingly or not, leads them to become social control instruments. It is not just the external political, economic, and organisational pressure to shape the social worker, but also a subjectivity formed by the social discourse and dominant cultures and the influence on their clients in their parenting (To, 2006).

3.14 Support versus Control

Janebova (2017) revealed that there are authorities involved in a child's legal and social welfare and monitoring parental care efficiency in child protection. Janebova (2017) considered the practices of these authorities to float between help and control. Moreover, Janebova (2017)

stated that social workers face a conflict between exercising control and rendering the support required by the client. This dilemma is about working with two ethical value options at odds. One option is to intervene and remove the child, and the other option is not to intervene. The social workers express their dilemmas, which can be complicated by the clients' socio-economic classes, family, age, gender, religion, ethnicity, sexual identity, and many more factors (Janebova, 2017). Within social work practice, clients who have lower social status are prone to exclusion from participating in resolving a problem (Dominelli, 2002). That might result in assigning the blame for the issues to an individual whereas, the concerns will be structural (Mullay, 2007). This contact attitude may lead to the deployment of disciplinary power (Web, 2000) or have a sense of superiority over the client (Jupp, 2005).

In some instances, social work decisions and evaluations reflect such stereotypes as discussed above, particularly regarding the status of their clients. Welshman (2007) stated that most social workers' clients belong to the ‘underclass’ - they are often unemployed or otherwise excluded from society's conventional benefits. Young (2007) argues that social segregation practices are on the rise, causing social irritations, targeting mainly the most deprived and marginalised people. Parton (2014) quotes Peter Taylor-Gooby, who agreed with the above authors regarding the underclass circumstances. He believed the increase of inequalities, the media views, and the major political parties have declined in their sympathetic attitudes towards the poor.

Parton (2014) indicated concerns about children's risks, which had increased in depth and numbers within marginalised groups (e.g. BAME and working-class communities). Nevertheless, the parents' failures seem to be attributed to the social workers, who become the scapegoats to whom society can assign ambivalences and guilt attitudes (Parton, 2014). As discussed before, social services clients are mainly poor, and the majority are from ethnic minority groups, where Black families are overrepresented in that category (Parton, 2014).

3.15 Social Workers' Influences on Decisions

Dalgleish and Ken (2013) state that decisions and judgments over alleged cases of child maltreatment result from the contact between the nature of the case and personal attitudes of professionals. Many factors affect decision making, including the ecology settings of the family, the organisational context of the decision-makers, and the public mood towards the safeguarding system (Fluke et al., 2010). Unfortunately, the decisions are recurrent and impact children and their parents (Bouma et al. (2019). The general public have varied views on child safeguarding, where some see its importance; conversely, some view the negative impact and power imbalance between Black families and social workers (Bouma et al., 2019). Dettlaff *et al.* (2011) confirmed that case features such as poverty, ethnicity, and risks are usually related to placement decisions and abuse substantiation.

Bywaters *et al.* (2016) agreed on the relationship between poverty and care, saying that in the West Midlands, it was found that 40% of the care population or those children under a protection plan are from the tenth of the most deprived population. Mikton and Butchart (2009)

expressed the same views as they argued that few interventions show signs to help children to overcome the effects of neglect or emotional abuse. This raises the question of whether increasing investigations followed by individualised interventions which necessarily involve an imbalance of power and parental blame, is the best response to perceived neglect and emotional maltreatment (Barnard and Bain, 2015; Department of health, 1995; Edwards et al. 2015; Bilson and Martin 2017).

Brunnberg and Pecnik (2007) pointed out that decisions and judgments are influenced by the decision-makers' age, experiences, and marital status. Their findings are that younger inexperienced, childless professionals, and some who have experienced abuse or corporal punishment in their childhood, sometimes conceptualise higher risk and are prone to recommend removing children into care.

3.16 Social Workers' Perspectives and Flaws

Munro (2008) stated that some cases of perceived neglect and emotional maltreatment are in the grey area, which is difficult for the most expert and well-informed social workers on what they consider to be the best judgment for the child and family. Munro (2008) likens this to the case of baby Peter (as discussed in the earlier chapter). Moreover, Munro (2008) identified that decisions are made under challenging circumstances, including insufficient resources and severe time limits.

Social workers are expected to address their clients' needs and challenge oppressive social structures (Sakamoto and Pitner, 2005). It has been suggested that social workers should also

question the power dynamics between them and their service users. The imbalance of power potentially drives social workers to indulge in harsh practices and arbitrary decisions (Sakamoto and Pitner, 2005). Sakamoto and Pitner (2005) noted that when social workers help clients, some allow their prejudices and biases to influence how they listen and tackle the client's problem. Their further suggestion was that social workers should initially scrutinise their cultural backgrounds and how the public views them. Sakamoto and Pitner (2005) saw the need for social workers to limit the possibility of imposing their values and opinions on their clients. It is a commonly held view that there are various social identities, such as gender, 'race', social class, religious beliefs, and many more, which are influenced by socio-cultural, historical, and political factors (Sakamoto and Pitner, 2005). In addition, to the factors which influence social workers to remove children into care, is poverty which is an element present among African migrant families in the UK (Sakamoto and Pitner, 2005).

3.17 Deprivation and Care

The media, politicians, and the public alike have all scrutinised the child safeguarding system, which has become a subject of high-profile major reviews and criticisms (Gilbert *et al.*, 2011). However, while these parties are passionate about child protection, equal focus should be given to support the pressure groups that relentlessly fight child poverty. Parton (2012) criticised the economic shift, which has occurred in welfare spending. It has been argued that the Coalition government of Conservative and Liberal Parties introduced a significant change in policy priorities, especially regarding families and children (Parton, 2012). The Coalition government

introduced cuts that affected families' benefits and services for children, unlike the New Labour era, which has had some carry over repercussions cuts in social services (Parton, 2012).

The scarcity of resources contributes to injustice. For example, children from the limited resources households are likely to be deviant and delinquent (Parton, 2012). This leads to justifying gendered 'race' and social inequalities policy responses, positioning poor mothers as architects of their children's deprivation (Featherstone *et al.*, 2014).

The literature supports a strong relationship between levels of deprivation and children on the child protection investigations, or in care - as Pelton (1978) points out that people who are within ten percent of deprivation have eleven times or more chances of being under a child protection plan or being in care than those in the less deprived percentage population. Bywaters *et al.* (2014) recognised that emotional abuse and neglect happens in circumstances of poverty. That might lead the practitioners to easily blame parents during investigations and ignore the effects of poverty, which decapitates their parenting abilities (Bywaters *et al.*, 2014). The children from areas characterised by homelessness, poverty, poor health, and other stresses are overrepresented in the care system (Honeyman, 2016).

Fitzpatrick *et al.* (2016) contend that demand and supply factors in child protection interventions have conflicting elements, and deprivation alone does not warrant a proper account of families' burdens, which depend on individuals and how resilient they are in dealing with their disadvantages. Equally, the primary cultures of service providers contribute to the

outcomes and performance. For instance, certain ethnic or socio-economic groups may be prompting a higher possibility of intervention (Fitzpatrick *et al.*, 2016).

Similarly, the child protection professionals may be desensitized to need in more deprived communities, leading to decreased opportunities in client support. The parents are prone to experience higher suspicions during investigations coupled with humiliation and anxiety (Bilson and Martin, 2017). On the contrary, Fallon *et al.* (2013) argued that the results indicate that some placement decisions are associated with the child's 'race' rather than deprivation, which is the focus of the next section.

3.18 'Race' and Care

Black families are among those ethnic minorities who experience difficulties accessing inclusive and culturally sensitive services (Raymond-Williams, 2017). Raymond-Williams (2017) suggested unstable home environments and single parenthood of black families tend to invite children's services indirectly. Further on Raymond-Williams (2017) suggests that they would be subjected to cultural and racial stereotypes when they are in the care system, identified as institutional racism. Raymond-Williams (2017) believes that ethnic minority children have particular behavioural and emotional needs than White children due to the corroded social services system.

Barn (2007) noted that diversities within the framework of prevailing race relationships have a long history, since the 1950s. Consequently, Barn (2007) argued that British social work practices and welfare policies can be viewed as restricted by cultural differences to the

detriment of racial equality (Barn, 2007). Barn (2007) stated that practitioners and policymakers had been concerned by ongoing ethnic minority children's circumstances, particularly in race-conscious countries such as Britain, Australia, North America, and New Zealand. Though Britain has made efforts to combat the relationship between 'race' and childcare, a more robust approach should be considered (Barn, 2007). The research has revealed that race awareness is apparent, but this has not prevented racialised practices. Previously, Mercer (1984) reported the same circumstances affecting black children, such as institutional racism is the fundamental factor identified as a continuous oppressive aspect of black families in the UK. However, other researchers like Bywaters *et al.* (2017) suggest that deprivation affects ethnic minorities more than white children. Bywaters *et al.* (2017), suggest that child inequality mostly affects children whose parents are socially disadvantaged and face inequalities systematically. Further on, the authors identify that the cases around child inequality in social care remain, affecting labelled and stigmatised groups who are largely ethnic minorities.

3.18.1 Targeting, Labelling, and Stigmatising

Children from stigmatised groups are born into an unjust environment. Hallsworth (2000, cited in Young, 2007) and Pratt (2000, cited in Young: 2007) suggested that ethnic minorities are perceived as a group which do not want to work, and deserve to be humiliated, demeaned, and to be punished. Resentment, stereotyping, and scapegoating are seen as deserving of minority ethnic groups. The 'underclass' experience an overwhelming sense of deprivation (Young,

2007), through the day-to-day threat of being identified, humiliated, disrespected and made to feel as losers. Furthermore, cultural values and norms of BAME communities are perceived to impact parenting skills (Young, 2007)

Statistics gathered by the Department for Education (DfE) (2016) suggest that black and minority ethnic (BAME) groups are worryingly overrepresented in the care system - summing up to 16% of all the looked after children, though the African Caribbean origin covers as little as 3% of the general population. The burden should not be on parents to figure out how to survive in a culture that was not built for them (Swann, 2019). It can be argued that this results in parental practices which conflict with the laws of the host country, leading to psychological impacts where the separation of a child and family occurs.

The DfE (2014) research prioritised key questions and omitted the ethnicity and race policies. This research revisited race and ethnicity on intervention rates in response to Owen and Statham (2009), whereby the latter's findings show a big difference in intervention rates between the racial groups. Their results indicate considerable disproportionality in the care population and child protection system between Black African groups and their White counterparts. The authors also suggest that there is little research or publications on this topic available (Owen and Statham, 2009).

One of the problems in decision-making and social work practices is a lack of guidance on collecting data and deciding the ethnic group categories when recording (DfE, 2015a; 2015b). The dilemma is whether social workers and parents would interpret these categories in the same

way. The approach consists of very comprehensive groupings, such as merging all Asian British Indians and all Black British people of African origin into one entity (Bramley and Fitzpatrick, 2016). Some analysts argue that race statistics are not accurate (DfE, 2015a; 2015b). However, there is a significant gap in numbers between black children and other races in care (e.g. White and South Asian children), that could be due to poverty (Bramley and Fitzpatrick, 2016).

As previously discussed, social segregation is increasing in the UK, causing social resentments, targeting mainly the most deprived and marginalised families (Stevenson, 2008). Some parents caught up in the net of child abuse or neglect have common problems, such as social isolation, low self-esteem, and severe and chronic poverty (Stevenson, 2008). These conditions undermine the parents and hinder them from giving the best care to their children. Stevenson, (2008) suggests attending to the parents' needs and supporting them, makes a significant contribution to improving the parents' ability to care effectively for their offspring. Focusing on the black community, one of the significant elements attributed to poor parenting is poverty (Stevenson, 2008).

Stevenson (2008) contended that Government regulations and policies have, since the advent of the Coalition government, over-stressed employment and reductions of benefits. The circumstances between childcare costs and the availability of a job are found to be contributing factors. Featherstone (1999) argued that the child protection system focuses more on how mothers' behaviour influences their children's development, health, and safety. She argued that

the professionals' approach during child protection inquiries should fully understand the mothers' socio-economic circumstances.

In addition, Kielty (2008) suggests that the difficulties of women's lived experiences as mothers have received little consideration in the conventional child protection literature. Weger (1997) describes parental failures as a social construct rooted in an inability to fulfil motherhood's social conceptions, which traditionally have been viewed as a primary gauge of a woman's moral responsibility. Child protection inquiries focus on the child and ignore the parents pushing them into vulnerability and helplessness. In this regard black mothers were most likely to suffer the worst impact due to racial disparities (Weger, 1997).

3.19 Impact on Mothers During Interventions

Several authors, such as Cleaver and Freeman (1995) and Smeeton and Boxall (2011), have written about the child protection system's antagonistic nature. Mason and Selman (1997) emphasized that even in court proceedings, the reports are harrowing and frustrating to the birth mothers. They are exposed in a public arena, the stigma of an incompetent parent. This was revealed in Mason's and Selman's (1997) qualitative study, through interviews of 21 birth parents who lost their children into adoption. One parent's statement stood out, saying the attitude and the spoken words by the social workers suggested how bad these parents were (Mason and Selman, 1997). The authors also stated how the professionals highlight the bad things that could overshadow the parents' good deeds. One parent was said to be frustrated with not being listened to. They expressed how it is a waste of time to go to court and not be heard

(Mason and Selman, 1997). Ryburn (1994) argues that there is no middle ground in the case of child protection interventions.

Dumbrill (2006) gave an account of a qualitative study carried out by nineteen parents from Birmingham City Council over their Child Protection investigations experiences. The researchers exposed that most parents felt disempowered, anxious, nervous and emotional. Dumbrill (2006), stated that in Canada, Ontario, grounded theory research was employed to interview 18 parents and analyse their experiences during Child Protection processes. Though parents shared mixed experiences, sixteen out of eighteen of the parents expressed that their experiences showed that the social services were using power over them (Dumbrill, 2006). The approach was inhumane, oppressive, frightening, or absolute. Some parents said they were afraid of the practitioners and felt misunderstood and failed to correct their evaluations (Dumbrill, 2006). They felt that the practitioners had preconceived and biased opinions over them, accusing the parents of not acting in their children's best interest (Dumbrill, 2006). Thus, from the initial investigations to the court processing, the whole process deactivates the parental rights and control, leaving the parents in a chaotic state (Memarnia, 2014).

3.20 Psychological Impact on Parents

Several studies indicate that the separation of children and their birth parents, mainly through enforcement, has long-term effects on the mothers' mental capacity (Scholfield *et al.*, 2011). Current studies (e.g. Grotevant, 2007; Scholfield *et al.*, 2011) indicate consistent psychological problems found in mothers who have been separated from their children, whether voluntarily

or forced. A range of theoretical literature suggests that loss and grief are the most common experiences of parents following the removal of their children into care (Grotevant, 2007; Scholfield *et al.*, 2011). Most of these mothers' resort to abuse alcohol and drugs as a remedy to cope with their loss.

Young (2019) cited a case in the UK of a mother whose seven-year-old daughter was removed into care by authorities because the child walked across the street to the grandmother's house while the mother was taking a shower. The medical report showed that the child was healthy and happy, but the mother was charged with endangering her daughter's welfare, resulting in the child being placed in foster care. However, the two of them were reunited after the mother was released from prison, but the child incurred long-lasting psychological effects of separation (Young, 2019). The predicament is that some children are taken into care in haste with scarce information about the family (Clifford and Silver-Greenberg, 2017). Even though child safeguarding should be at the top of the agenda, families need to be protected from victimisations, from an over-zealous, hash system that separates families before exploring other means to protect the child (Clifford and Silver-Greenberg, 2017). Clifford and Silver-Greenberg (2017) also indicated the burden of dealing with the consequences of a psychological and emotional broken child incurred through the separation. Provencher *et al.* (2003) state that younger children can be traumatised when removed to an unfamiliar environment and fostered by strangers.

Williams-Mbengue (2016) states that children placed in unfamiliar settings looked after by strangers, regardless of the shortest duration in care, can result in a long and traumatic experience for the child. Research of children in foster care, reveal that many children who have experienced removal from the home, exhibit disproportionately high rates of mental health problems and impaired physical development as they grow (Williams-Mbengue, 2016). In 2016, Williams-Mbengue stated that 80% of the youth in touch with the USA's child welfare system required mental health services and intervention because of behavioural, developmental, or emotional issues that crippled their ability to play a positive part in society. Children require stable relationships for the healthy development of their mental and psychological wellbeing. Williams-Mbengue (2016) highlights some of the consequences of the disruption of relationships such as parents, friends and teachers. Memarnia et al. (2015), cites Wells (1993) whose research found that children who have been removed from their mothers manifested Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptoms which is a psychologically distressing occurrence.

Memarnia (2014) cited Wells (1994), whose literature shows intensely distressed mothers following children's loss into care. He reports on the ‘psychic numbering’ on birth mothers' experiences, which is a feeling of being estranged or detached from people who have not gone through the compulsory removal of children, said Memarnia (2014).

Summary

This chapter has outlined the determination of harm and how thresholds were assessed within the social services and other multiagency. There were two distinct kinds of harm discussed in this chapter, namely, significant harm and likelihood of harm. Significant harm was found to be easily identified than the likelihood of harm which was subject to debate. In the context of child safeguarding, significant harm is confirmed where injuries are deliberately inflicted by a parent or caregiver on a child. In this thesis, harm is defined as the injuries inflicted on a child by the parent or carer. Likelihood of harm has the potential of resulting in a miscarriage of justice because in some cases it would be simply an assumption - mainly because the experts judge by comparing the development of a similar child. Unfortunately, there can be some discrepancies considering that there are many factors which determine the child's growth for example, innate development. This chapter has drawn data from the looked after children for the period of 2014 to 2020 and show a significant increased number of children in care.

The aforementioned increase in looked after children has provided either a clear picture of the vigilance of the professionals over child protection or revealed their rushed decisions for interventions. Some researchers in this chapter criticised the ever-increasing number of children in care as motivated by social workers' bias against targeted and marginalised people, as witnessed by the overrepresentation of black children in care. Some researchers concluded that the removal of children was post code driven, suggestive that the removal of children was

largely within poor neighbourhoods where many black people live. Additionally, this chapter reveals the relationship between discrimination, care, deprivation and 'race'.

On the other hand, this chapter has indicated that social workers' work ethics are questionable in relation to their clients' needs. One of the points which stands out in this chapter is the balance of power between social workers and their clients. Though it is expected for the professionals to work in partnership with parents, this is not always achievable due to control or the preconception of social workers against some of their clients. Although the experts intend to support the children and their families, the parents tend to resent the services because of the professionals' attitudes and misgivings towards the underclass community, which largely affects the black communities.

The experiences and conceptions of mothers towards social workers was found to be wanting in this chapter. Mothers expressed how traumatic it was to engage with social workers to the extent of physiological pressure. Some mothers felt humiliated by social workers that suggests some parents are frightened by social workers. Moreover, the thesis attempts to recognise the impact of Children's rights within black culture.

Chapter Four: Impact of Children's Rights

4.0 Introduction

This chapter explores the problem of balancing protection of children against their family' members and professionals interfering with family rights. The aim is to understand the impact of The Children Act 1989 and UN Convention Rights of the Child (CRC) Article 12 on parenting and other agencies involved. This also attempts to answer research question I; "*To what extend does the conflict between parents' and children's rights affect children in the later life"*? Article 8 has been expounded on how it impacts family life and home respect. The chapter exposes the cultural variations in parenting methods and how the Africans perceive the best interest of a child. The study also highlights the creation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) Article 12. This chapter explores the influences that affect the numerous members of the Black community, focusing on the diasporic group, regarding social workers' practices on child abuse investigations. Further, discussions on cultural expectations about raising children are detailed and how respect is perceived. Respect entails a core cultural expectation within the black communities. Respect was defined in accordance with the views of different cultures. The chapter also outlines diversity and professional capabilities from a social work perspective. The church involvement in child protection was explored. The rise of African organisations with the intention of compacting the increase of child removals within their communities was explained. Consequently, the chapter reveals how children's rights can be inappropriate to certain ages or maturity and potentially affecting them negatively in future.

4.1 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) Article 12

The creation of CRC was a reaction to the sufferings of children following World War II. Article 12 under the Conventions on the Rights of the Child (CRC) affords respect for the child's views. One of the Articles states that:

1. Parties shall assure the child who can form his or her views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the child's views being given due weight by the child's age and maturity.

CRC acknowledges that children are entitled to political, social, economic, health, civil, and cultural rights. Article 12 is significantly valued because it is one of the few provisions that accommodate children's rights to make decisions that can affect them. Article 12 competes with the opposite side of CRC, protecting 'the best interest of a child.' Though children's participation rights and the child's best interest are in tension but, are both essential pillars of CRC (Lee, 2017).

Conversely, some legislation encounters critics and challenges that might be viewed as another form of revoking parental authority. Lee (2017) noted the conflict between Articles 13 and 12. Article 13 viewed children as defenceless beings, requiring protection against parents or other people of authority. In contrast, Article 12 sees children as autonomous people with full rights to make decisions for their lives, regardless of their best interests. Stahl (2007) suggested that CRC is a law at odds within itself in some respects. Though this study acknowledges the

importance of children's rights but, reveals more attention to be given to the impact of life changing decisions taken by some children. The Case study below suggest how children's rights can be detrimental to some children in their later lives.

Case Study 1

"NHS gender clinic 'should have challenged me more' over a transition." By Alison Holt Social Affairs Correspondent, BBC News 1March 2020

> *Keira was born a female and went through the transgender processes by the age of sixteen. She confessed that she was initially happy about it, but her joy lessened over her new gender identity as time went on. In her own words, Keira explained, "I should have been challenged on the proposals or the claims that I was making for myself, and I think that would have made a big difference as well. If I was just challenged on the things, I was saying," She went on to say, "I was allowed to run with this idea that I had almost like a fantasy, as a teenager…and it has affected me in the long run as an adult. I am very young. I have just stepped into adulthood, and I have to deal with this kind of burden or radical difference-in comparison to others at least".*
>
> *As she pursued legal action against the NHS gender clinic, her lawyers argued how difficult it was for children to weigh up the impact of such treatment and imagine how it would affect their lives in the future, including their fertility. It was also claimed that 12-year-olds had received treatment that stops the hormones that propel changes*

associated with puberty, such as facial hair and periods. These are the consequences of trusting children with too many rights, which would put their lives at risk (Alison Holt Social Affairs Correspondent, BBC News 1 March 2020). On 2 December 2020, Bell was vindicated as The Times newspaper 2020, reported; "A High Court ruling that children are not competent to consent to be treated with puberty blockers is a victory for common sense."

The case of Keira, essentially, shows the consequences of trusting children with rights they cannot comprehend. Her argument was that she was failed by the responsible people in her life including the professionals who supported her delusions and that resulted in a lifetime distress. As stated by Holt that the case of Keira was victory for common sense, implying that children's claims should not be granted without full assessments against future implications.

Brennan and Goggle (1997) spoke on the common sense claims about the children's moral status, which should be compatible with other claims. Such claims are Equal Consideration Theses (ECT), stating that children deserve equal ethical considerations as adults while being treated differently. Children are regarded as exceptionally deserving moral agents, and adults should uphold that moral claim (Cohen,1982). However, there are some restrictions imposed on children. The Unequal Treatment Theses (UTT) restricts children from certain activities/behaviours such as voting, driving and alcohol consumption (Brennan and Goggle, 1997). Furthermore, (Brennan and Goggle, 1997), said the next theses is on the role of parents' rightfulness in raising children but, described it as Limited Parental Rights Thesis, (LPRT).

Though parents have roles in raising children, but they are still constrained by the same laws, particularly Children's Act 1989 in this instance.

Reinforcing their claims (Brennan and Goggle,1997), argued that children had limited cognitive powers and lack life experiences subjecting them to wrong judgments. Parents naturally have the freedom to choose for their children ranging from minor issues such as deities to serious ones like disciplining forms (Brennan and Goggle, 1997). The above three thesis claims do not show any consistency within themselves. The ECT, UTT, and LPRT seems to be operating from a standard position around a child's moral status (Hobbes, 1985). Other authors, such as Narverson (1995), endorsed the claim, suggesting that children are "eligible for ownership" of their parent. Though, being a libertarian (Narverson 1995), children are not their parents' property and indirectly acknowledged limits on parental rights. This suggest that UTT and LPT as being at odds with the ECT. This results in parental rights limitations.

As mentioned above, a person's moral status originates from one status, although personhood is not the only basis of moral status (Brennan and Goggle, 1997). Some roles confer rights, such as doctors and teachers, for example a patient confers certain rights against one's doctor (Brennan and Goggle, 1997). However, these authors stated that equal moral considerations do not imply that everybody has the same duties and rights. The first thing is to acknowledge one's moral status due to being a person. With this observed, one might be willing to consider one's other moral rights because of other factors that affect one's moral status (Brennan and Goggle,1997). This suggests that children can have different rights and duties to adults.

On the other hand, having the same moral status being the equal fundamental rights as any other person makes UTT and ECT compatible with each other (Brennan and Goggle, 1997). Brennan and Goggle, (1997) interpret the Limited Parental Rights Theses to represent parental rights as claims with thresholds. They suggest that any claim with a limit can be permissibly infringed upon, especially where at least one or so conditions are met. Rights can be outweighed if they conflict with a more substantial right (Brennan and Goggle, 1997). This happens in cases where parental rights compete with the children's needs and their rights. However, some people agree that affording children's rights under UNCRC may be detrimental to them if they make the wrong choices (Melton, 1996).

Thomson (1990) suggests that parental rights are subject to being overridden, mainly when those who benefit from infringement of rights are at stake. Arguably, children's rights impose limits on parental rights (Tuckness, 2010). This answers to some questions why parents might have thresholds on parenting rights, particularly were child abuse or neglect is in question. Some rights are best described through some articles such as Article 8.

Article 8 is a qualified right, and as such, the right to a private and family life and respect for the home and correspondence may be limited. Peterson-Badali and Ruck (2008) argued that while the right to privacy is engaged in many situations, the right may be lawful. Any limitation must have regard to the fair balance between the individual's competing interests and the community. Any limitation imposed must be in accordance with law; necessary and proportionate; for one or more of the following legitimate aims:

- The prevention of disorder or crime
- The protection of health or morals.
- Or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

However, rights in the perspective of family are subject to how individuals understand children's rights accordingly and parental perceptions or cultural differences.

4.2 Cultural Differences in Parenting

In a multicultural place like the UK, The Children Act 1989 has created tension between parents and stakeholders. Parenting styles and expectations vary within the same society. Wikan (1985), as mentioned in chapter 2, argued that child-rearing has different goals and aims in different cultures. However, a closer look at how Africans' perspective of 'the best interest of a child' is crucial to assist them with child rearing in the UK. A possible explanation of the child's best interest from an African perspective might be easily understood by considering a study conducted in Ghana.

It involved cultural techniques on how and why parents make decisions for their children by transmitting parental values, norms, and the child's best interest (Adonteng-Kissi, 2020). However, since the introduction of children's rights, it became difficult for parents to culturally practice what they considered to be the best interest of a child (Adonteng-Kissi, 2020). Cintas (1995) stated that cultural childrearing approaches could either achieve positive or negative results in the view of best interest of a child. Previous studies of parental expectations have

explained the importance of parents in obtaining their rights and making their children's future accomplishments (Glick and White, 2004). Children who exercise their rights and achieve higher aspirations and social resilience are linked to higher parental expectations (Benner & Mistry, 2007). In support of the notion of Jeynes (2007), culturally parental expectations in childrearing methods are the best family predictors of a child's rights. The child's best interest seems to be the key to the international children's rights law articulated in Article 3(1) of the UNCRC. Verhellen (2001) supports Article 3(1) that broadly covers those issues which UNCRC does not address positively. Ghana recognises the United Nation Children's Rights Convention 1989, which stipulates those children should be protected from deprivation and protection including activities which can injure the child's physical, spiritual, mental, social development, moral or interferences with the child's education, (Article 32). The cultural approach of raising children in Ghana is found to be inconsistent with the demands of Article 12 Children's Rights (Adonteng-Kissi, 2020).

The UNCRC Article 12 participation rights indicate that parental powers are compromised in making decisions for their children. The participation rights of the UNCRC in Article 12 seems to be a stronghold against certain cultural child-rearing styles (Adonteng-Kissi). In most cases, child-rearing practices do not usually acknowledge the participation or contributions of their children, just because parents believe their rights supersede those of children in the event of a conflict (Adonteng-Kissi, 2020). The author acknowledged that the cultural practices of the Ghanaian participants' educational approach, suggesting that the parents have extensive power

to control their offspring. The Ghanaian parents who engage their children in farming undertakings do not see it as a breach of children's rights, arguing that they must rely on their offspring's labour to increase production (Adonteng-Kissi, 2020). There are further suggestions assigned to the courts to offer uniformity in interpreting the state's role and parental and children's rights to minimize conflict between the two rights. Adonteng-Kissi (2020) supports the notion of stakeholders whose argument is adopting children's rights as articulated in the UNCRC. The application of UNCRC, and the cultural child rearing approach can improve the children's lives by promoting their rights that meant promoting them within the societal, legal framework. Adonteng-Kissi, (2020) findings propose that many parents indicated that their core values were to develop and raise their children in a cultural approach as shown in an example below.

"...I think some children will want to have their way. For example, they want to wake up at 8:00 am in the morning and go to school late. As a parent, I also want my child to wake up earlier than that and this sometimes leads to misunderstanding and tension. Again, children are also supposed to do some domestic work before going to school, but some children are lazy. This is where the tension between the rights of the child and those of the parent in our setting begins…" (Adonteng-Kissi, 2020; Pg. 8/17) and another parent interviewed said: "…. My children know they should sleep early so that they can wake up early, but they watch television and go to bed very late. So, in the morning, I go to their room and wake them up. They get angry because they think they have the right to have enough sleep. I also believe I've

the duty to compel them to discipline them in traditional childrearing patterns…" (Adonteng-Kissi, 2020; Pg.8/17; this all so goes with case study 1)

The experiences of the Ghanaian parents in this chapter is consistent with (Brennan and Goggle, 1997), regarding the limitations of parenting as seen through the lens of LPRT. Henceforth, (Adonteng-Kissi, 2020) suggest the tension between parents and their children increased since the emphasis of children's rights as it is reflected in the above quote particularly where a parent said '*This is where the tension between the rights of the child and those of the parent in our setting begins'*. Though in the recent years the children's rights have been blamed on tensions between children and their parents but, it has been a widely held view that some young people were incompatible within their society. That also resulted in seeing some of them being mentioned around youth justice systems.

No generation has gone by without feeling the burden of their youth's social deviant behaviours. Brown (2005) says the youth are seen as the 'social ills' of their generations. Such presentations of youth are barely not new. Pearson (1983) argues against the demonisation of young people. He says that young people's moral decay has been dominated by concerns of adults' perception more than youth's notion as social deviance. Armstrong (2004) suggests that young people's deviant behaviours have resulted in social policy and criminal justice responses. In the context of youth crime (O'Malley, 2006) states the risk is a significant influence in response to criminality. Further considerations of African parenting are needed in order to understand their fears of raising children in the UK.

4.3 African Parents Perceived.

Tedam (2014) noted that parents find values and practices they have observed throughout their lives put to the test. Their values are held at a lower level of cautiousness, putting them at odds with those of the host country (Maitra, 2005). They see themselves in a state of being misunderstood particularly during child abuse interventions. In some cases, it may be difficult to understand whether the actions of the authorities are due to genuine abuse cases or due racism at play. In the USA in the late 1960s and early 1970s, articles on racism and race began to surface in the social work literature, highlighting the system's flaws (Jani at al., 2011).

It was necessary to analyse some reasons why children are removed from home especially where cultural aspects are in play. The world has now emerged into one global village, given many black African children raised in Western countries. The attitude might imply black African people do not know how to raise their children or are always subject to racial prejudice. Questions can be probed as; to what extent is cultural competence, especially of black Africans' is taught in social work courses in western countries?

Conflicts arise between social workers who are seen safeguarding the same child who might be perceived to be a victim of racial bias; and parents who justify their disciplinary actions with the view that they know what is best for their child. In recent years we have seen the awareness of cultural competence as an extra tool offered to the social workers to help them affect their duties efficiently (Briggs, 2018). Cultural competency is grounded in the values, norms,

customs or beliefs, or faith structures that may influence an individual's or communities' behaviours or practices (Briggs, 2018). Further suggestions include that there should be a demarcation from cultural contingency that outlines child abuse as socially fashioned (Briggs, 2018).

Graham (1999) challenged social workers to consider the African centred view in social work approach when dealing with Black families. Graham (1999) argues that the method enhances the profession to execute its fundamental principles of social justice, equality and self-determination as they accommodate alternative paradigms and worldviews as valid and legitimate for social work practice and theory.

4.4 Cultural Expectations

Culture moulds all spheres of child development and growth (Bornstein and Lansford, 2019). In non-Western cultures, respect has a more central child-rearing dimension than can be found Western cultures. The non-Western cultures share a healthy family affect warmth (Li, 2006), for children to develop respect in the family environment. Respect benefits the family with the bonding of the parents and children (Li, 2006). The term respect is interpreted differently by different cultures or societies. Shwalb, D. and Shwalb, B., (2006) mentioned that Western children express respect for authorities such as teachers in order to obey the established rules.

On the other hand, Chinese children show respect for teachers by working hard as a cultural expectation. Respecting teachers is said to be associated positively with school achievements

(Li, 2006). Respect is defined and practised differently, according to nations, broken down to societies, communities, and families. From Western culture, respect is defined by rights and rules based on moral principles, not hurting others (Li, 2006). The crucial outline is that respect is usually direct to parents, kin elders, and other elders with the status conferred by age.

4.5 Defining Respect

In the study on the views of mothers Ross and Caldera (2019), suggest that obedience is not a matter for complaint, and children should not be too demanding but responsive to parental supervision. Respect is not just subjected to relationships between children and parents but goes across to all humanity. To those who take the biblical principles seriously, respecting parents meant an avoidance of bad things happening to the children in their later life, as stipulated in the ten commandments. Honour your father and mother, which is the first commandment with a promise (Ephesians 6:2 NKJV). Respect has been interchanged with honour. Frei and Haver (2002) describe respect as an attitude or social concept that regulates relationships and guides people's social behaviours. They say people should be respected hierarchically, that is, people in authority, parents and kin elders, teachers, and other general practitioners. In the context of this study, respect is due to people's roles such as parents and older generational status or power within the society. Li and Fisher (2006) state that respect is also emotion related to social/attitudinal concepts. Therefore, they classified respect into two categories, affecting respect and ought to respect and be extended to others. The need for

respect is emphasised with regards to all kinds of respect, deserved by everyone, regardless of age, gender, creed, race, and many more Frei and Haver, (2002).

In the context of a parent and a child, Shwalb and Shwalb (2006), the nature of respect children project towards their parents and kin elders is of the same view for teachers within the Chinese culture. It is understood that Chinese teachers are revered as parental figures. Eastern cultures, such as Japan and Hong Kong, have been described as having more emphasis on collectivism. There are the same elements found within the African cultures. Unlike Western countries such as the United Kingdom, focus on individualism (Argyle et al., 1986). From a cultural perspective, Japanese people are trained to refrain from bad behaviour, which prevents shame (Lebra, 1976). The cultures are also found to be guided by stipulated rules.

4.6 Rules

According to (Argyle and Henderson,1985), rules are behaviours that govern individuals, neighbourhoods, and most members of a community or a group. Also, rules can apply to situations or relationships on what should be done or vice versa. Brain (1976) noted that relationships are gathered based on standard rules (Argyle et al., 1985). Also (Argyle et al., 1985), cited Blood (1972) said, there are formal and less formal rules, for instance, rules that are expected within the family unit. Additionally, within the family context, there are favourable rules which afford one to be rewarded and rules that deter bad behaviour Blood, 1972 (Argyle et al. (1985).

Argyle et al. (1986), cited Acquaviva et al. (1981), who stated that some rules are emphasised to class differences of families. Arguably, for example, middle-class families are relaxed with rules imposed on their children showing a more permissive and less authoritarian approach to parenting. It is within the different kinds of cultural parenting that conflicts arise between parents and professionals.

Fairfax (2017) says that failure to embrace other cultures within social services would imply different cultures' ethnocentric bias. The training institutes should highlight individuals' need to have adequate knowledge about their own beliefs of their lived realities. Fairfax (2017) went on to say that social workers need to connect with their clients. However, it, would be unfair to criticise social work practice without understanding their training requirements. The British Association of Social Work (BASW) expects the social workers to go through the Professional Capabilities Framework concerning social work level capabilities.

4.7 Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF)

BASW (2018) defines capabilities as incorporating skills' knowledge and behaviour (personal qualities). That includes understanding the social work values effectively and appropriately and responding to new, complex, and changing situations, rather than concentrating only on a familiar and specialist framework. PCF offers the foundation and balance for social work practice and enables the social workers to be responsible for their actions (BASW). The PCF has nine domains alongside which social workers are assessed against. PCF's primary purpose

is to educate England's social workers. The descriptors comprise four levels: pre-qualified social workers, newly qualified social worker (ASYE) social worker, experienced, advanced, and strategic social workers. This research focuses on the already qualified social workers and on establishing how much cultural competence they have attained and understood. This research focuses on the third domain of the nine, which is on diversity and equality. It points out what the social workers should recognise and promote the vital principles of human rights such as social justice and economic welfare protected in national and international laws, policies, and conventions. Social workers ought to understand and be able to address discrimination, oppression, and poverty. They are encouraged to challenge injustice and inequalities and uphold strength, hope, agency, and self-determination; they work in partnership with those who use their services, including carers, families, and service users (BASW, 2018).

Social workers are anticipated to demonstrate social justice, equality, and social inclusion in decision making (BASW, 2018). They must also comply with the law and challenge any situation where there is the disproportionate, unethical, or unjust application or interpretation of the law (BASW, 2018). The social work knowledge is drawn from various dimensions, for instance, social work theory, practice, research, law, and other relevant disciplines (BASW, 2018).

As stated in the PCF, one of the requirements of social work on all four levels is understanding, diversity, and equality. Diversity comprises race, class, disability, economic status, gender,

sexuality, beliefs, faith, and other characteristics. Social work is said to have the ability to understand and demonstrate differences in an individual's life experiences that may include marginalisation, alienation, oppression, even power, acclaim, and privilege (BASW, 2018). In this regard, as seen discussed in chapter three that most of the social workers clients are from deprived areas and the majority being black families; that alone calls the professionals to understand diversity.

4.8 Diversity

Jani et al. (2011) stated that the modernist of social work emphasises promoting generality and fails to consider human experiences' complexity. Reisch and Andrew, (2001) stated that though modernism has dominated social work education for several decades, it unconsciously undermines the goals of professionals who are determined to promote a greater understanding of cultural and social differences. Attention to cultural diversity has been discussed for a while (Reisch and Andrew, 2001) and recommendations related to specific groups have been mandated through educational policies and the curriculum. Jani et al. (2011) said that social work educational guidelines have been attached with requirements to treat these groups with impartiality in their procedures and policies. Social workers should have a clear understanding of the family's culture for them to deliver cultural competence. Fairfax (2017) argues that cultural competency is irrelevant if not addressing spiritual, moral, or ethical issues. Fairfax (2017) noted that one of the fault-lines that remain in social work is philosophical discussions

of cultural and racial scopes to uncover, inform, and seriously think of Africans and those in diasporic communities. Houston (2005) emphasises the need of contextualising and combining cultural and racial realities are required for interventions. Riemann (2009) supported the above philosophy and said that philosophical debates should incorporate behaviours of poverty and other disadvantages encountered by people should be the pivoting point for social work and social policy. Reiman (2009), also argued that self-determination should be grounded in the context within the ontological framework. The ontological framework should address self-conception reflected in the social complex and structures of the client's social relationships with intrinsic and historical values (Reiman, 2009). The above discussion proposes for professionals to have a clear understanding of African history and traditions.

African history is characterized by enslavement, apartheid, colonisation and later decolonisation (Fairfax, 2017). It is prudent for social workers to consult African philosophers, as they engage in inquiries that involve cultural practices of the African people. The social work training stems from the Eurocentric moral policy and theory angle, mostly consequentialism, paternalism, and deontological, as explained (Reiman, 2009).

There is more to African philosophy to be identified, such as understanding African personhood. Fairfax (2017) pointed out that African personhood addresses concepts of social relationships, behaviours, and community identity, found mainly in disadvantaged and social marginalised. African personhood is defined as self-conception, wherein individuals are identified and conversant with a community (Wiredu, 2009). The community also, in turn,

expect certain moral, ethical qualities and spiritual values from individuals. The values should reflect some beneficial choices to the family or community that the individual is accountable to (Wiredu, 2009).

However, Reiman (2009) views the bid for African personhood as challenging and exhausting. When dealing with individuals in the cultural framework contest, it implicates the addressing of values, primarily where the practice does not fully address these. Reiman (2009), argues that social work is a good profession but, fails to address ethical and moral values in the practice arena. Bent-Goodly et al. (2017) pointed out that the African-centred approach employs African history, philosophies, and cultures as the first referencing point of interpretation of psychological and social occurrences. They further recommend the development and application as best practice chiefly on factors that impact the African diasporic and other ethnic minorities. Nevertheless, the African centred theory should be placed in conjunction with the established theories taught in social work training (Bent-Goodly et al., 2017).

Ciaffa (2008) contended that some technical and scientific changes that are not governed by moral and political values resulted in compromising when promoting people's welfare. European philosophy is alleged to be disparity-ridden and biased (Ciaffa, 2008).

Nevertheless, in the implementation of African personhood, other factors should not be overlooked, such as racism, discrimination, biases, and disparities, which have become part of social institutes and the government sectors.

Bartholet (2009) noted that Black people are historically, continuously economic and racial injustice victims, resulting in a more severe disadvantage situation within the society. Bartholet (2009), analysed the inequalities in those child protection tenets leading the professionals, concentrating on human rights, which are so vital in favour of children. Yet, on the other hand, they seem like weakening the parents who are the rights facilitators. Human right violations are rooted in racial disparities, gender inequalities, and some cultural aspects (Bartholet,2009). They have resulted in many fragmented families due to child abuse allegations and the state interventions. Discrimination tends to play an underlining role in black family child protection, as reflected by black children's overrepresentation in care mentioned before. Africans who raise their children in the UK find themselves faced with new culture and are prompted to change to be in harmony with the host country way of life.

4.9. Changes of Culture

Culture goes through a constant transformation, as Hall (1989) suggests that it is not fixed in the past, and culture marks identification points. Diasporic culture constitutes the original culture of people and their host country, which becomes the dominant culture. Oberg (1960) defines cultural shock as being anxious due to the loss of familiar symbols and social association signs. The signs included numerous ways in how people orient themselves in day-to-day situations, for instance, how to behave when you interact with certain people. This

includes facial expressions, gestures, norms, and customs acquired in growing up (Oberg, 1960). Henceforth, the spoken language and accepted beliefs that form a specific culture (Oberg, 1960). According to (Oberg, 1960), most people believe that their culture is both the greatest and the only way of approaching life, ethnocentrism. Eisenbruch (1990) suggests that there is also a factor of cultural bereavement that impacts immigrants. The impact of experiencing change led to anxieties that should be addressed through social structures. Eisenbruch, (1990) says the statutory experts, have created gaps in relationships with immigrants who then tend to rebel against the host country's expectations and values. The diasporic communities are found to be more on the defensive position regarding their traditions and values (Eisenbruch (1990) as they seek to transmit them to their children. Due to high rates of African children in the social care systems, in recent years, Britain has seen the rise of African organizations responding to the child welfare system, as discussed below.

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4.10 African Organisations on Child Welfare

In the UK, concerns regarding safeguarding children are not a recent innovation, the phenomenon surrounded the British before recent migration issues. Narinelli (1980) noted that Great Britain's history, saw some reformers revolting against child labour in the factories, resulting in the formation of the Factory Act of 1833. Unfortunately, (Smith B., 2017), noted that since slavery, the blacks were required to address their child welfare requirements. He pointed out that black communities developed a new system that accommodated their needs.

The child welfare system's establishment included different arms, among schools, churches, secret organisations, women's clubs, including individuals, Billinsley and Giovannoni, (1972) (Smith B. 2017). The formation of African centred organisations exhibits a repeat of the black people rising to, protect, and educate their people. This study mentions a few diasporic African organisations formed in the current climate, like Ghanaian Social Workers Association (GHASWA), https://ghaswa.com/ Zimbabwean UK Social Workers Associations (ZUKSW): (Communityonestopsocial.co.uk) and many other grass-root community associations. GHASWA was founded in February 2018 by a social worker in the UK, Mr. Afram A, which was then consequently joined by social workers from Ghanaian origins, as stated on the website. They aimed to reach out to the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities, starting with the Ghanaian communities. They sort to advocate for, support, empower and educate BME communities by raising awareness of critical topics such as safeguarding children and their families, and hoping to collaborate with the Local Authorities, Children Trusts, and other professionals. They also aim to inform, promote, develop, and defend social work and social workers' ethical practices. However, child protection for Africans is not just implemented in the western countries but, from their countries of origin, for example in Zimbabwe. The increase of child abuse was to be intervened through different programs like, Tirere Pamwe (TP), implying (let us Raise Them Together) in Zimbabwe. These were established to help to minimise the stigma associated with children, socio-emotional difficulties, maladjustment/behavioural (Wini Dari 2018). The TP program helps to reduce the prevalence of neglect or child abuse. The TP has similar purpose like the British organisation

created to improve a better society, especially for the BME communities, and prevent children from going into the care system. They also address issues that relate to church and child protection.

4.10.1 Conflict of Religion/Beliefs and Law

Recently, social workers are found investigating child abuse in the most unlikely and sacred places, such as churches, in the wake of child witchcraft and spirit possession. Tedam (2014) also confirms that children's labelling as witches in the UK has triggered childcare experts, statutory agencies, and other voluntary organisations to investigate in church settings. Horwath and Lees (2010) said that the crossroads which the social workers face could be their professional dedication to anti-oppressive practices and the demands the Children Act which recognises the seriousness of the child's religious belief during interventions. Streets (2009) sees how the subject of religion intervention distances away from the social work curriculum. Due to limited literature covering the relationship between family and beliefs/religion in the UK (Knitter, 2010) sees this area as a drawback to social work practices.

Some individuals in Christianity acknowledge that the bible forms and is central to the foundation of most of their moral training, end up legitimising child abuse (Gillian and Furness, 2010). The Laming Enquiry highlighted the dangers of over-focusing on race, culture, and ethnicity to negatively affect child protection. Some of these beliefs have led to the high-profile

story of eight-year-old Victoria Climbié, who was murdered by her great aunt, linking her to child witchcraft.

Though conversations occur regarding social workers' cultural incompetence, it seems they are also overtaken and unprepared for some predicaments in child protection. Tedam (2014) highlighted that some African communities linked to certain faith groups are involved in this phenomenon. Supposed child witches and evil spirit possession is a new phenomenon that has hit child protection in recent years in the UK. Briggs (2018) suggests that a belief in witchcraft and spirit possession does not give evidence of child abuse and neglect. It is thought that some communities and family misfortunes are attributed to the increase of witchcraft accusations (Bussein et al., 2011). It is during difficulties times when the child witches, and spirit possession labels occur. From this context, authors like Briggs and Whittaker (2018), endorse the previous comments as they say faith-based practices regarding spiritual possession remain relevant to the individuals or communities at large. To emphasise the point, (Casey 2016) said that transitional experiences go along with fears caused by social structures. The African Unite against Child Abuse is a promenade organisation created in the UK to fight against child abuse through cultural conceptions.

The African Unite against Child Abuse (AFRUCA) in the UK is an organisation formed in response to Victoria Climbié, Jude Akapa, and Damilola Taylor in the country as cited on their website (www.afruca.org/who-we-are/#ourmissionte). They state that their mission is undertaken in the best interests of children and that they do not consider culture and religion to

be the reason for child abuse. They also acknowledged that child abuse in the African community, mostly stems from, cultural and beliefs standpoint, which unfortunately result in a negative impact on the African community. They pointed out that their focus is in need to change some detrimental cultural practices and beliefs. Briggs and Whittaker (2018) cite La Fontaine, whose comments suggested that lack of religious discussions could impair child protection practices regarding satanic abuse.

Throughout history, the church has played a vital role in child protection. Smith B. (2017) said, historically, African Americans depended on the church to meet their moral, spiritual, and social needs. Long (2018), writing from an American's point of view regarding child welfare, noted that, governments are not affording parents the tools they need to assist them in raising their children. Casey (2006) condemns the welfare system for failing to support black families due to a lack of cultural competence and says that the services provided to train parenting courses are limited. However, historically it has been noticed that black families have been avoiding seeking supportive services and counselling because of the stigma behind it (Whaley, 2001). Long, (2018), cited from Whaley, (2011) found that in America, Native Americans and blacks do not trust and are not satisfied with services offered to them.

Consequently, (Long, 2018), sees the difficulties in trusting systems with a history of destructive and invasive families. The author stated that appropriate services, such as pre-emptive services before removing children from home and court processes, are not fully

accorded to the families. This leads to forcing families to participant in services that are detrimental to them and their children.

Summary

This chapter demonstrated that the UN CRC Article 12 is concerned with the entitlements of children's rights and protecting their best interest. The entitlement was also, contested against and perceived as working against parental authority and affords children too many rights they cannot comprehend. The case study validates the arguments on too much of unchallenged rights of children leading into regrettable consequences in the future. In quest of observing The Children Act 1989, the stakeholders saw themselves at odds with parents particularly those who employ cultural parenting. Parenting styles vary according to cultures and individual goals and aims one has over their children. This chapter reveals that 'the best interest' of a child was the core of tension between parents and stakeholders. It is demonstrated through a study carried out in Ghana. Parents claimed that the introduction of children's rights disarmed them of their parental skills and tools they had acquired from the previous generations. Since then, it became difficult to practice cultural parenting which they felt to be undermined through the CRC as they perceive those African cultures, values, and norms as being prone to be misinterpreted. The conflict comes when parents apply their cultural parenting approach, which often collides with their rights. Article 12 and Article 13(1), advocates for a child's best interest, send conflicting signals on children and parental rights.

Furthermore, the necessity for social workers to understand their clients was expressed as of great importance. Lack of understanding of other cultural parenting styles possibly lead the professionals to perceive African parents as incompetent people with no talent. In child protection, discrimination and racial bias have been found to have their prevalence in the system, as revealed in this chapter. The cultural perspectives have been raised to be one of the significant hurdles in the child protection system, mostly when the social worker and the family's cultures collide. In relation to migrant families there are conflicting values with their host country.

Different parental expectations have been discussed to the level of how they impact children. Through this chapter, discrimination has been explained as one factor that plays an underlining role in Black families' child protection. The chapter has stated how the church is conflicted on child protection while participating in safeguarding children. Due to overrepresentation of black children in care the UK has witnessed mushrooming of African organisations working to support and enlightening fellow Africans on British expectations of childrearing. This thesis seeks to comprehend African parenting and their expectations; with the aim of understanding the impact it has in the western countries particularly the UK.

Chapter Five: Parenting

5.0 Introduction

This chapter gives a brief description of what leads African parents to be fearful of raising children in the UK and explain how parenting is viewed across cultures. African parenting practices are discussed in detail, including the gender divide in their child nurturing. Within the African parenting methods, a discussion about the fear of stigmatisation is explained. The chapter also discusses parents and youth adjustments, which shows how the youth may misinterpret parental control. It will encompass detailed explanations of the factors that lead to juvenile delinquency, the effects of child discipline, physical punishment and the impact caused by institutional racism on black people and their children in schools are all discussed. This chapter highlights how black mothers feel on their sons' stigmatisation. It also reveals the challenges which are faced by the black boys in the educational sector. This chapter determines that juvenile delinquency is socially controlled, as explained by social control theories. In conclusion, an explanation on the impact of lack of social bonds on children is examined.

5.1 Cultural Parenting

Parenting is a pivotal role assumed by parents from the moment a child is born. Parenting may be defined in different cultures and might not have the same meaning in different nations. Smetana (2017) states that the global conceptualisation of parental styles characterise parenting.

Here we explore different practices and concepts of parenting methods across different cultures and eras, though the bulk of attention is given to the African group living in Western countries, particularly in the UK. The burden of conflict between the African diasporic community and their western host countries is exposed through the overrepresentation of black children in the welfare system, as mentioned in chapter 4. Barn, (2007) allocates the blame to a continued concern of professionals and lawmakers of countries like Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and North America about ethnic minority children abuse concerns. Barn, (2007) went on to say, that evidently, practices and policies have continuously shown the prevalent beliefs of racial disparities. Historical, political, cultural, and economic aspects enable western countries to have similarities in cultural and racial opinions on ethnic minorities (Barn, 2007). The need to explore parenting practices and expectations is considered vital at this point within various ethnicities.

Oberg (1960) explained that sometimes individual distinctiveness is accounted for as a race or national characteristic, which is criticized as an individual act among fellow people. Arguably, (Oberg 1960) holds the view that though nationalities have their own cultures, some other diverse cultures are identified and differentiated according to class, counties, and separated into urban or rural settlements. There are some core beliefs and cultural aspects that urbanization or modernization cannot be easily altered. In the cultural context, there are different stages of parenting. For instance, some parents are supposed to stop psychological and behavioural

control within their cultural norms and expectations as they transition into adolescence (Oberg, 1960).

Nevertheless, some cultural parents retain total control of their adolescent children (Darling et al., 2009). These kinds of behaviours are attributed to deeply rooted traditions and cultural beliefs. Lansford et al. (2016), children's and parents' expectations concerning family obligation vary across cultures and traditions. Parents have different goals for their children in different cultures, which direct parents' behaviours and beliefs (Keller et al., 2006) Though parents are guided by their traditions and culture there is also a visible presence of the interference of beliefs in parenting. Some religions have a stipulated way of disciplining children as demonstrated in Christian beliefs over spare the rod and spoil the child. For instance, in America the conservative Protestantism's are in support of corporal punishment, suggesting that the Evangelical, Charismatic and fundamentalist figures disproportionately reinforced physical punishment (Alwin and Felson, 2010).

A study conducted in India, China, Kenya, Italy, Thailand, and the Philippines revealed cultural in formativeness of physical punishment, externalizing, and internalizing behaviour problems (Lansford et al., 2014). It was found that physical punishment showed more externalized and internalized problems across the cultural groups. However, the strength of the effects was weaker in countries where physical punishment is normative compared to countries where that sort of punishment is not normative (Lansford et al., 2014). Some suggest that if children see their parent's behaviour accepted within the cultural group, they may not view

their parents as rejecting or abusing them but expect it as parents are doing what they are supposed to be doing (Gershoff et al., 2010).

5.3 African Parenting

African parents are like any other ethnicities over parental expectation despite different approaches. The African Charter for the Children, (1999) is the mirror of African parenting expectations and provides a guideline for children's rights. One of the fundamental expectations for African children was the reverencing of parents and elders (AFRUCA, 2009). Wini Dari, (2018) noted that Africans expect respect as demonstrated by the Zimbabwean culture which demands the children to reverence elders. Each society has its own distinct characteristics, for example, Wini Dari, (2018) argued that it is a taboo for children to answer back to an adult since it implies a fight, and no adult across culture can permit that. While the African culture has its various empowering properties in child-rearing, some longstanding myths are ingrained in the hearts (Wini Dari, 2018). Chireshe, Chireshe, and Mudhovozi (2009) talked of some myths with unknown nature or source deep-seated in African families' psychics. For instance, the Zimbabwean culture emphasises the common myth that leaving a crying infant alone (Wini Dari, 2018) helps it to be healthier and encourages it to self-care at an early age. This is contrary to the UN's stance on the Rights of the Child, (1989) which is deemed gross negligence. Ogbu, (1981) supports the same view, stating that African ancestry's emotional detachment myth characterises parents. Baumrind (1991) argues that while leaving

the child alone helps them grow, it has its own repercussions in imposing a sense of fear on the infant. This kind of belief and practice leads to child maltreatment interpretation within Western countries. Lachman et al. (2016) discuss another myth in Zimbabwe which warrants detachment and physical disciplinary approaches as useful, though potentially cause intergenerational damage. Since physical discipline has been the cultural disciplinary method, however, due to children's rights expectations recently it was categorised as abusive practice.

Wini Dari, (2018) cited the "Zimbabwean Statistics, 2014," noting that 77% of Zimbabwean adult groups suggested corporal punishment was commonly implemented in families. A further survey indicated that 63 % of under-14-year-olds in Zimbabwe had experienced violent discipline and psychological aggression in the same year. Santrock, (2012) suggested parenting rights made them either protectors or perpetrators. Further arguments on the detachment myth could lead to emotional impartiality and self-replicated in youth (Thoresen et al., 2015). These myths were not limited to Zimbabwe and Africa only but included countries where hierarchy was practiced. The dynamics of intergenerational interconnections of some traditions and legends tend to lead to emotional detachment (Ogbu, 2013). However, some of the mythical believes which harm children were addressed from a African continent level through the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of a Child.

5.4 African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of a Child (African Children)

In recent decades, the African nationalities denounced some of the longstanding mythical practiced customs. It was a long process to squash these enduring practices, which are not easily eradicated without resistance. For example, there is tension between the Zimbabwean framework on child protection and international law (Bhaiseni, 2016). Bhaiseni (2016) states that there is no clarity on a child's definition that entails discord between domestic and international legal tools on The Children Act 1989. Mbagua (2002) states that the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) came into existence due to disappointed members of the African countries, which are the Assembly of States and Governments of the Organisation of African Unity (African Union). These had their concerns stating that the UNCRC had ignored central socio-cultural and economic realities experienced in Africa; however, it does not oppose the UNCRC but compliments it. The ACRWC insisted on the necessity to embrace African experiences and cultural values regarding African children. (This claim can only be exercised in an African state). Bhaiseni (2016), Zimbabwe has many parts of legislation covering child protection; unfortunately, the law is at odds with some views; for instance, the definition of a child. Arguably, The Children Act is inefficient in line with the contemporary inclinations and structures in child safeguarding at the global level. The conflict is where ACRWC defines a child as a person under eighteen years old, while The Children Acts ascribes a child to anyone below sixteen. This also suggests how a child is treated and disciplined. Bhaiseni (2016) noted that both UNCRC and ACRWC condemn corporal punishment on children as it is viewed as torture and maltreatment. UNCRC Article 37 notes

that *"no child shall be subject to inhumane, or degrading treatment or punishment or other cruel or torture."* The African Children Charter obligates caregivers/parents to accommodate the following; always to observe the best interest of a child and caregivers to apply domestic disciplinary measures with humanity consistent with the fundamental dignity. However, male children who conflict with the law can be administered corporal discipline as an alternative to sentencing according to the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) (Bhaiseni, 2016). More importantly, African Children Charter has stipulated some guidelines in view of the best interest and responsibilities of a child.

Article 31: Every child shall be responsible for family and society, the state and other legally recognized communities, and the international community. The child, subject to age and ability, shall have the duty:

a. To work for cohesion of the family, to respect his parents, superiors, and elders always, and to assist them in case of need.
b. To serve his national community by placing his physical and intellectual abilities at its service.
c. To preserve and strengthen social and national solidarity.
d. To preserve and strengthen African cultural values in his relations with other members of the society, in the spirit of tolerance, dialogue, and consultation and to contribute to the moral well-being of society.
e. To preserve and strengthen the independence and the integrity of his country.

f. To always contribute to the best of his abilities, and all levels, to the promotion and achievement of African Unity.

Generally, all parents, regardless of country or ethnicity, share the same goals of raising their children to be competent and successful in their society. However, for the parents to achieve those goals, their approach varies with individuals or society (Bornstein and Lansford, 2010). Deater-Deckard and Dodge (1997) noted that normative cultural theory suggests that parents' conduct is associated with healthier or less contrary child outcomes if parents practice in the normative manner of their cultural perspective. The reason is that children understand their parents' parental approach in association to their peers' parents' approach. Rohner and Lansford (2017) supported the above, saying that the theory is consistent with 'interpersonal acceptance-rejection theory' that means children may interpret the parenting they receive as loving and warm according to their culture.

On the contrary, the same parental practices can be perceived as rejection and abusive in different cultural norms. Furthermore, within the normative cultural way, parents' likelihood of receiving their practices' approval is higher within their community or society. Parenting methods are more tested during children adolescence stages.

Some cultures value academic accomplishment viewed as the passport to enter main life domains, such as financial freedom, suitable employment, and health (Coffman et al., 2013). That is the drive of other parents in their approaches and emphasis of education that includes, parental monitoring the link to higher educational achievements (Fang et al., 2003).

Additionally, parental behavioural control is linked to adolescent social competence (Hillarker et al., 2008). In a study conducted in Kenya (de Guzman et al., 2005), parental expectations of their children participating in family obligations reflect children's pro-social behaviour. The likelihood of Kenyan children being pro-social behaviour is higher in the circumstances involving family obligations, including house chores, caring for younger siblings, and any other labour which benefits the family. Nevertheless, this could be viewed as parental failures in a western country and subject to cultural settings and interpretations. Essentially, misinterpretations of professionals may result into child abuse investigations followed by child's removals into care. Disciplining of a child culturally might be a central point of misinterpreting that as abuse.

5.5. Discipline in Parenting

Glueck and Glueck (1950), found that the parents of offending children were laxer and not consistent with the application of physical chastisement and provided less praise (Burke, 2017). By contrast, the parents of non-offenders applied physical punishment more sparingly and were constant in their disciplining style. There are three types of childrearing techniques (Hoffmann and Saltzstein, 1967); (Burke, 2017). Firstly, power assertion was identified as the parental application of threats, withdrawal of material privileges, or physical punishment. Secondly, love withdrawal is expressed when a parent threatens to withdraw or remove affection from the child, that's ignoring the child. Thirdly, inducting a child, implying that the parent should

explain the effects of the child's behaviour. This approach encourages an empathetic or sympathetic response. The first approach initially depends on the installation of fear, whereas the second and third techniques rely on fostering guilt feelings in a child.

Burke (2017) described the relationship between the childrearing approach and moral development through Hoffman and Saltzstein, (1967) five explanations. Firstly, the parent who openly expresses their aggression and anger when disciplining a child increases the dependence of violence on external control. This kind of approach can be identified as Authoritarian parenting style.

The discipline linked with power assertion more likely dissolves the parent's anger and the guilt of a child more quickly. Secondly, withdrawal of love inducted an eternal impact which leads towards the development of internal control. Thirdly, where the removal of love is expressed, the punishment ends after the child makes amendments or confesses; these are regarded as corrective actions. Fourthly, withdrawal of love is said to intensify a child's resolution to conduct oneself in an accepted way to retain love. Finally, induction was effective and empowered the child to scrutinise and correct one's conduct into an approved behaviour. People who have experienced induction or withdrawal of love, as they were raised, are most like to avoid criminal acts (Hoffman and Saltzstein, 1967), the reason being the effect of internalised controls. More so, those brought up on the power of assertion approach, threatened of external punishment to control their actions, temporarily control as long as the threat is still applicable. In 2021 Centre for Emotion Focused Practice Psychology and Counselling

published four different kinds of parenting. In this study some of the parenting practices are described as authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and uninvolved (Glasgow et al., 1991). .

5.5.1 Authoritarian Parenting

Authoritarian parenting characterised by less verbal communication with the child rather than detecting rules to be followed without questioning or explanations (Johari Talib, Z.M. and Mamat, M., 2011). The authors stated authoritarian parenting was highly unresponsive and demanding including control. This parenting approach attempted to shape and control behaviours and attitudes of their offspring in accordance with parents' standards. Johari Talib, Z.M. and Mamat, M., (2011), held the view that authoritarian parents tended to put emphasis on respect and obidence for authorites and orders. Baumrind, (1971), the authoritarian parent expected their children to understand the application of punitive discipline (Shumow Lee et al, 1998) where violation of instruction occured. They went on to suggest that authoritarian parenting resulted in poor academics and behaviorial challenges. Radziszewska et al. (1996), argued that one of the demographic variables theorised to encourage authoritarian values and punitive parenting was economic hardships. Additionally, it was claimed that this kind of parenting is essentially associated with the Asian-Americans, African Americans and Hispanic-Americans (Radziszewska et al., 1996). Steinberg et al. (1998). It was also, claimed that the authoritarian method was found to have positive outcomes for children from the low-income (Glasgow et al., 1991). On contrast, that indicates cultural and ethnic variations

impacting on parenting methods differently. Neverthereless, aurhoritarian parenting from the Chinese perspective, is fundamentaly different, in comparison to the Western views. Unlike Chao, (2001) who argued that the Chinese authoritarian parents were said to have a closer relationship with their offsprings, and that is a predictor of academic achievements. Essentially, these findings of parenting methods, derived from largely white middleclass research (Glasgow et al., 1991) and that suggest it's not well-balanced research across races and cultures. Glasgow et al., (1991), suggests that the common and more acceptable parenting method was the authoritative style.

5.5.2 Authoritative Parenting

Authoritative parenting was branded by Baumrind (1971), as a practice which kept an effective balance between high levels of response and demand (Johari Talib, Z.M. and Mamat, M., 2011). They also suggested that such parents established and firmly enforced standards and rules for their offspring's' behaviour. Additionally, these parents are supportive and warm towards their children. Above all they are seen to be consistently monitoring conducts and employ a non-punitive disciplinary method when their children break rules. Glasgow et al. (1997), stated that parents encourage two-way communication as they validate the child's opinion as a recognition of the rights of both parties. According to (Baumrind, 1973; 1979), authoritative parenting style created a loving warm and mutual understanding within the family, and it fostered stability in children's personalities and behaviours (Glasgow et al.,

(1997). Authoritative parenting seemed to be the modest parenting method so far before incorporating other approaches such like permissive style.

5.5.3 Permissive Parenting

Permissive parenting displayed high levels of warmth with less control of children (Estlein, R., 2016). The author stated that in respect to parenting, the parents totally accepted the child's behaviour and had no means of corrective measures applied. This parenting category did not believe in hierarchy within the family and avoided confrontations whilst they allowed children to be responsible of their own behaviours (Estlein, R., 2016). This was consistent with the previous claims of (Baumrind 1971), stated that due to the tendencies of self-regulation of children, such children usually exhibited immature behaviours. Wischerth et al. (2016), concluded that permissive parenting was associated with less understanding and less emotionally intelligence. This kind of parenting has elements of negligence over children's behaviour easily associated with neglectful parenting.

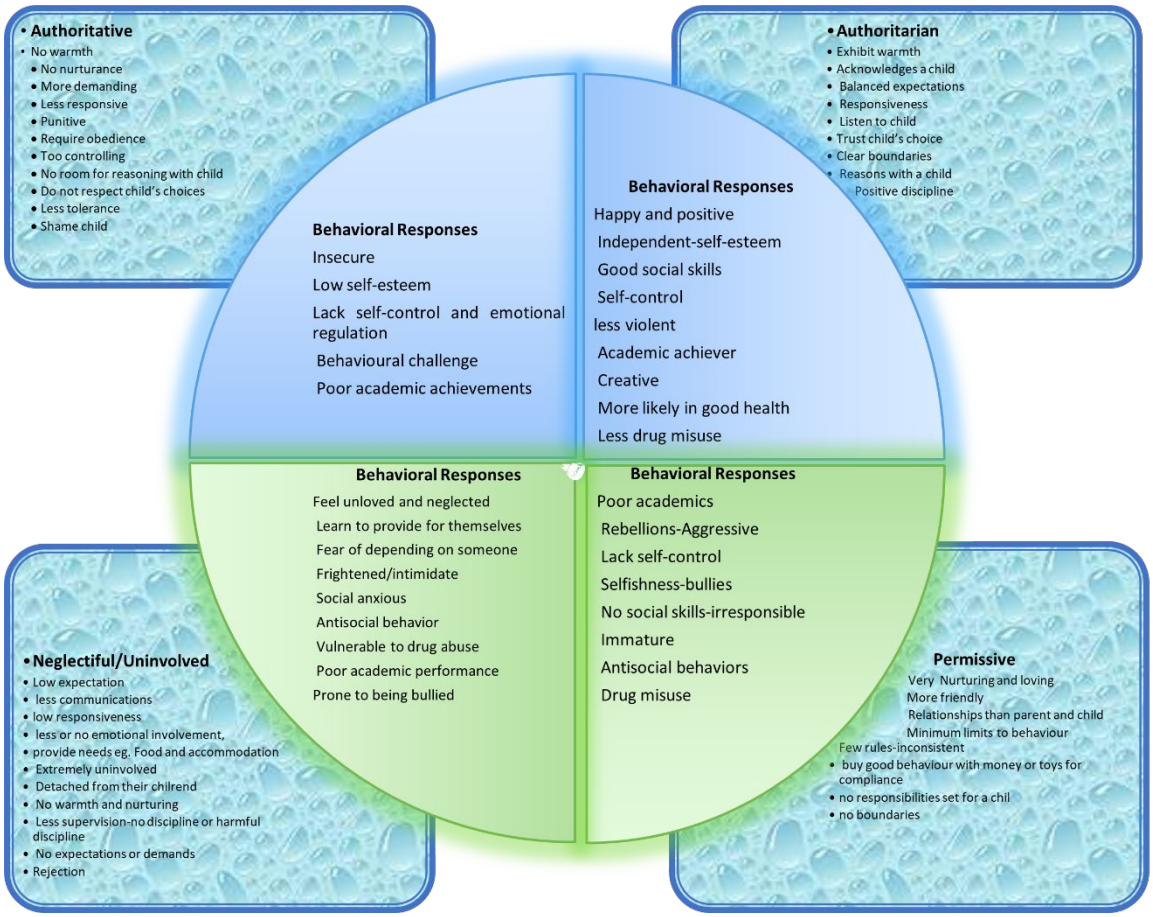
5.5.4 Neglectful/Uninvolved Parenting

Neglectful parenting also referred to as uninvolved parenting practices, were associated with unresponsive to the children's needs. Neglectful parenting was mainly observed where children were exposed to risk (NO, B. et at., 2020). Baumrind, (1991) found that uninvolved parenting

had few or no demands for their off springs. Furthermore, previous research by (Baumrind, 1991), confirmed that neglectful parenting was also associated with both rejection and negligence particularly in some extreme cases. These parents were also characterised by little communication with child and detached (Cherry, K., 2012). Child neglect was one of the central elements discussed in this research as the main explanations for state interventions. In some cases, state intervention was subjected to respond to some parenting practices or disciplines which potentially harmed the child. State agencies got involved and separated families where abuse and neglect were evidenced. Deducing from the above discussions Figure 1 has been designed to summarise the characteristics and impact of four major parenting methods.

The Figure below shows a pictorial summary of the impact of parenting methods.

Figure 1



The above figure outlines various kinds of parenting. The information in the diagram has been drawn from parenting styles as reflected in this chapter.

5.6 Impact of Parental Approaches (Behavioral response)

Bowlby (1988) showed that maternal deprivation is linked to juvenile delinquency, mostly those parents who displayed affectionless attitudes towards their children (Newburn T., 2017). Bowlby (1988), believed that children needed continuous and consistent care from a primary caregiver, particularly the mother up to five years old. If the relationship with the primary

caregiver is disrupted, the likelihood of harmful impact would be high, leading the child to fail to establish stable relationships in the later years (Newburn T.,). Newburn (2017) gave an account of Bowlby's findings after research that involved a child who spend close to a year of hospitalisation. Upon discharge, the child called his mother a nurse and had profound problems creating affectionate relationships with the family. Drawing from this experience, it enhanced and contributed concepts to maternal deprivation. Besides, there are more other factors than separation from parents. That suggests a more complex relationship between crime and functioning family. From a different angle, the notion is supported by, (Blackburn 1993), saying psychodynamic rest on the following three claims:

1. Socialisation is subjected to the internalisation of societal rules during primary childhood.
2. Weakened parent and infant relationships are causally associated with later criminal behaviour.
3. Unconscious conflicts were arising from troubled family relationships at different stages of development.

This might answer the argument of overrepresentation of care leavers in the criminal justice system due to separation from family. Newburn T., (2017) deduced that Bowlby supports the first notion on the internalisation of societal rules in childhood and further agrees with the second assumption. Nevertheless, the third is criticised because it only accounts for criminal activities, especially involving irrational conduct. Furthermore, Blackburn's (1993) opinion

fails to account for some significant criminality features, especially the age distribution of criminal behaviour. Barbra Wootton (1959) was famed for criticising Bowlby's theories on the following basis (Newburn T., (2017):

1. No proof suggests lasting damages occurred during the separation experienced between parent and child.
2. Maternal separation is joint among people within the general population, making the theory exaggerate delinquency.
3. Separation is different from deprivation, implying that what is essential is the quality of the relationship.

Supporting the above, juvenile delinquency can also be partially explained through Comet, (1976) theory on criminal acts (Burke R.H., 2017). He argues that some people do not commit crimes because they want to, but they lack the strong moral authority to influence them to behave differently. In relationship to dysfunctional families, that can lead to parental failures to apply moral authority and influence good behaviour to their children. Regarding children in care, being separated from parents could have been the primary strong moral authority effect influencing them to do as they wish and later find themselves in deviant behaviours. Comet (1976), the positivist, argued that humankind have an inherent and natural desire to achieve perfection, and it is achieved through the formation of moral authority (Burke R.H., 2017).

Interestingly, it is a view which Durkheim rejected, arguing that (Burke R.H., 2017), moral authority is only acceptable to people if it is relevant to their position, particularly in the

changing society. Durkheim's ideal society is characterised by mechanical solidarity through the conformity of the group. However, there are several factors that comes to play to influence juvenile delinquency.

Other factors to be considered are broken homes, as the leading suppliers of offenders (Burke 2017), identified by Glueck and Glueck (1950), and stated that 60 percent of offenders were from broken homes. In the US and Britain (Burt 1945) and (Mannheim 1948), many criminals were from such homes. Contrary (Gibbens 1963) and many others contended the above, saying offending behaviours are most likely associated with children who are established in their families but not happy at home. Further confirmation to Glueck and Glueck (1950), findings were confirmed by (Farmington 1973), that close to double criminals are the results of broken homes due to parental separation before a child attains ten years of age. Surprisingly, children affected by separation through a broken home are more likely to be offenders than children separation by a parent's death Farmington, 1973 (Burke, 2017). There is also an element of the race which is associated with the extent of offenders.

Putting race into consideration, broken homes are more found among black than white offenders (Monahan, 1957). Pitts (1986) identifies with the notion that homelessness and criminality correlate, which is more common, with African-Caribbean youths than their white counterparts. More recent research conducted in Britain depicts conviction that up to 33 years of age, separation happened before turning five years old (Kolvin et al., 1990). Furthermore,

the relationship between the lowest income and single-parent families shows a higher level of offending children.

This indicates that low levels of parental supervision and a lack of economic security (Maginnis, 1977) turn out to be an indicator of crimes associated with violence. Burke R.H. (2014) suggested that poverty was the principal cause of violence enacted by gangs. Wilson (2006) indicates that poor neighbourhoods have no or fewer employment opportunities from his underclass theory. Some findings suggest that where a father is present with financial stability, he becomes a role model of a boy child and providing household security resulting in a reduction of stress on the mother (Maginnis, 1977). As Maginnis suggests, it shows that the combination of low income, absent father, less supervision, and an adolescent boy's presence in the family makes the boy more prone to crime.

5.7 Juvenile Delinquency

Factors found to be influencing juvenile delinquency have been in several predominantly sociological discourses like psychology, criminology, and social work; without rejecting the scientific research, particularly biology. Durkheim (1893) mentioned three deviants: biological deviant, defined through one's psychological or physiological malfunction from a criminological perspective. Nevertheless, (Burke, 2017) suggests that these do not correlate with external factors. These are the same views that Caesar Lombroso, 1835-1909, (Burke,

(2017), identified decades before. His theory offers the notion that criminals have a distinct physical representation different from those who do not engage in criminality. His findings are in four classes; those born criminals are those with distinguishable physical features. Secondly, the mentally challenged, including imbeciles, alcoholics idiots, and paranoiacs. Thirdly, it is a group of occasional criminals, particularly those who commit crimes motivated by opportunities; nevertheless, they carry innate traits of criminality as suggested. Fourthly, those who commit crimes out of passion are driven by anger, honour, or love. In a nutshell, Lombroso's theory suggests that criminals are born but, later he included other social control factors like environment, governmental structures, climate, and family.

If one takes Durkheim's biological deviant theory into account, no juvenile care delinquent should blame the social construction or other strains other than one's natural makeup. Burke (2017) also cited Freud's (1927) theories similar to those of Durkheim to some extent, who tackles his argument from the psychoanalytical model angle. He pointed out that a human being's personality has three groups: primitive, biological, and biological. The second is the conscience that operates in the unconscious that includes values internalised through early childhood and interaction. Thirdly, is the conscious personality that balances the primitive biological drive's demands against the inhibitions forced by the consciences? He also suggested two different models of criminality. One involves shoplifting, arson, and some sexual offenses, and this category reflects illness or state of mental challenges. More importantly, (Freud), psychosexual development of a child is influenced by parents, most likely

unconsciously subjective as narrated by (Burke, 2017). Freud's views suggest that both the parent and child are not aware of each other's influence.

Secondly, Freud proposed that offenders have a weak conscience, entailing that conscience's development has a fundamental importance in raising a child. Sense of morality is linked to guilt conscience, and those who have it are less likely to be involved in criminality, Freud (1927), as articulated by (Burke 2017). Guilt virtue develops in childhood, resulting from how the parents respond to the child's misbehaviours. Burke, 2017). Burke also cited Redl and Wineman (1951), who supported Freud's findings by stating that children who did not develop conscience behave delinquently, the outcome which turns to be hostile behaviour towards authority. Earlier than Freud, (Aichhorn, 1925), had proposed that from birth children have an amount of inherent that drives them to demand satisfaction, and that has no interferences of norms of the society they are in as Burke, (2017) narrates.

Aichhorn calls it an asocial state awaiting to be brought to a social state (Burke R.H., 2017). His findings are that failure to activate the child's automatic drive and translated into a latent delinquency state. At a later stage, the latent delinquency can turn and activated to actual criminal behaviour. Aichhorn, from his research found that undeveloped consciences result from a lack of intimate attachment between parents and their children. Healy and Bronner (1936), as cited by (Burke 2017), were not very supportive of the notion of conscience development because it is an individual behaviour, where one can condemn lying, and the other condone stealing. Their argument was based on findings after researching several brothers,

where one was engaged in criminal behaviours, unlike the other, a non-offender. The results reflected that 19 of the offenders and 30 of the non-offenders had experienced good family life. The findings suggest that conditions in one household may be favourable for one child and not the others and vice versa. The results also suggest that children growing in the same environment might react to situations differently.

Their further explanation was that criminals are more emotionally troubled and channel their frustration through offending behaviours while non-offending engagements in socially accepted practices. Moreover, some of the deviance was due to amount of discipline the child got from parents. Factors of delinquent behaviour cannot be fully understood without consideration of racism influences. However, the impact of racism will not be fully understood without taking into consideration the impact of slavery and colonisation being the root causes.

5.14 Impact of Slavery

Historically, black slaves lived in a culture of severe discipline (Coles and Powell, 2019). In their studies, Macpherson confirmed that the culture of discipline was evidenced through violence inflicted on punishing blacks. A former slave was cited as saying, *'.....the first time you are caught trying to read or write, you were whipped with a cow-hide'* (Cornelius 1983, 174) (Coles and Powell, 2019). Michelle Alexander (2012) said that though slavery was abolished, its presence continued through severe discipline. Blacks were viewed in different

dimensions and according to how they suit the society at a given time. When they are not needed, they stood as a threat to social affairs and are deemed dangerous to the community, but when a need arises, they became a perfect resource of the workforce (Adamson 1983). It is also noted that the black children are exposed to institutional racism in educational settings.

The disproportionality of in-school suspension or discipline where the black young people suffer is not from individual racist educators but more from institutional. The notion is consistent across the institutions that unequal discipline is directly informed through racism (Adamson 1983). Hirschfield (2008) suggests that what is being experienced now in the schools stems from historical roots that black youths are unteachable and are criminals, leading the educators to impose a corrective action in an uninformed position. Sojoyner (2016), commenting on what was already know as from school to prison, as they viewed school exclusion as a passageway to prisons and realised that schools themselves are forms of prisons. Irvine (1990) put it across, as that schools are places where black children disconnect from their identity. In the same manner (Dumas, 2016) sees schools as a set up for black youth and exclude them from education, as demonstrated by the rate of suspension even because of petty issues compared to similar circumstances performed by white youths.

5.8. Crime

Backdating to the 1950s (Pryce, 1979), after studying young African-Caribbean in Bristol whose high hopes and aspirations were thwarted when they were relegated to cheap labour while their families subjected to discrimination and racism. This pattern contributed to their continuous pressure. The immigrants had only two choices to adapt to, either to take on infamous defiant attitude or conform and become suffering law-abiding citizens (Burke R.H., 2017). That suggests that the second and third generation (Burke R.H., 2017) were not likely to respond to the second option. He said that it is not only economic pressure that subjected them to offending but also prejudiced played a significant role.

Studies conducted by the Institute of Race Relations (1987) exposed that police officer are biased against class or race in the UK. It is also suggested that police, in their search for criminals they unconsciously pursue a certain kind of individuals Cicourel, (1968) (Burke R.H., 2017). However, Cicourel breaks it down to individual police and responds to the case subject to understanding their roles. Some carry their duties following the due process approach, which is to uphold the respondent's rights, based on the crime's tangible evidence as deduced from the above discussions. Contrary to the above, other police view their roles primarily as to control crime; in this regard, they are more likely to react based on the defended personality. These are the same views Cicourel has in social work; the process is mainly class-biased, generally affecting the working class. Cicourel's finding on delinquency from social workers' and probation officers' perspectives is on the usual factors, including poverty, broken homes,

and permissive parenting. Quinney (1970) came up with four societal structures, gender, ethnicity, age, and class, suggesting that the probability of receiving a criminal label most likely fell on a young working-class or unemployed black man (Burke, 2017). Other factors attached to delinquency are external encounters.

5.9 External Challenges of Parenting

External influence on children is one of the most significant parenting challenges where parents have little or no control (Burke, 2017). This research also focuses on challenges in parenting approaches for example, where circumstances lead parents to control situations in an unprecedented way. That is well explained by Wikstrom, (2011) over the Situational Action Theory (SAT) which answers why people break the rules and laws. SAT could be defined as a moral action, guided by moral rules between right and wrong in certain situations. Wikstrom (2007) gave five leading suggestions: moral actions, action alternative and habitual or deliberately, social conditions, and life history. The labelling of parents as criminals fitted any of the five situational action theories applied to reveal conventional criminological theory. Burke, (2017) stated that SAT identifies how people are consequently, transformed into a criminal due to circumstances perceived as criminal offenses as a feasible alternative and a genuine way of achieving the anticipated outcome.

Moreover, where individuals are placed geographically, including the kind of environment where crime contributes to criminality. Burke cited Lemert (1951) and Becker (1963), noting that crime varied over time and location depending on how it is defined in a given society.

Although extensive research has been carried out on parenting, limited literature is available on forces that work against parenting. Moreover, very little consideration has been discussed about black parents' challenges other than those frequently debated like deprivation and poor parenting skills. From the western world context (Powel and Coles, 2020) expressed the overwhelming trauma and stress that accompanies black parents. Their research quoted one mother who said she was convinced 'that prison was a rest stop on every black man's journey' (pg.2) (Powel and Coles, 2020). The narrative was that they perceived schools as spaces of 'becoming' implying that they have made places of reproduction of the lived historical traumas. The trauma experienced by black parents in this account is in respect of black Americans' parenting pain. Their children had the highest rate of school suspension (Gregory et.al., 2010). ACLU, (2014) looks at the system as channelling children out of school into criminal justice. They see one of the main challenges of this problem being failure to recognise the role of parents who are trying to pull their children out of trouble but perceive it as a juvenile problem.

They said black families had not been given protection to infer their experiences as trauma. Black parents are described from a shortfall narrative, interpretation as, single-parent home, parental absence, incarcerated parent (Waters, 2016). Through the experiences of being

suspended from school, this represents one of several ways black Americans are seen and trained on how to perceive themselves as a problem (Waters, 2016). The black man is labelled as abusive and absent from family and seen as unequal with the 'superior race' (Snoor Ismael Mahmood, 2019).

Emdin (2016), considering previous slavery accounts in black people, narratives established during the slavery period still exist today. The slavery narrative is not too dissimilar from the colonial experiences that influence African people's thoughts and behaviours. The above is consistent with Olusaga (2015), an article written in the Guardian newspaper (8 Sep. 2015) that read "the roots of European racism lie in the slave trade, colonialism." It described that the philosophies that suggest Africans as barbaric, inferior, and backwards could be traceable back to 18th-century slavery. Furthermore, it suggested that Europeans view the African people through racial theory and racism's biased lenses. Olusaga (2015) emphasised more on tales of slavery while disregarding the racial concepts of the pro-slavery lobby, which also impacted the Africans in their own home countries. Black families still bear the tag as broken, black mothers were loud and uneducated, black fathers were always absent, and black children were terrible and deviant troublemakers (Morris, 2016). One of the main obstacles in education is that resolutions are mainly to sort-out (punish), black parents. This was driven by the orthodox narrative that labelled black parents as void of knowledge and skills to contribute valuable things to their education.

Powell and Coles (2020) provide the lived narratives of three black American mothers about how they viewed the way they and their sons were perceived in the context of their colour. They linked their experiences to racially motivated. This was in relation to the school suspension of black children. Approaching it from the concept of power structures how it is viewed from Black people's perception, it is essential to understand some facts (Dumas, 2014), which are:

- The social placement of blackness and the social construction of ant blackness
- The constant traumas resulting from the root of anti-blackness and Black.

This history, which is connected to trauma and anti-blackness, enlightens the future and present of black mothers and their children, including their relationship with educational institutions.

Many elements challenge black people that also includes their environment. Burke (2017), the Chicago school theory, concluded that if an individual is raised and lives negatively, it most likely influences the residence outcome. Robert Park (1921), (Burke 2017), said that in the US cities where the population was more migratory and less established, increased the movements of immigrants into low areas pushing the former occupants into suburbs. The movement increased criminality as a result of its impact on people's behaviours. In his findings (Ernest Burgess, 1928) said such movements weaken families and their communal attachments and bonds, later leading to disorganisation (Burke, 2017). There is also an element of macroaggression (O'Keefe et al., 2015), which suggested how people behave.

5.10 Macroaggression

O'Keefe et al. (2015) alleged that there were consequences of macroaggressions that exposed black people to significant micro racial aggression, with a probability of showing suicidal ideation and depression symptoms. Similarly, (Kim et al., 2017) pointed out that further studies revealed that a decrease in wellbeing and microaggressions were facilitated by cultural mistrust. Specifically, increased encounters of racial micro-aggression influenced cultural mistrust. For example, being suspicious of white individuals leads to a decrease in one's participating wellbeing. It is also suggested that people of colour are heavily burdened with a routine of macroaggression experiences, resulting in directing the psychological negative impacts dues to such interactions (Sue et al., 2019). All this led to mistrusting the system that is meant to help, particularly in social services as mentioned by (Long, 2018). Lui and Quezada (2019) noted that black people do not trust the system because they already have a wrong mind set of distrusting the structures even though they might need help. Henceforth, contributes to more reduced psychological adjustments, lower self-esteem, increased somatic symptoms, and negative affect. That can be deduced as continues life experiences of black people since slavery.

5.11 Reliving Black History

The black mothers' narratives indicate that black history is still being lived in the 21st century. They indicated that black people are still interconnected to historical misconducts against their communities and individuals (Marable, 2006). Marable stated that black people's history was

ineradicably and could not be divorced from the present lived experiences. The participating black mothers' voices outlived realities that revealed their experiences; were not exceptional but universally affecting blacks wherever they are scatted across the western countries (Marable, 2006). The research went on to say that the experiences of these black mothers were not a surprise to them, but a phenomenon rooted and engraved in their beings. Currently, these practices are more visible through institutional structures.

5.12 Institutional Controls

New words centred on racism are formed now and again, including institutional racism (Stockly, Carmichael and Hamilton, 1967). Carmichael and Hamilton defined the differences between individual racism and institutional racism also known as systematic racism. They said individual racism is easily distinguishable because it is evident whereas, institutional racism, is not easily noticeable. Individual racism encompasses the entire group, community henceforth found in every fibre of social life (Snoor Ismael Mahmood, (2019). They noted that institutional racism operates in respected and established organisations or institutions in the society, where the public usually turns a blind eye on, in comparison to individual racism. However, they went on to say institutional racism is directed by individuals from the dominant group governed by their intuitional policies. The institutions tend to support and protect the group identified by the powerful. A Memmi (2009) explained racism as more of a structure that is more than a notion or belief. It is beyond individuality, but an established social structure that divides

society according to many differences, including race, religion, and culture. Memmi (2009) says differences are devalued and degraded as a justification of the downgrading of the deemed inferior class whiles the only group are evaluated. The superior class is socially privileged and enjoys all the available opportunities favouring their identity (Memmi,2009).

In recent decades, Sir William Macpherson (1999) defined institutional racism in the case of Stephen Lawrence as "the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin. That can be detected in processes, attitudes; and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people".

Bandura (1973) discovered that decision-making was shared in an institution/organisation controls practitioners to contribute to punishing practices because of the lack of individual responsibility. They hid behind shared responsibilities branded as a corporate crime that allowed a deception in their minds, suggesting no one was suffering (Braithwaite, 1985).

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation, 2016 review did not contain any acknowledgment of race and racism. Larkins and Wainwright (2020) noted that the UK Youth Justice Board library of effective practices in their 50 documents did not monitor racism within the youth justice system. This reflected on structural inequalities connected to race and racism which is even noticeable from school age.

Finigan-Carr (2017) suggested how racially disproportionate school suspensions hurt black young people. School suspension was a punitive way of disciplinary stratagem through the removal of students from school grounds. School exclusion was looked at as an inherently anti-black policy that excluded or removed black children from school, as explained before. Coles and Powell (2019) stated that this was intentionally designed to exclude black children and later marginalise them. There were varied ways the black youths were demonised within the education sector as intellectually inferior, lesser than human and inherent offenders (Coles and Powell, 2019). Waytz et al. (2014), both school and society viewed black youths as capable of managing higher levels of suffering and pain, which then caused an overwhelming degree of environmental and institutional abuse. Unfortunately, it has ended up being sustained and normalised over time (Love, 2016). Coles and Powell (2019) said the disproportionate rate of removing black children from school was the starting point of their life experiences of negative consequences compared to other races. Bourdieu (2001) cited by (Ferguson 2010) on youth violence, school suspension. The school suspension is not an isolated practice but still a part of the constant structural policy that shows anti-black violence. Ferguson (2010) likened that as punitive practices that present enforcers of cultural domination disguised in the curriculum. He outlined symbolic forcefulness as the damaging, painful, mortal wounds imposed by manipulating words. Even though the numbers of school suspensions were disproportionately alarming, there was the silence of the voices and absence of views of the black students (Ferguson, 2010).

5.13 Anti-Black Encounters

The police in the UK were alleged to perceive the BAME youths as the typical suspects for criminality according to Lammy (2017). Stereotyping of African/Caribbean young people as violent offenders was as frequent ever (Williams and Clarke, 2019). Apena (2007) suggests that the initial contact of a BAME youth with the criminal justice system was grounded on stereotypes which the police held due to their perception of the black race, including labelling them as offenders. Lammy (2017) found that the impact of criminalising BAME youths was affirmed by the youth criminal justice court system on the unfair sentences they received. Furthermore, many BAME youths, mainly African and Caribbean, experienced appalling socio-economic conditions due to the environments in which they were raised. These kinds of settings encouraged offending behaviours and made it challenging to desist if one was already engaged in it (Nichols, 2017). Nichols (2017) argued that how other youths and criminal justice establishments perceived BAME youths had a direct and continuous effect on their involvement in offending and the criminal justice system.

Powell and Coles (2020) argued that black mothers unearthed how racism was manifested differently in society's various settings. These mothers also highlighted the anti-blackness children are subjected to in schools mainly targeted on their boys. They noted that the mothers alleged that teachers in schools were afraid of black boys and saw them as older than their actual age and perceive them as guilty people. From these interviews came out some bizarre

perceptions about black children, such as "black children could never do right," the mother, through her experiences, gave the impression that black children were robbed of their innocence and denied the 'right to make mistakes' as children. These notions came from the conceptualisation of black people as inferior or less than other races.

One mother related her account of going out of her way to getting favours of teachers for the sake of her son, *"…what I've to do is develop relationships with teachers and the administration because what's; We, if they like they'll treat my kid better. Also, tried to make that my education level and all of that is known in some way, shape, or form so that they know that I'm not. Because I know that they're looking at me as a single mother, uneducated, poor, and so to try to dispel that stereotype. I'm upset. It makes me angry that I have to do that"* (Powell and Coles, 2020; pg. 11).

She had to confront the ideologies, which suggested black mothers were single mothers, poor, uneducable, which was less than the negative experiences of her son at school. This is classified as triple jeopardy in social work; being black, woman, and single mother. Additionally, though this mother put herself in the political correctness of decency by attaining degrees, but that did not move anyone. Another mother gave an account of her racial experiences through her grandmother:

"……I am biracial. My white grandmother… she honestly thought that Black people didn't care about their children. I think [white people] honestly believe that. That we're just pawning

them off on the education system for them to do our jobs or something like that, and it's ridiculous…" (Powell and Coles, 2020; pg. 12).

This mother links her preconceived ideas of her grandmother's views with some white teachers. From this interview, the researcher concluded that most of the parents felt rejected mostly by white teachers. Another mother narrated her experience with her son's schools. She stated that her son was suspended from school on many occasions and worked hard to send her son to the best school, and that ended up in vain: *"…With the other parents, because I was a single parent, I was somewhat of an outcast. Then, of course, being black. … But was I embraced by other parents and the school? I wasn't White and married, so, not really..." (Powell and Coles, 2020; pg. 12).* Gilliam et al. (2016), stated that primary concerns included the black children's experiences, specifically the boys and how society views and judges them.

5.14 Black Boys' as Perceived

It has been previously witnessed that Black children were perceived as 'bad' and guilty, not fully human, and misbehave (Gilliam et al., 2016). In America is established from different studies that teachers fear black children (Bailey, 2016); due to teachers' failures to build effective relationships with the black students. Henceforth, he went on to say, from an anti-black context, scary stories about black people have been spread through the mainstream media and result in fearing them at a societal level. One mother gave more insights concerning black children: *"…the one time [a Black child] challenges you, suddenly, they become a big bad monster in the classroom, especially black boys…black boys are held to the cross. They can*

never do right. When they mess up one time, forever, they are labelled that way..." (Powell and Coles, 2020; pg. 13).

That is how black boys have no room for errors and should not make childlike mistakes, even though they are children, most of the parents repeated this theory. Dumas and Nelson (2016) stated that black boys existed in a world that does not acknowledge their childhood and cannot be childlike. Black children have been deprived of the liberty to imagine themselves as they wished but rather perceived themselves through others' lens. McArthur (2016) saw anti-blackness as a structural system that confirmed that black children were continuously discriminated.

In the same vein, another black mother explained about her historical traumas manifesting in life today. Though attention could be given to anti-blackness, there is a need to uncover the psychic damages it caused where black people are end-up internalising their narratives. Dumas (2014) points out the importance of black mothers' voices to uncover such accounts, revealing that many black families and children in the United Kingdom and other countries' schools were considered suffering sites. The suffering of black people in schooling was least acknowledge. One of the mothers whose 3-year-old son was suspended from school; voiced her opinions, saying: *"...and I'mma be honest, I still deal with myself on that again, because I didn't have all the information. I didn't have the historical knowledge. So, I did overreact on him sometimes. Like spankings, stuff like that. 'Go to school and be good'. Just do what they tell you do. Not realising that he was being a normal child and experienced micro aggressions. I*

got the language now. But back then I didn't. That's how I was raised. Just do what they tell you to do. Stop making things hard for mommy. I remember saying that…." (Powell and Coles, 2020; pg. 14). There was an increasing concern on how children as young as two years of age were suspended from school (Dumas, 2014). In this regard, it becomes apparent that the black children's challenges played a significant factor in directing them into criminality. The further interpretation might suggest that the black boy's behaviour was socially controlled.

5.15 Control Theory

The control theory is an idea that two control systems, internal and external control, work against the people's tendency to deviate (Hirsch, 2015). The strain theory or anomie theories are presented with the theory that humankind is a moral animal longing to obey rules. People have to be coerced to behave in a manner that is inconsistent with their own personal internalised norms and the desires they have towards others. Strain theory attempts to achieve one's assumed goals. Arguable, strain theory seems to be an over-predicting crime, especially among the lower class (Hirsch, 2015).

Burke (2017) suggested regulation with a system to have people's freedom, while Durkheim (1960) noted that people have no broad base system of regulation within traditional societies regarding social control. As a tool, social control can be broken down to individual, family, community, and societal levels. Social systems were developed into market-based or modified society resulting in a decline in understanding and increased individualisation freedom (Burke,

2017). The concept was found short in societies with diversities because of cultural variations (Aldelman et al., 2003). In this regard, the majority were observed to agree on what constitutes deviant behaviour. However, that may not have reflected a collective consciousness (Aldelman et al., 2003).

Eriksom (1966) argued that social control agents and deviant serves had a boundary maintaining mechanism. Durkheim's views on social control suggested that the state afforded people to voice, denoting a direct relationship between actions of the state and the peoples will concerning regarding deviants (Giddens, 1972). Whereas (Reiman 2004) noted that where the government does not include its citizens on a collective understanding of behaviour that might result as a purpose of social control mechanism, of controlling people under surveillance. Also, punishment can be seen as a control mechanism.

Kent and Jacobs (2004) perceived punishment as a power, like a tactic and social function, suggesting that power is driven through violence or force. About this research that can reflect parents' attitude towards discipline and the application of corporal punishment as viewed previously on parenting approaches. Foucault (1975) stated the penal institution development where the state has drifted away from treats of badly injuries incapacitation though punishing the soul. They went on to say that previously the power of the ruler/state was demonstrated through physical punishment. In contrast, in recent years, it is power operated in an invisible and uncertain nature. The social control mechanism can control people's behaviours, like putting the entire general population under surveillance. The social control system is

strengthened by its agents' invisibility and distribution of power among various agents, such as multiagency in child protection (Foucault, 1975).

Burke (2017) social control systems could be categorised into social control systems, including communities and families. The formal systems consisted of social welfare, the criminal justice system, education, and health sectors. The formal social controls were further divided into two groups, including soft and rigid controls. Hard controls consisted of criminal justice sanctions where deviant behaviours were controlled. As described by (Rodger 1988), social services' involvement as a social control mechanism was distributed as the penal institution. Whereas soft social controls were through social services that were perceived as controlling the behaviour of poor people. For example, the construction and expansion of welfare state, including removing children into care where parents were labelled to be incompetent (Margolin, 1997). This largely manifest during child abuse investigations. Coestin et al. (1996) perceived the child abuse movement as a driving force for imposing middle-class values and norms on the deprived to protect the community or society from underclass criminals.

As presented by (Hirsch 1969), said that people do not commit deviant behaviours because of their morals; but because criminal behaviours were learned from socialisation in individual social groups. Arguably, social control theory desires to conform to the norms of other people. Cultural deviance theories perceived crime as a product of universal obedience to an individual's culture's values and norms. Merton (1939) assumed that social theory imperious biological drove into criminal behaviours because social controls were not useful to restrain

them. However, (Merton 1938; Sutherland, 1934), theories did not account for other factors, such as why there were highest criminal activity rates among teen and young adult males, particularly those from low levels or no relationship families poor parenting (Burke, 2017). Hirsch suggested that the absence or presence of delinquency is around family bonds, parental supervision, educational aspirations, and delinquent friends. His findings suggested that delinquent behaviour is not well integrated into one's family and school. In some instances, were school is an essential influential institution for young people (Burke, 2017). However, this study focusses on children who were in care and involved in criminal justice.

Burke (2017) stated that Hirsch, (1969) delinquency theory was suitable for care leavers who were overrepresented in the criminal justice system. The teens and young people in care lacked family bonds, parental supervision, difficulties in committing to education, and not having any attachment with their new home and community. However, it might be different from those who continued with one foster carer. Changing schools increases the level of detachment with the group because of lack of commitment. However, the critical cause could be a lack of family bonds, which leads to more detachment from society. This consistent with Durkheim, who stated that the more weakened the group to which one belonged, the more one drifted away from depending on it; and the more one depended on self and had no regard for the law of contract (Burke, 2017). Hirsch (1969) suggests that due to social control theory, people conformed because they had firm attachments with their parents, involvements, mainstream activities, and trust in social norms (Burke, 2017).

5.16. Conformity

In contrast, the adolescents who had low stakes in conformity, weak attachments, no or less participation in regular activities, and no regard for societal norms had a higher chance of being involved in delinquency behaviour (Burke, 2017). Previously, he contended that attachment of parent and child is imperative, enhanced the relationship, which was one of the critical factors to deter delinquency behaviour. Hirsch's implication of social control theory applied to all adolescents regardless of their ethnicity and race, suggesting that the causes of delinquency were the same across races. Conversely, (Gottfredson and Hirsch, 1990) signified that blacks have lower self-control levels than their white counterparts. The low self-control level was based on flaws and erratic socialisation, or parental supervision rendered to the child. Ethnic minority families were viewed as falling short of supervision, recognition, and punishment of deviant behaviours in their children (Gottfredson and Hirsch, 1990). They viewed parents from ethnic minorities as ineffective at childrearing leading the ethnic minorities to be frequently involved in criminality. They further argued that in these families, criminal activities included the effects of more prominent families, absent fathers, and mums working away from home. Additionally, minority adolescents had lower degrees of self-control and raised the probability of criminal activities.

However, (Leiber and Peck, 2015) opposed the above by applying the general strain theory that examined ethnic and race differences in criminality. Some interpreted general strain theory

suggested that blacks and ethnic minorities usually experienced disproportionately and different qualitative types of strain that resulted in higher rates of involvement in criminality. They also said black people suffered from different strains, like, poverty, unemployment, economic strain, low grade in education, discrimination, and family strain that included poor parenting and community strain.

Correspondingly, Shaw, and McKay (1942) said examining impoverished neighbourhoods explains why such environments were prone to crime, low socioeconomic status, residential mobility and ethnic diversity heterogeneity (Newburn, 2017). These factors created social disorganisation that led to subcultures. Newburn, (2017) described subculture as accepting values contrary to the societal ones and helped create crime and gangs (Newburn, 2017). Communities with such characteristics led to weak social ties among their community (Newburn, 2017) and local institutions such as churches and schools. In this regard, such communities failed to deliver essential services, including education, housing, and health care, which propels weak social ties and disorganization. This might be the reason why the minorities were involved more in criminality because of such environment. Sampson and Wilson (1995) tackled social disorganisation from a race perspective. Sampson and Wilson (1987) reported that racial discrimination and economic inequalities contributed to ethnic minority engagement in crime. Areas that evidenced unemployment, segregated communities, and family disruption, were confronted with structural barriers and can quickly adapt subcultural ethics as a means of

managing that embraced drug misuse, crime and devaluating educational aspirations (Sampson and Wilson, 1987).

5.17 Subcultural Theories

Subcultural theories were viewed as race-focused to explain why minorities differentially commit crimes than whites (Burke, 2017). Burke (2017) reported that the relationship between race and homicides could be explained more through the subculture of violence theory. He went on to argue that some subcultures of violence justified assaults. That included antisocial behaviours where physical aggression was accepted within the community approving violence, which could end up in fatality. Morffitts (1993) argued that black offenders, most likely leave in structurally deprived communities and that restricted their likelihood of success. Burke (2017) stated that deviant subculture, suggested that juvenile criminal behaviour was not always motivated by financial gain as Menton proposed.

Maritza noted that social workers and the criminal justice system encouraged juveniles to commit deviant behaviour (Burke, 2017). Comte (1976) argued that the way people were increasingly separated into different residence locations and employment had subverted the former united community or society's moral authority. Hence, people were more prone to criminal behaviours though and not of their interest but, because of lack of moral authority to influence them positively. There has been no clear explanation that has been given directed to black African care leavers regarding delinquent behaviour. More so, delinquency is ascribed to a lack of social bonds perceived by Hirsch (1969).

5.17 Social Bond

Social bonds could be lost through criminal activities, and these bonds could be distributed in four different classifications, which included commitment, attachment, belief, and involvement Hirsch, (1969), (Newburn, 2017). Attachment related to how an individual was connected to others was demonstrated through respect, love, and sensitivity to others' opinions. Such bonds were usually found in a family setup. According to Hirsch (1969), the assumption was that parents and teachers alike disapproved of deviant actions such as disrespectful, hurtful, and dishonest. Furthermore, he emphasised that commitment to education or any form of occupational goals saved as a deterrent to criminality. The assumed goals could be jeopardized by violating laws and set values of institutions or organizations, which provided such rewards.

Additionally, he noted that an individual's involvement in everyday activities, such as sports, school, or any other, reduced criminal behaviour chances. Hirsch noted that strain theory desperation and deprivation provided enough reasons to violate laws, which one believed. Cultural deviances theories suggest that people, do not violate their norms. However, control theory indicated that some people are found violating the norms because of the void of attachment to others because they had no respect for the laws or rules.

Hirsch (1969) suggested child attachment to parents reduced the chances of delinquency. His emphasis was on the occurrence of delinquency due to social weakened or broken bonds of an individual. Social control theory became prominent in 1968 as a significant theory on as causes

of delinquency. Punishing a child was natural and viewed as necessary in childrearing in control theory. The parental sanctions were applied to warn children from falling off a tree or putting their hands on a hot stove. Loeber and Stouthamer (1986) supported Hirsch's (1969) notion that families differed in childrearing styles, but poor functioning families were strongly identified with delinquent behaviour. Burke (2017), says Hirsch (1969), defined delinquency theories as variations of cultural deviance such as strain and social control.

On the other hand, it was viewed as classic Durkheim (Burke, 2017). with attachments, bonds, and participating with the conventional societies, regarding conformity. Without internalised control, people continued to deviate with no motivations. (Burke, 2017). He also despised Hirsch's methods as of low quality.

Summary

The chapter highlighted several aspects of parenting, including how it was approached differently according to its ethnicity or cultural backgrounds. The immigrants' parenting methods were found to be on trial as they failed to match the host country's expectations. The literature shared in this chapter showed that African practices conflicted with that of their host country. The question of why black children was overrepresented in the care system was addressed by analysing parenting failures, separation of parents, forms of discipline/punishment, race factors, poverty, and crime. Racial and cultural elements were viewed to have a more considerable detrimental influence on how black families and children

were treated. Some researchers have argued racism as a continuation of slavery and colonisation.

Discrimination, racism, segregation, and their impacts were also discussed. Not only was discrimination experienced by black adults but black children in schools. The school suspension of black children was one of the under-reported phenomena in the UK. Most researchers deduced that society had imposed pressure on black parents and their children. Black children's suspension affected the parent's psyche that led them to label themselves as bad parents and their children as equally bad. This brought about stress, pressure, and trauma to both the parents and the children. The chapter explains that social bonds were classified into four categories as commitment, attachment, belief, and involvement. Attachment to parents was described as an essential element that reduces delinquency. The chapter outlined the importance of social bonds, which encouraged good behaviour and deterred criminality. Black people are frequently perceived as being discriminated, with no employment and under systematic racial prejudice. In most cases they are oppressed, and their abilities are not exposed but offered general jobs and labouring work. Such notions had to be verified through methodology employed in this research as mirrored in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX Methodology

6.0 Introduction

The chapter outlines the methodology used and the justification for the methods undertaken, reflecting the whole process taken. It begins by establishing what this research intents to achieve and developing the research areas. The chapter is structured as follows: theoretical literature, study design, the snowballing technique employed, and ethics approval. The chapter moves on to explain the way the participants were contacted. A qualitative method was applied for interviews. The written literature review is one of the tools used to guide the research field's initial steps. Gray (2013) suggested that the qualitative method is flexible and might divert the researcher into changing questions and focus. It was for that reason the technique was found appropriate for this study. This chapter demonstrates the methodological approach employed in the research, and some experiences encountered highlighted. The methods selected for the research and the analysis of data were outlined. The study was concluded by discussions and recommendations.

6.1 Defining and Developing the Research Area

This research has taken place at the height of racial disproportion debates through Parliament and the media. These debates also appeared in the Lammy Review which considered racial inequalities across the cities and other countries such as America, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, and France (Fekete, L., 2018). The Lammy review emphasised and exposed the injustice experienced by ethnic minorities, particularly the black population. As a former

Responsible Individual (RI) with Ofsted for a children's care home, I witnessed extensive trauma on children removed from home into care. Regardless of the familiarities of the consequences and stigmatizations in the care system, there was a need for further exploration in more depth and understanding of such encounters' impact and outcomes.

Hillyard et al. (2004), stated that delinquency does not exist just because of individuals' physiological tendencies but sometimes responding to the label enforced by those with legitimate authority over different authorisations on legislations. From this perception, criminological outlines to seek answers from stakeholders' policies and practices and implementation of the law. One of the research objectives was to understand the relationship between race, poverty, care, and youth criminal justice systems. Another goal was to examine black societies and their cultural approaches regarding childrearing. For this reason, narrative methods were adopted, allowing the participants to express themselves as they relate their experiences or views.

The research topics were prompted by controversies over child protection, parental rights, and inequalities experienced in social settings. Therefore, I endeavoured to explore the practices' imbalances and how their outcomes impact the people in question. An examination of the conflict between children's rights and parental rights when executing human rights Article 8 was carried out.

The following actions were taken:

- Social workers, both academics and the front liners in the field were interviewed.

- First generation of African immigrant's parents interviewed.
- Observations of conference presenters on children's rights.
- Determining how the practitioners work without interfering with human rights, Article 8.
- The operations and the outcomes of multi-agency processes, within the child protection framework settings.

6.2 Theoretical Literature

This research adopted Gray's (2013) recommendation, which suggests that theoretical literature provides comprehensive critical analysis and a narrative of the existing state of knowledge. The study attempted to explain why some child protection approaches where not adequate in responding to and understanding child abuse within the African diasporic communities. This is monitored through analysing the existing social theories and how they are applied to the challenges faced in this current research. Furthermore, the concept of child safeguarding and its impact is the primary theoretical framework of this study. One of the research objectives was to understand how African children are disproportionately represented in the social care and youth criminal justice systems. The reseach had to be carried out employing the Multi-Site Study approach.

6.3 Study Design

The Multi-Site Study is a qualitative research approach designed to acquire an in-depth understanding and knowledge of Local Authorities' (LA) operations (Audet and Amboise, 2001). The process involved interviewing participants from several sites and later analysing the data. The sites were five educational institutions, one children's services department from LA, two libraries including the British library and one residential. Lee TW and Lee T (1999) states that the multi-site study, as a qualitative research approach, has been explicitly designed to gain a deep understanding of strategic scanning activities carried on by similar organizations. I found this approach appropriate when contacting interviews mostly on social workers from different LAs.

6.4 Snowballing Technique

After several unsuccessful months of exploring all possible gatekeepers within the LA, I followed my supervisor's recommendation to attempt a snowballing approach. Patton (2002) describes snowballing as a friendship pyramiding technique that forms a convenience sampling. This method of collecting data might have added to methodological weakness. For example, the snowballing approach mainly connects one group of people with the same mind and thinking (Williams and Soyan, 2005). This could arguably be the reason why I quickly got to the saturation point in my interviews. At some point, I felt I was interviewing siblings, particularly on how the participants were raised and how they view their parents' parenting styles. It seems that Africans have similar principles of raising children across the continent.

Nevertheless, the findings were not compromised by the approach employed. As a member of the diasporic community, I found it easy to undertake the snowballing methodology. My first contacts were five church/community leaders who provided me with their congregates. The chain grew as one person introduced me to another. I connected with some of the participants at social events and academic conferences. From academic conferences, I identified categories of professionals who work in the child protection system. I also interviewed three child psychologists and two police officers. Participating parents' occupational status was put into consideration and evaluate the professions' influence on parenting. Most of the interviews took an average of 45 minutes, whereas academics participants restricted themselves to 30 minutes.

6.5 Interviewing Parents

As mentioned before, that the original intention was to interview parents with child protection investigation experiences. Nonetheless, because of the difficulties I faced in identifying the group, I reverted to collect data on first-generation African immigrants' perceptions. The participants were mainly from Nigeria and Zimbabwe, and the rest spread between Kenya, Zambia, South Africa, Ghana, and The Gambia. Only two of my participants were single parents. The eligible participants in this category were expressing how they felt about the child protection system. Parents were interviewed over their understandings on raising children in the UK and their expectations towards their children. The research was conducted during the height of stubbing among black youth, and I was moved to collect data on how the participants

felt about it. Some parents expressed that their authority over children was taken away through children's rights and the interferences of social workers and that they were left helpless to guide their children.

Both narrative and conversational analysis were employed. In the narrative analysis, the parents were asked to expound upon their experiences or views, the conversational method enabled me to interject and pose questions during interviews. The advantage of conversational analysis is that it has an informal approach to social interaction principle (Ten Have, P., 2001).

6.6 Plus Care Leavers

I intended to interview care leavers, reaching them through LA and children's charities such as Barnardos, including one politician who agreed to share his data with me. Unfortunately, these investigation lines were not readily available, and I could not pursue that after experiencing distress while interviewing one care leaver. It would have benefited this study to get first-hand information from the care leavers and their views on living away from family. As described above, when interviewing parents, narrative analysis was applied as the primary way of collecting data by asking open-ended questions. Semi-structured interviews were used, especially for probing questions in the mid of the meeting.

6.7 Professionals Involved in Child Protection Interviews

Contacting social workers was easier through friendship circles where individuals would introduce their colleagues. The social workers I interviewed were working from different LA within London, except for two from Birmingham. I intended to establish how the LAs function and understand the guidelines they take to remove children from home. All the social workers who were available for interview were of black origin expect those in academia. Questions included what kind of abuse/neglect triggers the removal of children, and what the outcome's success rate. I also asked questions about the crime rate of looked-after children in their boroughs. In my data assembling on social workers, I used formulated research questions, considered to be focused questions. Additionally, I used, audio recording and note-taking as tools to collect data. The same approach was applied to the social workers, inquiring about their experiences and feelings about the practices

Child psychologists and therapists were among the participants I interviewed. Some psychologists offered insight into attachment factors between a child and a parent and the consequences of separation. I interviewed schoolteachers, medical doctors, police officers, and nurses involved in child protection procedures, children, and multiagency. Some participants were both professionals and parents and were interviewed from both capacities.

6.8 Data Collection

I employed a Qualitative method for interviews as my main instrument of assembling data. Qualitative methodology is commonly used for field interviews, where the researcher assembles data from selected settings. My choice of the method was influenced by the recommendation of (Wang and Noe, 2010; Lee TW and Lee T., 1999), who stated that the qualitative method is the best when investigating cultural practices issues. This resonated well with the nature of my study and the kind of my participating group. The method carries two distinct advantages, innovative and adaptive, which I needed in my research. I was aware of Mauther and Doucet (2003), who contended that the method might show the researcher as if they present the participant's voice. However, my approach was semi-structured questions, which allowed the participant to speak without any restrictions. Research questions were used to generate the first set of interview categories and to code the data. The research was based on interviews that involved interactions with people, groups, organisations, and societies (Gray, 2011). Qualitative data is considered a more useful source for analysis, as it is more appropriate for real-life experiences over long periods (Flick, 2018). However, I found it imperative to begin by examining the existing guidelines on the investigative processes, outcomes, and decision-making processes used by the investigators leading up to removing the child.

6.9 Interview Guide

I attempted to comply with the Data Protection Act 1989 (DPA) Schedule 3, which states that the processing of data is only necessary for the purpose it is collected for. I understood that the data should not be used for profit or for political, religious, philosophical, and trade-union motives. But to be used appropriately with the understanding of safeguarding the rights and freedom of participants.

Additionally, personal data should not be disclosed to third parties without the consent of the participant. However, in this study, I had no intentions of sharing the information with third parties, and the identities of the participants were concealed. Data protection principles were upheld to such as fairly and lawfully processed, not excessive data collected than required, processing data in accordance with individual rights according to the APA, etc. (Data Protection Act 1998, Chapter 29). The study applied the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, which came into full effect on 25/05/2018. An Osterman Research White Paper (2017) says GDPR focuses more on protecting personal data, not just privacy. The intention is to protect people's rights concerning their data. Cymraeg Publications Accessibility (2017) stated that sensitive personal data, regarded as a particular class of personal data, referencing article 9. Article 9 prohibits personal data that reveals race, political opinions, and religious beliefs (Joshua, 2017). After following the above requirements, I sent interview guidelines to the participants before the interview date and gave them the time frame of the interviews' duration. This was intended to prepare the participants for the interviews.

I chose to tape record my interviews, and where it was not possible, I had to take notes. Notes taken during the interview were reviewed the same day or on the earliest convenient day. The hasty approach in reviewing the interviews was made to manage and maintain accurate information while the data was still fresh.

6.10 Data Analysis

I also considered the age group, occupation, beliefs and values, and gender of my participant, including time spent in the UK. Those factors helped me to analyse my data. Through my research, I identified differences in parenting style influenced by the above categories. In considering an alternative analytical method, it was vital to fully understand other techniques to arrive at the most appropriate methods to answer the research questions. The following were the main options to consider.

The initial stage was to employ a narrative analysis, which is a chronological story of happened events. I chose this approach to examine the extent to which parents feel about raising children under the radar of social services. Narrative analysis was applied to the African diasporic community regarding their perception of the child protection practices, to inform and educate the professionals and parents. Semi-structured interviews were employed to secure explanations from social services and other stakeholders on what they term 'poor parenting,' which led to the removal of the child. I also understood forms of neglect and abuse, which warrants removing children from families.

This research was primarily planned to have case studies analyse, documentary analysis, including cases that had recently passed through the family courts, accessed from a database such as www.bailii.org. It was challenging to identify cases' nature, whether it was due to abuse or other forms of irregularities in child safeguarding. Moreover, identifying individuals' ethnicities was unattainable because they are not listed according to the racial background. Nevertheless, upon reading the files, I would be able to access background information on the cases several days later. However, that would have required an investment of a couple of months to identify few relevant cases. Because of the rigorous search needed and the amount of time that I had, I could not reconcile the two challenges. I constructed and compiled cases studied from participants' lived lives and experiences, and a few from the literature review. The case studies were analysed and revealed the findings, as seen and explained in the discussion chapters.

I followed (Eisenhardit 1989), recommendation on data analysis on how data is analysed in depth. This stage, which he calls "within –case study analysis," entails gathering the gathered data, sifting it through, keeping the relevant information and discarding the inappropriate one. After selecting the data, I did the cross-case analysis recommended by Eisenhardit (1989) to examine all interviewed individuals and all the evidence presented. As I started my cross-case analysis, I gave a brief introduction, describing the individual detailed description of their characteristics and practices. I carried out a comparative analysis to ensure precise results regarding the similarities or differences between the participants.

6.11 Thematic Analysis (TA)

Thematic analysis was described as a method for analysing qualitative data that involved searching across a data set to classify, examine, and report frequent outlines (Braun and Clarke 2006). It was also, a way to describe and interpret data whiles picking codes and creating themes (Kiger, M.E. and Varpio, L., 2020). TA's guidelines and specification focused on coding key themes as they developed, that approach was a shift from grounded theory (Braun and Clarke 2014). They further suggested that it was an easy method to comprehend to the extent that anyone without qualitative research experiences can quickly adapt to TA. TA is relatively quick and easy and flexible to do and learn compared to more complicated, intensive qualitative analytic methods. It can also be used to a wide range of research designs, sample sizes (Kiger, M.E. and Varpio, L., 2020). Braun and Clarke (2006) claimed that thematic analysis is an individual analytic technique and viewed as the original of other qualitative research methods, though the same data coding is found applicable to other qualitative methods such as grounded theory. Kiger, M.E. and Varpio, L., (2020), posits TA has the ability to emphasis the cultural, social and structural contexts which influence individuals' experiences. That also, enables the development of knowledge which was constructed through the interactions of the researchers and their participants. Furthermore, that would enable the participants to expose some revelations which are socially constructed. Joffe (2011), describes TA as a method suitable for costructivism since it envolves a wide range of data henceforth,

illustrates how some social construct are developed. The above was found to be relavent due to the form of my research which consists of cultural, social and structuaral contacts influences.

Through this method, researchers are able to critical perceive and acknowledge experiences which are grounded in a substantial reality. However, TA tries to investigate implications and social meanings within the topics of interest (Joffe, 2011). Critically, TA accords the researchers to engange free and balance of power investigations that value and respect the voices of oppressed group of people (Kiger, M.E. and Varpio, L., 2020). Hence TA, can bridge the gap between facts based realities and post-positivist seeking to understand reliable objectives and later to interpret aims of several researchers within social sciences.

I found this method to be more appropriate for this research, due to its accessibility and participatory methodologies. I found that the strengths of TA outweighed its weaknesses, unlike with other qualitative research methods. Braun and Clarke (2014) noted that TA was weak in being limited to interpretative power if not used within an existing theoretical framework. Because of these limitations, I attempted to operate within the timeline of my research. Braun and Clarke, (2014) suggested that TA can be used to focus on individual's experiences and meanings to acquire insights into the external actualities and that supports the development of hypothetical knowledge about some realities. That became the perfect method for my research.

6.12 Analysis

I transcribed the interviews, read the transcripts, and divided participants into three categories: parents, professionals, and observations from two conferences. I indicated the purpose of the sections and combined them with the question. Findings were found from the reviewed literature and participants' interviews.

Questions 1 and 2 were responded to in Section 1 of the participating parents, pg. 163. These addressed such questions as "How were these parents raised." This question was intended to investigate if their parenting methods are influenced by the way they were raised. The second section covered three questions and their related themes of the interview schedule, pg. 163 to pg. 165. In the third section, I presented them with the narrative of the qualitative question's responses that considered the aims. From the emerged themes, which I classified into key themes, sub-themes, and codes. All the findings were drawn from Qualitative thematic analysis. The second questions are focused on parents' expectations when they raise children in the UK. The questions asked in the chapter section included the how parents conceptualised social workers and other agencies involved in child protection processes. I requested three participants to comment on David Cameron's speech after 2011 riots from a parental point of view. The speech under family, pointed towards failed parenting, and the commenters acknowledge his notions but, felt that the expectations of Cameron on the youth were unattainable under social controlled parenting.

6.13 Ethics

Before contacting my interviewees, my initial port of call was to seek ethical approval from The University School of Law. With the help of my supervisors, I was able to produce a satisfactory application for ethical approval. My central point in this research was to contact the interviews using the British Society of Criminological guidelines, and both confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed, http://www.britsoc.co.uk. The interviews were of high-profile sensitivity that resulted in some people rejecting the invitation to participate. However, I managed to secure participants from the African diasporic communities, particularly the parents. I considered Gray's (2009) recommendation that the researcher respects participants' privacy and avoid deception.

Furthermore, it was mentioned that in (Gray 2009), ethical consent should be renegotiated on ongoing research, if necessary, notably where some of the questions would have been altered or changed. This is also supported by Mason (2002), who stated that the idea of a qualitative research method over informed consent should be scrutinised and updated regularly. In that regard, I kept a close consultation with my supervisors. Punch (2013), says ethics can be challenging, mostly for qualitative researchers, particularly those who work for more extended periods with their participants. That might entail dealing with intimate and sensitive issues of participants' lives. However, I acknowledge that my research inherently involves such sensitivity. I therefore took the precaution of minimising the time spent with participants. I kept my interviews for an average of 45 minutes. As expected by the ethics committee about

confidentiality, I adopted the same values which I regarded thoughtfully. However, where there were consents of harm or undisclosed abuses to the children, I declared to the participants that information would be subject to disclosure to relevant authorities. Nevertheless, there were no such concerns that arose in my interviews. By the end of my interviews, I discovered that none of my participants disclosed highly sensitive matters since they were not directly involved with safeguarding issues.

6. 14 Consent Forms

I provided participants with detailed information about the purpose of the study. Participants were informed of their rights to withdraw from participating without giving any explanation. Contact names and details were given to participants complaints or concerns about the project. Also, participants were given accessible information about the study, as Crow et al. (2006) recommended. I considered the guidance of (Sudman and Blair, 1998), that the amount of information provided should reflect the level of risks and the required time.

6.15 Risk Assessment

Following the Researcher Ethic Guidebook, the researcher applied the general rule on risks to researchers. Researchers are sometimes exposed to emotional, physical abuse, and any threats. There is also a possibility of compromising situations such as accusations of inappropriate conduct/behaviour. I prepared myself for these risks and took some safeguarding measures

such as contacting the supervisory team to ascertain there were no safeguarding concerns. Each time I scheduled an interview with participants, I would continuously contact someone updating them from the beginning to the end. If the initial communications indicated high risk, then the meeting would be terminated. The necessity of having a colleague present during interviews tends to help mediate any instances of interviewer/interviewee disagreement. In this research, I had no such concerns because I later changed the participant group resulting in a general group rather than those who had gone through traumatic events. I conducted twelve interviews by telephone and the rest through skyping. .

In response to the disclosure of unreported abuses, I was prepared to respond accordingly to what is stated by (Clark, 2005) that clients have a right to privacy like everyone else, however, nothing was disclosed to call for my response.

Although clients' information is expected to be confidential, professionals are morally or legally bound (Clark, 2005) to break confidentiality for the public good. Professionals are expected to explain to the client why personal information must be communicated to other people within their agency. Before the interviews, I was able to assure confidentiality however, I informed respondents that whatever they disclose was subject to be reported to the relevant authorities over situation which would be harmful to the public or individuals.

I understood that my research had a potential of provoking painful memories in the participants. Psychological stress might be expected of parents, who might have gone through grief and condemnation of seeing their children taken into care. This group was most likely to manifest

psychological stress, anxiety, and other emotional problems. In the event of this happening, I would signpost the disturbed participants to local experts, such as psychologists, therapists, counsellors, or any relevant organisations where they could get help. I would have made some assessments on whether to continue, postpone, or terminate the interview. I dedicated myself to listening to their lived stories without judging them but show empathy. Before the interviews I gathered necessary and detailed information about therapists and psychologists to refer any participant who needed that but, none of my participants required that service.

6.16 Managing Research

One of the crucial instruments for my investigation was my diary, which enabled me to manage my time and avoid double bookings or overlooking appointments. To the best of my ability, I ensured that my records were detailed and accurate, as recommended by (Miles and Huberman,1994). They noted that keeping a diary helps individuals to maintain and develop a flexible stance as one conducts field interviews. Most of my data collection was done through voice recording after consulting the participants. I found voice recordings to be more advantageous for my research, particularly avoiding the burden of asking the participant to repeat themselves all over again. I also used diary recordings as a backup system. My research diary contained the following information:

- Processes and approaches applied when contacting interviews in the field.

- Experiences encountered when getting access to the participant and data gathering tool (negative or positive).

I was detailing the literature sources to read. And the reflection on the interpretation and presentation of outcomes, including significant changes in directions.

6.17 Participants' Interviews

The younger generation of parents was more flexible in their beliefs than those in their fifties, who were rigid about their cultural ideologies. Without a degree qualification, two older parents expressed animosity over social workers. However, participants who have lived in the UK for over 15 years admitted to adjustments on their parental approaches. Most of the mothers expressed their terror of social workers. Parents argued that they were not given sufficient information on British childrearing expectations. The study revealed that though social workers are to work in partisanship with the parents, that is hindered by power imbalance, giving the social workers more power over parents. This also exposed that black parenting is socially constructed.

The interviews, of professionals enlighten this research on different views of frontline social workers and social work academic over the overrepresentation of black children in the care system. The academics pointed out that the vital element was socio-economic and deprivation, whereas the practicing frontline social workers emphasised cultural incompetence and racial biases. In this thesis the claim of cultural incompetence was discounted because social work

training had revealed an emphasis on cultural sensitivity and understanding. Also, suggested that social workers are faced with the challenge of failing to marry theory and practice. The claim of academics which suggest deprived areas are the reasons why African children are in care in numbers was also discounted after evaluating that there is no London Borough where black people are the majority. The Glasgow research was an additional prof to disagree with that claim since Nigerian families were the minority, yet their children were overrepresented in care. All these claims suggest racial elements are at play within child protection.

6.18 My Experiences

This section reflects on interviews and analysis of the data, and I feel the research was successful in different ways. The study addresses the central issues on the causations of overrepresentations of black children in the care system, leading to care leavers disproportionately placed in the youth justice system. The research gave insight into the conflict between parents and their children due to parental expectations and attitudes. Through this research, I was able to verify the assumed phenomenon of racial inequality experienced in the social care and youth criminal justice systems. Through this study, I could not identify similar research in the UK addressing this topic, particularly on parenting dynamics with their children. Additionally, I had challenges of getting literature from the British researchers on the African first immigrant families in the context of this study. The closest materials I could get were American literature written about the Black African Americans' experiences and few African researchers on childrearing and the children's welfare system's response.

Though the information came from different entities, the encounters which they detailed were strikingly similar concerning children welfare services interventions. I changed the parent participation category, which worked for the better for this study. It enlightened me as to the realities of how parents perceive social workers and how they are constrained to raise children in this country. The group that had experienced the removal of children from their home possibly would have biases against social workers and failed to expose their shortcomings. Some participants reflected on their upbringing and managed to recognise some flaws and opted for an alternative parenting approach.

I had underestimated the level of emotional involvement this research had impacted me until I interviewed a care leaver and children's psychologist. The psychologist related her experiences of engagement with social workers during interventions. She spoke about both mother and child's pain on separation and further explained the lasting effects of detachment. I was overwhelmed, and I found myself crying. However, the psychologist was kind and understood my shock and pain, and I later apologised for my spontaneous reaction. On another occasion, I interviewed a care leaver, who narrated her lived life. I found myself driven by my empathy emotions as I listened to her lived story and saw her breaking down. She spoke about the pain and trauma of being picked from school by 'strangers' who told her she was not going home but elsewhere. She offered me to view her care records, which she said were inconsistent and portrayed her as a troublesome child. I declined that offer because I was not sure if I could use

that kind of material. Due to pain I failed to transcribe her interview which was filled with traumatic events.

This research has left an impact in my life considering that I belong to the African diasporic group. I realised that black parenting was socially constructed and there is a need to support children when they are faced with discrimination at school. I felt that black parenting was conflicted due to cultural expectations and the host country's anticipations. The Kenya study enlighten me on how parenting methods are effective and accepted by children in the country they practiced chapter 5, pg. 111 (de Guzman et al., 2005). Contrary to a place they are not accepted, for example African children resit African cultural parenting in western countries, especially in the UK.

6.20 Limitations

As mentioned previously, my initial focused group was not attainable for interviews. It was unfortunate that the parents who participated had not experienced child abuse investigations. Most of the material gathered was based on 'hearsay' or personal assumptions. Because the social workers who participated were Africans, it was challenging to develop clear social work practices.

The study involved multi-site case study interviews, applying a qualitative semi-structured interview technique. Accessing of participants required gatekeepers who, in many cases, were not within reach. Alternatively, the snowballing approach was later taken into consideration and implemented. Ultimately, thematic coding and outlining the data analysis were determined

to be a more suitable approach. The initially proposed group of participants' unavailability was appreciated because they gave accurate and unbiased opinions on their perception. They acknowledged the flaws in their parenting practices, which the other group most likely would not have reflected accurately. Conclusions were drawn from the literature review and assembled data.

Additionally, an attempt to establish the importance of parental rights accords them the right to raise their children without fear of social services interferences. An attempt was also made to present a better vision for the future of social services and criminal justice, work practice, and inter-and multi-agency work in the area under child protection. The data on children in the care system, more specifically, examined how parents feel about their rights over their children in comparison to children's rights. This reflects an overrepresentation of black children in the system.

6.21 Summary

This chapter has defined the methodological approach applied in this research as the best option in comparison to other methods. The snowballing techniques were found to be appropriate and easy to assemble data though, the major problem was to get to the saturation point before reaching the 40 participants I intended to interview. Qualitative methodology was found to be favourable for it afforded the participants to narrate their lived lives and experiences. It gave the participants voices to articulate their feelings about parenting in the UK. Though the method

might be seen to promote the voice of the research which was not so in this study. The same method was used to collect data from the professionals who shared different views over the disproportionate rate of black children in care.

TA was found to be the best methodody for this study due to its responsiveness to cultural, social and structural contexts which influence individuals' experiences. It has also helped to reveal the socially constracted black parenting in the UK. The emerged themes were catagories into key themes, sub themes and codes. The findings were drawn from qualitative thematic analysis. The following chapter analyses the experiences and feelings of African first immigrants in the UK in relation to parenting.

Chapter SEVEN: Parents' Interviews

7.0 Introduction

The chapter examines several themes, starting with parents giving their accounts of how they were raised. Henceforth the chapter explores findings from 25 parents of African origin who participated in the interviews, 18 from Table 1 and 7 from Table 1. The questions were designed to probe answers on the causations of black children's over-representation in the care system. Findings were drawn from the qualitative themes which emerged during data collection and from the literature review. Furthermore, the chapter demonstrated that black parents were often ignorant about British expectations regarding child-rearing, which conflicted with their cultural parenting practices. Parents' concerns included children's rights approaches which made them feel demonised due to their cultural parenting styles. Some parents felt that children were given the right to set up their families to fail, because the minorities' voices were insignificant. Parents had diverse perspectives concerning professional contact. Some parents had the view that some social workers were trying to punish them by allowing children to do whatever they wanted without boundaries.

There were mixed views over parenting styles of the previous generations in comparison to those of the current. The majority supported how they were raised and defended their parents' childrearing styles. From the secondary data presented in the literature review, the results revealed conflict within the law, particularly UNCRC Article 12 and Article 3(1). This research reveals that parents were ignorant of their human rights. Parents expressed the difficulties they

were facing on raising children in a new cultural setting. The problems stemmed from a mixed package of parenting constraints, including deprivation, cultural conflict with children. Finally, their views about social workers were discussed together with the way that they wished for a transparent dialogue with the social services without fearing incrimination.

The driving force that regulated social workers' practices were translated from legislations and policies. The end of the chapter outlined factors that contributed to black children's over-representation in care and the criminal justice system. The table below shows the profile of parents who participated in this research, followed by most important element parents look for in their children.

Table 1: Parents' Profile

SAMPLE PROFILE				
Participant	Age Range	Profession &Qualification	Country of Origin	Gender
1 Washington	45-50	School Teacher	Zimbabwe	Male
2 Sandra	45-50	Pharmacologist /Mental H. Nurse MSc.	Malawi	Female
3 Joyce	55-60	Mental H. Nurse MSc.	Zambia	Female
4 Naomi	50-55	Social Worker/School Teacher	Zimbabwe	Female
5 Collet	50-55	Orthoptist	Zimbabwe	Female
6 Israel	50-55	Engineer	Zambia	Male
7 Christopher	50-55	Social Worker/ University Lecturer	Kenya	Female
8 Tola	45-50	Psychology	Nigeria	Male
9 Matthew	55-60	Minister of Religion/ School Teacher	United Kingdom	Female
10 Selina	55-60	Minister of Religion Businesswoman MBA	Zimbabwe	Female
11Dr John	45-50	MD	Nigeria	Male

12 Sarah	35-40	Social Worker PhD	Zimbabwe	Female
13 Eunice	55-60	Sec School Teacher/Nurse	South Africa	Female
14 Lilly	55-60	Hairdresser	Nigeria	Female
15 Martha	55-60	BA Marketing	Zimbabwe	Female
16 Lena	50-55	Social Care Worker PhD student	Nigeria	Female
17 Molly	40-45	Social Worker	Ivory Coast	Female
18 Hilda	60-65	Special Needs teachers-master's degree	Zambia	Female

7.1. Respecting the Hierarchy as Core Value

This sub-section attempts to outline how African parents felt about their upbringing and how it influenced their own parenting practices. The points below were responding to research question 3 (*How the Black children are impacted by their parents own upbringing)*. As mentioned in the literature review, parenting approaches vary across cultures, ethnicities, places and periodically. Central to the theme culture was the emergence of the sub-theme, respect. This concept of respect dominated among the participating parents. They expected and demanded reverence from their offspring. Respect was found to be a core value of African culture which is consistent with (Wini Dari 2018) as articulated in chapter 5.

As outlined in chapter 4 (Frei and Shaver, 2002), argued that respect is an attitude or social concept that regulates relationships and guides people's social behaviours. That qualified respect as a central component of an individual's social competence. When the African parents were asked about their expectations over their children, 23 echoed that respect for parents or elders was the core value of their expectation. African culture viewed disrespect to parents and elders as a taboo. The notion was also reflected in the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, Article 31 stated that: 31(a) to work for the cohesion of the family, to respect his/her parents, superiors, and elders always and to assist them in case of need. -Li, (2006) was consistent with the above statement that respect was a social behaviour standard set by authorities. Respect included listening, attentiveness, not answering back to elders, obedience, politeness and compliance. This research shows that respect to authorities was engrained in the African cultural fabric.

All parents who participated and answered the questions about their expectations in this research were first-generation immigrants, apart from two British-born Africans. The latter spent their lives in Africa until they reached university age. These parents were from six different African nationalities, and they shared similar values on respect. Drawing from the participant's interviews the following was expressed.

Ref: Section 4:

Section1. *"...I expect that they would respect me, and I don't expect them to talk back to me or to talk back to me to argue with me? Ye, er, respect and ah, mainly I will say its respect", (Washington).*

"That means they have to honour their parents, they have to obey their parents no matter how old they are, if the parents are still alive, they are expected to honour, respect and obey" (Martha)

The interviews indicated that disrespect was the leading cause of conflict between the children and their parents. Three of the participants mentioned that children could be beaten for disrespecting parents or elders.

Section 2 *"...because culturally you have to respect your elders don't overstep those boundaries and that goes with sanctioning and disciplining", (Dr John).*

"...by the age 4 or 5 they will be knowing how to respect their elders because they will be disciplined if they don't. And from there the children will grow up with values that they must respect an elder person", (Israel).

Ah, I would probably, ah, raise them up the toughness that ah, expressed in trying to raise this child in best way possible, there is a bit of toughness that, is applied (Collet).

Parents were asked why respecting parents was so much of a fundamental value and considered the most critical requirement for children. Interestingly, respect rendered to parents by children was universally anticipated, though the approach and interpretation varied according to individual cultures and societies. As the literature review outlined in Chapter 4, Bornstein and Lansford, (2019) said that one of the fundamental values in a child and a parent's relationship was respect. Respect was defined and practised differently, according to nations, broken down to societies, communities, and families. In western culture respect was defined by rights and rules based on moral principles.

From the African perspective, respect had a different interpretation and yielded different results. The African culture suggested that if one was taught to respect the elders, one would find it easy to respect anyone in the outside world. It is also a biblical requirement which comes with a reward of wellbeing and long life.

Section 3 *"…our parents prepared us for the outside world in terms of respect. If you respect your parents, you will respect any authority ……This is to say, if you can respect me your parent you can respect the community around you", (Dr John).*

One prominent English professor in social work accepted the importance of respecting parents, though with some reservations. The professor looked at it from a deserving point. Contrary to the African culture, respect was unconditionally due to elders regardless of their social status or attitudes.

"…Ar, yes, I think you earn respect though, you can't, and you don't deserve respect except you behave in a respect worth way. Ar, and …I expect respect from my children, but it's earned", (Prof. Alice).

Children were not meant to be too difficult but responsive to parental supervision, as cited in Chapter 4. The participants' views on their expectations were similar though varied in terminology. The words 'obey', 'honour' and 'respect' were interchangeable, though for the purposes of our study they constitute sub-themes. The research illustrated that a younger person should not give direct eye contact, answer back, or raise their voices when speaking to an elder or parent. However, direct eye contact was expected to be also observed when the children interact with their teachers.

Section 4 *"…There, that's not for negotiations, ar, expectations, is that you respect the parents, and all adults Ar, you don't, you don't talk back to your parents, ar that's a no, no, just like what we see, schools where kids, talk back to adults, that's, no, no. So, our kids know that you don't talk back, to teachers, you don't talk back to adults, you show respect….", (Israel).*

"…it's a respect thing giving direct eye contact would be like a challenge" (Eunice).

Also, numerous terms were used to explain respect, the common was to obey, taken from the Bible "(Colossians 3:20, KJV.) Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord". Such scriptures were often cited to defend Christian parental actions.

"… I think it's both, it's both because it is, biblical, to respect elders, to honour fathers to honour mothers because, the Bible has a promise to say, then your days will be lengthened if you honour your father and mother. And honour is part of what we believe as Christians and cultural, I think our culture really is about respecting and honouring, where honour is due" (Joyce). The research has shown that children's disrespectful attitudes were followed by discipline, usually the rod of correction as evidently mentioned in this research.

7.2 Spare the Rod Controversies

As mentioned before, 'spare the rod' is a biblical phrase used to suggest regulating delinquency behaviour through physical chastisement in a family environment. Data from most participants have indicated a strong relationship between the application of corporal punishment and Christian beliefs. According to Bilston (2008) the society had a predominantly religious and social ethic, rooted in the expression 'spare the rod and spoil the child.' This is reflected under sub-heading (5.1 Cultural Parenting), over the views of John Wesley's mother.

This was installed by means of a whip (chapter 2). She advocated for her disciplinary actions, drawing on the concept of 'spare the rod and spoil the child.' Also from chapter 5 it is reflected that conservative Protestantism's favour of over corporal punishment. (Alwin and Felson, 2010). The application of the rod weighed (Gershoff, 2010), asking who decides what is physical child abuse and not discipline. That confusion either way increased the

possibilities of criminal behaviour of a child, including antisocial behaviour with a possibility of affecting adulthood development.

Section 5 *"…again religiously, Nigeria it is a religious society, it's in the Bible about smack your child, spare the rod, it's a bible verse", (Lena).*

"…within our Black community is that children are raised expected to respect their parents. Respect I mean if parents say go and do this, it is expected that the child don't challenge'`The relationship between the parents and children, they look at it as respect", (Molly).

"…however, they did not shy away from disciplining me using physical chastisement if the need arose, or scolding to show their disapproval of bad behaviour", (Sarah).

"…If you would want to go back in time, all the African parents will be in jail for abuse….. I can confidently say that a lot of the African parents do struggle with that, that was the way you were brought up", (Dr John). Essentially, parents struggled to understand the phrase 'children's rights.

7.3 Rights of a Child as a Conflict

African parents have adopted children's rights as a new and frightening norm. This began as an inconceivable idea which contradicted their values, as they considered respect to be an adult's right, not of children's. The parents felt that their rights were diminished and that

children were given the freedom to do what they wished at the expense of their lives. In Chapter 4 Brennan and Goggle, (1997) pointed out that it was internationally and traditionally known that children were immature in many ways. They argued that children tended to make wrong judgments and worked against their interests due to limited cognitive powers and lack of life experiences. Children's rights were a source of conflict between parents and their children. It was easy for a child to take a more comfortable and exciting root of life, short-lived, than to depend on a parent's guidance. CRC Article 12 highlights more on the children's rights to make their own decisions concerning their lives. This was explicit collusion between those of parents and children's rights. Lee S (2017) viewed the CRC Article 12 as an organ to undermine parental rights. Participants stressed the idea that children were only given rights without responsibilities. Suggesting that this contributed to deviant behaviours. Parents argued that children's poor decisions resulted in a lack of respect and so they should not be entirely entrusted with their rights.

Section 6 "…*the children's rights are more like emphasis than your right as a parent to bring up a child, in the way you think best for them, children will end up making wrong judgments which will work against them*", *(Moll).*

"…We don't want our children to grow thinking that they only have rights, and they don't have any duties and that makes them irresponsible and uncontrolled", (Joyce).

"...people not knowing their rights and responsibilities as time goes on, puts them at a disadvantage and certain parents are fearful", (Hilda).

"...I grew up I never knew anything called a right, these rights are against parents, they are poisoners", (Lilly). Obviously, as clarified by this research, children's rights created tensions in families. Possibly lead to disciplinary measures when the child fails to co-operate basing on child rights.

7. 4 What Discipline Entails

A common theme among the parents was discipline. Chastisement was expressed as a vital tool in raising children. The success of participants' lives stemmed from disciplined their lives served. Through the restraint they got from their parents, most of the participants ascribed to the successful lives the acquired to discipline they received. Within the African cultural approach, discipline was based on correcting or punishing bad behaviour. Under this topic, the term discipline was referred to physical punishment/chastisement, smacking, hitting, and corporal punishment as they were interchanged within participants. There were different views to discipline between African parents and the professionals. As discussed in chapter 5, (Wini 2018), a survey conducted in 2014 suggested that 63% of under 14-year-olds in Zimbabwe had experienced violent discipline. Wini, (2018) indicated that 77% of Zimbabwean adult groups

suggest corporal punishment was commonly implemented in families. Discipline was on the high agenda, as confirmed by some participants.

"*…I know discipline is high on the agenda of our, in our families", (Washington).*

"…Ah, I think generally, the black, black family, is particularly from Africa, the discipline regime in families is quite strict", (Sandra). Disciplining or raising a child is more of a communal responsibility which involves other trusted people.

Africans do believe in the communal responsibilities of raising a child, which includes disciplining children. An African proverb said, "it takes a village to raise a child" (Kim-Farley 2019. The saying suggests the notion of the whole village or community's involvement in the welfare and safeguarding a child. Disciplining of a child is assigned to the parents of the child and other trusted members of the family and community. The perspective of this research shows that disciplining a child can be administered by anyone. The literature review did not indicate that anyone outside the family would be allowed to discipline a child, that is, within the village setup.

Section 7 "*…Parents discipline you, neighbours discipline you, teachers discipline you, ar, even strangers discipline you", (Washington).*

"…unlike here children do whatever they want because there is no communal responsibility. Whereas, with us the members of the community could discipline you, you wouldn't even dare to challenge them. After smacking you they then proceed to inform your parents", (Sarah).

7.5 Grey Areas Between Discipline and Abuse

As suggested by (Cle´ment and Bouchard, 2003), that there is a thin line between abuse and discipline. The same views were shared by (Zolotor, 2014) who confirmed that sometimes there was a fine line between abuse and corporal punishment. The same concept was reflected by participants who expressed that they did not know where discipline ended and where abuse started. Whilst participants believed that discipline is a behavioural regulator, but Lansford and Dodge, (2008) suggested that caused by external forces. For example, socioeconomics affecting specific cultural groups like Africans, African Americans, and American Southlands who were more at risk for physical force, resulting in higher communal and societal violence rates. In this research an overwhelming number of parents argued in favour of disciplining children and that had no relationship with their economic status.

"…In African culture we are brought up to discipline our children, they are not brought up to abuse them, we don't see it as an abuse we see it as discipline and children need discipline... they shouldn't come in and take the children away. They cannot have the children's best at heart more than the parents. They should ask questions instead of removing the children straight away", (Lilly). Lilly was expressing the need for social workers to understand the way Africans discipline their children. The parents had also an element of misunderstanding the laws and regulations the host country.

7.6 Misinterpretation of The Law

Parents who immigrated from Africa to western countries without any child law and regulation knowledge were at risk of breaching child safeguarding regulations. They perceive that in the UK children are not supposed to be disciplined, which is a misconception of the law.

"*… When the law says you can't discipline your child, you let your child do whatever they like, that is what we are seeing on our streets", (Selina).*

"…My problem is when the country says I cannot even use the rod", (Naomi). As much as they felt using the rod was the only means of discipline, they also felt manipulated by their children.

7.7 Manipulation of a Child

Children tended to take advantage of the Child Safeguarding Regulations by doing what they wished. The participants also felt that youth deviance behaviour was promoted by children abusing their rights.

"*… If the child would just say I will report you to social services, then we are now controlled", (Martha).*

"…but they overlook those responsibilities, then they manipulate whatever rights they know that they are afforded to them. It causes a rift you know between them and the parents", (Tola).

"…ya, because the child is the one who says what she wants to do. If the parent says to a child, you don't go there, the child will say no, you can't tell me where to go and where not to go. I go where I want to go, that's means the child is now parenting. In our culture it is not done, that's way we see all this in our street, the killings (Molly). The tension revealed in this research is not just between the misunderstanding of laws over children's rights but further contribution from the children who took advantage of the system.

7.9 Forms of Discipline

Although differences of opinion varied in child disciplining methods, there seemed to be a consensus over the need to discipline a misbehaving child. What differed were the methods used and some approaches were controversial. As mentioned in chapter 5 (Hoffmann and Saltzstein, 1967), they found three discipline methods. The first approach initially depended on the installation of fear, whereas the second and third techniques relied on fostering guilt feelings in a child. The participants of this research suggested the application of physical punishment was common with African parents.

"…Yaa, I think the thing is hitting the kids, hitting them very had that's the common [thing] within the African families, African communities", (Dr John).

"…Yes, there was, because from our culture if a child misbehaves and if you give them a warning, you could even give them a whip to correct", (Israel). However, this study shows that physical punishment has its own consequences on a child resulting in criminality or removal into care.

7.10 Effects of Punishment

Chapter 5 explained why violence had been normalised in some settings. It was established that the violence adults received when they were children was the same violence they applied to their children. Research into the relationship between childrearing and moral development (Hoffman and Saltzstein, 1967) resulted in five explanations. Firstly, the parent who expresses their aggression when disciplining a child increased the dependence of violence on external control. Secondly, the withdrawal of love and induction has an eternal impact that led to internal control development. Thirdly, where love was expressed, the punishment ended after the child made amendments or confession. Fourthly, withdrawal of love intensified a child's resolution to conduct themselves in an acceptable way in order to retain love. Finally, induction was found to be effective, and that it empowered the child to scrutinise and correct their conduct into an approved behaviour.

People who have experienced induction or withdrawal of love, as they were raised, most likely avoided criminal behaviours (Hoffman and Saltzstein, 1967) because of internalised controls. More so, those brought up on the power of assertion approach threatened external punishment to control their actions were temporarily controlled if the threat was still applicable. The internal controls were more lasting compared to the external monitors. Physical punishment of a child was associated with violent and delinquent behaviours in juveniles and adulthood (Gilbert et al., 2009). However, the strength of the effects was weaker in countries where physical punishment was normative compared to countries where that sort of punishment was

not normative (Lansford et al., 2005). The interviewees showed that physical discipline was the ultimate method to regulate a child's behaviour.

Section 7 *"…you can actually tell that this kid comes from a family where there is ar, discipline is high on the agenda", (Washington).*

"…I know many African, west African, Nigerian parents who say off Couse must beat your children No matter how much I try to explain to them that it is assault, they will say, "no, because if you spare the rod towards a child if I don't beat them", (Lena).

Some participants indicated that their parents shaped them positively through disciplinary methods.

"…Even now, I still hear his voice, ar disciplining me and its, its, actually, even up to now, that's how I leave my life, Am, when it's time to go home, I have to go home, I have to go home, am and that's because my father was, disciplinarian", (Washington).

"…when I reflect on it, I would think, ah, it was both ways, some people were destroyed by it, but some people were built by it, I suppose. It also depends on the capabilities of, of the child", (Hilda).

"…they will be smacked for their own good and that helps them a lot to behave well. Ya, that's how we were disciplined when we were little, …we got smacked for our own good…When they are disciplining their children, they are always thinking about their children's future. They are

doing it for the child's own good not to kill the child", (Lilly). Though the participants had different views, the literature already mentioned showed a negative impact of physical punishment while the participants saw the benefits. Participants were asked of their personal views in regard to disciplinary measures they have experienced of applied on their children.

Throughout this research, a growing need to correct some disciplinary methods was identified to minimize the conflict between parents, children, and the stakeholders and for treating children with dignity. The parents expressed a need to change their disciplinary styles. Few held to their old traditional beliefs, including that of the Christian faith, which suggested God's order was not to spare the rod.

Section 8 *"...the advice I give them is the advice I gave myself the first place, discipline your child in the proper way", (Selina)*

"...so, I think we need to be mindful of the society at where we are. Discipline our kids but also, if we could use the rod of correction then, do it moderately" (Abbie).

"...ar, I think there are cases, parents are, over the top, in terms of the way they turn to discipline their children. They are over strict" (Israel).

"...I think that's the biggest mistake in out African families they don't look at the age of the child they sometimes they don't mind hitting a 17-year-old and as disciplining a seven-year-old" (Lena). Some parents saw the need to change the approach to discipline also considering the age of a child.

7.11 Accepted and Normalised

Chapter 5 set out the opinions of other previous authors such as Lansford and Dodge (2008), as the critics of physical punishment. They found higher rates of physical chastisement within a community or society, resulting in a high percentage of accepting adults' application of violence at communal and societal levels. Lansford and Dodge's (2008) views were consistent with those (Gershoff et al.,2010) who said if children saw their parent's behaviour accepted within the cultural group, they did not think their parents were rejecting or abusing them, but rather expected it as parents were doing what they were expected to be doing Gershoff et al. (2010).

"…At any age the parents can hit you cannot even challenge them or report them anywhere, because that is normalized then you think that's the way of doing things", (Tola).

7.12 No Regrets of Being Disciplined

The participants were asked if, on reflection, they had any regrets on the way they were raised, mainly where physical punishment was applied. Glueck (1950) findings were in support of the benefits, which were yielded through the physical discipline method. Twenty of the parents were in favour of the way they were disciplined.

Section 9*"…For me there are no regrets I think it's, I really normalize within the African culture that form of discipline, because I was raised in Africa that's what was happening that's what was happening to every child", (Dr John).*

"… I noticed that there are sometimes I would push boundaries and do things that were not right. Whenever, I went on the top, my mother used a rod on me. I am grateful because she did that, I wouldn't be the woman I have become", (Collet).

"…That was quite normal for my dad to beat me up so, I didn't have any hard feelings, any ill feelings about it", (Washington). However, two showed that they were displeased with the way they were disciplined.

7.13 Resentments on Childhood Discipline

Only two of the participants resented the way they were physically chastised. This is possibly because their parents went beyond the accepted norms of the community. Collet had mixed views on the way she was raised. On some occasions, she approved it, and on other occasions she condemned it.

"*…, I think I made a decision, that I will not probably raise my kids, the way my dad raised me", (Tola).*

"…Am, I will say, say for an example you are doing something wrong; our parents would really come like heavy weight and you feel like you are a failure. If anything is wrong is like they just exaggerate it, it's like, it's more of like they prompt you to do well but by, in a say, by saying the bad in you like almost, like open your eyes to see, you are ugly, you are lazy, you, you are dull, you are dumb you are going to be, you are going to end up, you know, this way. So they always make you look at the waste, side of things, then it's you to figure out and say, you know

what I can turn my life around. And when you turn it around, they will say, that's my girl, that's exactly what I wanted you to do" ... (Collet). As this study sort to understand how the black children are impacted by their parents' own upbringing, there was a need to explore if there was a need to correct the methods.

Those who resented physical chastisement contested against the African approach of discipline. Most of those who had no regrets felt a need to alter some disciplinary methods within African parenthood. Some scolded their children and called them nasty names. The above notion was supported by (Matsueda, 1992). The participant seriously condemned such disciplinary methods, including the withdrawal of food which is against the Children Act 1989 and the African charter. They pointed out their concerns as follows:

"…What do you want to happen to your child, you want him to listen to you, do you want him to listen to you out of fear…Because if a child listens to you out of fear you have to be always present in order to make sure that they don't do something or what you want is for them to understand why you are giving them that instruction. Why you are telling them that, because when they are out of their house they can think for themselves is this good or is this bad, for me", (Dr John).

Children's rights seemed to be a source of confusion in parenting. Parents felt the sudden demonisation of their parenting methods.

Section 10 *"...In actual fact it is the way we discipline our children, for example my daughter is, could be may be sixteen, and asks to go out to party and if I say no, and, that might be taken as me kind ok taking our way freedoms, taking away her choices, which is not",(Collet)*

"...What I have just realised is there are some values the way we were taught on how to raise kids, it's how you can, maybe how you can discipline or reprimand, then all of a sudden you come and almost a shocking system, you are just told, it's almost like, there is no clear path on how to do it, and you are just told, no, this children rights, you can't do this you can't do this", (Martha).

"...it's a taboo for a child to talk back to the parent or report the parent to a third part about the discipline he or she received. The child knows that the parents are disciplining me for my own sake, they are not abusing me they are disciplining me for my future. .....If the child reports to the third part the third part will discipline the child because they know it's for the child's own good", (Israel).

".... what I think is, even if we talk of disciplining your child we always discipline in love", (Selina).

"...Ah there is little regret, maybe the only thing I would, probably you have, loved to have, it's to have, its positive affirmation to be to be told that you can do these things. Ah okay, you failed here that's not the end of the world, it's okay you can do this, you can do this ah, you

are capable. But it wasn't, it was more of ah, the negative like you will be doomed, you will you were not really capable academically, so yea, thinks like that, (Martha).

Parents have advocated for discipline and highlighted the consequences of an undisciplined life. In chapter 8, Glueck and Glueck (1950) asserted that offending children's parents were laxer and not consistent with physical chastisement and provide less praise.

"...If parents are allowed to discipline children at home and tell the children that I am correcting, you, all the stubbing's [stabbings?] will not happen", (Dr Ronald).

"...Parents are scared that if they don't smack their child, that child was going to turn up worse it's one of the reasons", (Sarah).

"...If they come to my house to arrest me, I will say, listen, what I am doing is to prevent crime. If I discipline my child, is there to prevent them of making wrong choices and they will be a problem for you police or, safeguarding agencies. So, my discipline is quite preventing [sic] *simple", (Dr Ronald).* The participant suggest the importance of discipline since it deters children from deviant behaviours.

7.14 Difficulties of Stigmatised Parenting

Parenting has been one of the key factors credited with the adverse outcomes of children. Prior research noted several factors that contributed to poor parenting, including frequently debated topics like deprivation and poor parenting skills (Waters, 2016) chapter 5. Powel and Coles

(2020) expressed the overwhelming trauma and stress that accompanied black parenting from the western world context. These concerns were consistent with what was shared by some participants as heart-breaking experiences. There was the imposition of parents' characters by the system, nevertheless the system socially constructed them.

"…The parents are now powerless over their children to discipline them because they do not want to lose them to care, so therefore their hands are tied. Some of them are even afraid to say anything to their children because the children will cry, oh abuse", (Bishop Joseph).

"…this then raises conflict in me as a parent because, I am of the view that in most situations parents who care for their children discipline them out of love or having high expectations for them and not necessarily wanting to hurt them", (Selina).

"…so, most of the time the parents, because of fear they cannot express themselves, they cannot be able to express how they try, try, you know, try to discipline their children", (Joyce).

Some of the participating parents who were professionals who saw the necessity of corporal punishment in child-rearing, but on the contrast acknowledged its negative impact.

Section 11 "…*that's why it is very important to discipline the child, taking away the child because of discipline and put them into care doesn't help that child at all", (Washington).*

"…But it worries me that people are sort of dealing with the individual family and not exploring why are they doing it and because the motivation of your action are huge factor in

how serious problematic they are. Than to a parent who was taught that's the way to discipline a child and help them to be a well-functioning adult", (Eunice).

"…I only got to know of different styles of parenting through my social work profession, (Elaine).

"…To me as a pastor, I don't agree on discipline which harms the child or leave bruises just as the act states. My problem is excessiveness", (Selina). Selina is pro discipline, though she feels that there should be a balance to it, were children should not be hurt.

7.15 African Children Have No Voice

Though these interviews it was noted that African children did not have voices. 'Children should be seen but not heard' was a Victorian proverb, though the same views were present in recent history, where children's views were not considered (Ann Head, 1998). The lack of voices among children was not just an African singularity but rather felt across the world, not just in family settings but also in such contexts as schools. In 2004, Rudduck wrote that educators forgot the importance of connecting between teachers and students whilst we listen to outside experts to inform us and consequently overlook the treasure in our very own backyards (Soo Hoo, 1993:389), pg.55. The statement implied that children's voices have not been considered in the educational settings, as in their respective families.

A significant number of participants indicated that African children had no voices but were seen. Wini Dari (2018) was supported by the above when she stated that Zimbabwean culture

demanded the children to reverence elders, and children were left with no voice, (chapter 5). Controversially, UN Convention Article 12 on the Rights of a Child states that, (a).“*States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight per the age and maturity of the child.* (b) “*… the child shall, in particular, be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight by the age and maturity of the child”.*

The participants were unable or unwilling to discuss how lack of voice within their families impacted their lives,

Section 12 “*… growing up as a teenager I don’t remember growing up into teenage years I couldn’t even express how I was feeling you don’t actually have a voice”, (Dr John).*

“…whereas my children in my culture they don’t have, the voice”, (Lilly).

“…It was not a culture that promoted you saying your own peace of mind, you know I was still close to my mom, but I would not challenge her, answer back”, (Sandra).

“…Children do not have a voice that is a problem. If children do not have a voice they are not going to be believed, which is the opposite in this country”, (Lena).

7.16 Parenting Expectations

Several parents confirmed that the achievements of their children were their honour and pride. They emphasized that their children should be pushed to achieve the set goals. Chapter 5 academic accomplishment has always been considered as a passport to enter main life domains, such as financial freedom, suitable employment, health, leadership to say the few. This expectation has always stretched across all countries (Coffman, M.J. et, al., 2013). More parental monitoring was correlated to higher educational achievements on parenting adjustments (Li, Fang, Stanton, Su, and Wu, 2003).

"…we are known as those who do well, then what way, are you coming from then it comes like also a bit abusive to your mum because dad can easily say, where is this one come from, because he doesn't behave like one of us,… and that's where the toughness is, when you come out, the way which make them proud, we really proud very proud of you, yes! That's my, child, you would have made it. So, children are trophies, that's what I can say, I think", (Collet).

"…my kids' achievement is my achievement as well I think", (Abbie)

"…it's never that we say we don't love, the children or the other nationalities, who are at easy with their children, at ar, are better loving as compared to the African parents, I don't think so", (Bishop Joseph).

7.17 Child-Parent Relationship

Within the African cultural setting, relationships are defined in terms of how one can benefit from the other. Deducing from this research, parents expressed how they viewed themselves to their children. The overarching word was parents being providers, followed by protectors. The parents had to train and educate their children to benefit all, including the family members, particularly the parents themselves when they are of age. They viewed their children as investments to be cashed when they would be older or incapable of looking after themselves.

"…you he will love you but more like somebody is a provider, somebody who protects you but at the same time policing such kind of a thing. So, you u, u in most cases a father is loved from a distance ……no like maybe, hugging, very close intimate relationship that kind of thing, is it's a bit of a distance that what I can say", (Israel).

Parents perceived their children as their helpers, starting from a young age. Children were involved in the house chores, looking after younger siblings and helping hand to the parents. The same found in the Kenya study reflected in chapter 5.

"…I am thinking of a scenario where there are child careers. If a child doesn't, know how to make a cup of tea how are they going to help? If they learn that from a young age they will know how to help out. They could be looking after mum, who is unwell. With the way the NHS is going these days we have some child careers", (Sandra). This study confirmed that some

of the disciplinary methods are found to be above the expected thresholds of the host country. state. On the other hand being the norm of the parents' cultural practices.

7.18 Thresholds

Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 outlines the measure to determine whether a child is in danger or not. Hence, once a child has a significant mark inflicted, whether through discipline or intentional is classified as abuse leading to the child's immediate removal. Chapter 3.11, as documented in the Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) (2017), suggested that Children Act 1989 presented the idea 'Significant Harm' as the threshold which validates the state's enforced family interferences. In making assessments, social workers were expected to have the capacity to interpret the law correctly, enabling them to recognise the threshold criteria of significant harm (Searing, 2017). Contrary to this research, African parents' disciplinary threshold were very high. They do not see bruises on a child as a cause of concern unless it gets to the level of broken bones or blue eyes. One participant said that it was a norm to see marks inflicted during childhood disciplinary act:

"…If you grow up in the southern part of Nigeria, I am sure you were smacked, and I am sure your parents left a mark on your body, with you. I can confidently say that a lot of the African parents do struggle with that, that was the way you were brought up", (Dr John).

"*…I think the threshold is very high, I think it's very, very high. It is not unusual for a ten-year-old, to look after a new-born baby, it is not unusual, certain things will not be unusual if that was an expectation within that family. I think the threshold is quite high. However, I think the threshold should be really, low, it's just unfortunate, unfortunately, usual that children have quite deal of expectation on them exposed on a lot of the adult chores when they are much younger", (Chris).* However, this is seen from African cultural perspective and that conflicts with the host country.

7.20 Cultural Conflict

The research identified the need for parents to learn the host country's culture, this would enable them to lower the disciplinary threshold. Nevertheless, that could only be achieved by the practitioners' initiation.

"...I didn't expect much I just thought maybe the way we were brought up the cultural would carry on. So, I was not expecting any, anything else. I didn't know, I only knew the Zimbabwean, ar culture, the way of doing it", (Elaine).

"...What I have just realised is there are some values the way we were taught on how to raise kids, it's how you can, maybe how you can discipline or reprimand, then all of a sudden you come and almost a shocking system, you are just told, it's almost like, there is no clear path on

how to do it, and you are just told, no, this children rights, you can't do this you can't do this" (Naomi).

Eighteen participants expressed that there was a need to be informed about parenting expectations in British culture.

"…There may be a need of educating African parents who don't yet have any understanding, of what the rights of a child are, the safeguarding agenda, that we are supposed to keep our children safe. I think we also have a religious element, to raising children", (Sarah). The study suggest that there are tension found in parenting revolves around social workers' attitudes and practices.

7. 19 Parents' Perception of Social Workers

Sub- heading (3.16) reveals how social workers were perceived or labelled by the public. Janebova (2017), stated that social workers were labelled as agents of control, regarded as a social control service, viewed as a means of protecting the interests of the powerful. Different spiteful reports were made against social workers reporting that they intimidated some families to cooperate (Trotter, 2006).

Indeed, messing (2011) criticised some social work attitudes, saying they were just "self-delusion in a fanciful, fictional story about doing good" (sub-heading 3.20). These comments were like some of the parents.

"…it is a bit worrying when you hear, social work, you just hear of those people who take your child away and who are not there to listen to whatever happened", (Collet).

"…generally, people see social workers as people who are looking for people who are not looking after their children", (Joyce).

"…social work is not very effective, it's not very effective, ……They are not looking at the source, of the problems most of the time", (Sarah).

"…they have to understand the difficult lives of black families, it's so hard, some don't have proper immigration status to stay in this country, they resort to work so hard, that you leave the children on their own, (Martha).

"…Social services only concentrate on the children, whatever is going through with the parents they do not care", (Molly).

Eunice's voice and bodily gestures was easily noticeable that she was anti-social workers.

"…they have to protect the children who are vulnerable instead they, take the ones that are not vulnerable", (Eunice).

"…ignore the signs of those who are vulnerable. They can also, split the families. I won't say the social workers are doing the good job because of the press and also from personal experience also to me they are not doing a good job. Social workers are evil, evil people.

Although they are doing their job they are not, they do not have children's interest at heart more than the parents especially when it comes to African family", (Lilly).

"…social workers are not the right people to be involved with family", (Martha)

Parents also expressed their fears over social workers.

Section 13 *"...so, most of the time the parents, because of fear they cannot express themselves, they cannot be able to express how they try, try, you know, try to discipline their children", (Hilda).*

"…I feel I am incapacitated it felt like that, maybe it's more like fear mongering and you think that the authorities are there to find fault in you not to assist you", (Joyce).

Social workers portrayed a very antagonistic relationship with parents, particularly from the black community. This was evidenced by some previous research and participants in this research. The message sent about social workers' involvement with families depicted a broken relationship and this led to family separation.

"… If the parents are given all the authority and power, discipline their children the proper way, we will not see what we are seeing on our streets today instead, the law says the child is the one to do or say ..4a. Some of the kids we see in the street maybe in care", (Molly).

"…The social worker does not know anything about [the] child, it's a job they are doing they are earning their living. Whatever they are doing they are not emotionally attached to the

child, they can't do for the best interest of the child. They think they are, not in all cases maybe some cases. What the parent do for their child is deeper than eyes can see, the love their children, you can compare it with social workers." (Lilly).

"...Parents do not have overall control of their children, because government at large has an organ called social services, The failures of black families are predominantly linked to the powers that have been given to the social services" (Bishop Joseph).

"...I would think that the government whatever the African or black families they should do a thorough assessment and they should even support, children in their own families rather than coming to take the children out of the parents. You can put a system whereby people come in and do something. People can come in like support workers looking after those children supporting parents how to look after the children", (Lilly).

"...so, I want to say social workers allow children to remain with their parents. Create a system were by parents can be supported to raise the children in their own homes. The best place for a child, to be is in their own homes", (Sarah).

"...Also, the family it's also coping with high demand, putting in additional home help would have solved it. The local authority putting in, family support", (Eunice). The participants, suggest if the Local authorities were to support families directly within their homes, that would minimise the amount of children going to care.

7.20 Burden of Children's Rights

Some parents expressed their feelings suggesting that they are treated as if they were less important in their children's lives. Sub-heading (4.1), states that children's rights-imposed limits on parental rights (Tuckness, 2010). This was apparent collusion of rights between those of parents and their children. Lee, (2017) sees the UNCRC as a pushy international human rights agreement striving to highlight the latter over the former. In support of the notion (Jeynes, 2007), stated that parental expectations in child-rearing styles were the best family predictors of a child's rights. The UNCRC Article 12 regarding participation rights indicated that parental powers were compromised in making decisions for their children.

Henricson and Bainham, (2005) suggests that some Government policies for children in the care disregarded some fundamental rights of parents and families, such as right to family life.

"...I think it can be worrying if it can weaken parents' authority parents that's what I would worry about it. I think what it does it does put parents on the tip toe according to the way they will deal with their child. We don't want our children to grow thinking that they only have rights, and they don't have any duties", (Sandra).

"...So, so, it's not like taking the rights of a child away according to our culture", (Elaine).

"...the children's rights are more like emphasis than your right as a parent to bring up a child, in the way you think best for them", (Naomi). The participants viewed children's rights as a

barrier to their parenting. Particularly, where there are conflicts of what the child wants and the parents' views of the best interest of a child.

7.21 Parents had no Voice

Parents felt that professionals silenced their voices and encouraged children to deafen against parents. The whole process emphasized the voice of a child while parental opinions were suppressed. Even though a child's voice was amplified against the parent, it is not consistent with the care system. The children's rights and best wishes as stated by the Child Act's Rights vanishes as children get into the care system. Gordon, F. and Fitz-Gibbon, (2019), suggested that children's 'dignity was compromised in care and the youth justice system were subjected to abuse and harm. O'Brien and Fitz-Gibbon (2019) found out that there was a need for children to be taught about their human rights and made sure their voices were heard across the systems they were involved in. More so, it was known that human rights were downplayed or ignored, especially when the child entered conflict with the law, as Gordon argued. O'Brien and Fitz-Gibbon, (2019) described how it was appalling to give a ten-year-old criminal responsibility to criminalize the child.

"...they are not concerned about the voice of the parent, and they are not concerned about you know", (Martha).

"...which we have been disempowered we have no voice.... you have lost voice", (Selina).

"…Ah, and it sounds as if black parents are losing their voice because they don't know, they are being accused perhaps of being authoritarian and over punishing. They need help in understanding how to be authoritative without being authoritarian or appearing to be authoritarian white social workers (laughs) (Prof. Alice).

"…For stopping the children from being taken away, the parent complies with what the children want. The role now has been reversed instead of the parent to parent the child; the child is now parenting the parents. That is a taboo in my culture", (Joyce).

The participants commented that more effort was needed to embrace the culture of the host country.

"…If they respect both cultures, from young, from babies, they will be able to draw on the positiveness, of each culture and make them…they will be able to know, which is good and which is bad and draw on both cultures. So, we have a lot a lot of work, to do, serious work to do, and then we also have to acknowledge that these children, listen to their peers more than their parents", (Washington).

"…You sit down here as a mother, an African mother and see on the TV the faces of these names that are coming to you, see something clicking to say you have to do something and that you have to continue and to continue to doing it, until somebody hear you……..And sometimes they do not know ask for assessment from expert witness, the family don't, know, the guardian do not know, the solicitor don't know", (Aunt Anne).

7.22 Social Workers' Power Dynamics

As stated in (sub-heading 3.20), Sakamoto and Pitner, (2005) pointed that social workers' force of power as an intimidating tool against their clients. This reflected social workers' conduct or practice as oppressive infliction upon their clients. That meant social workers might be prejudiced and biased against their clients and possible influence their judgment. As indicated in chapter 3, that social workers imposed their values on the client.

"...because the difference is, you see a policeman, in uniform, it's obvious, you see that, that policeman has power because he is in uniform. You see a social worker; you don't associate any power with the social worker. But they are absolute power", (Aunty Anne).

7.23 Parents Misunderstood

In general, black people were labelled as incompetent in many ways, including parenting. This was confirmed by Gottfredson and Hirsch, (1990) who stated that black people have low levels of self-control (Sub-5.16). They say the low level of self-control was an impact of lack of parental supervision and erratic socialisation. They argued that these families failed to punish deviant behaviour in their children, lack control, and were incompetent in bringing up their children, leading to criminality. Further, they stated the causes, including prominent families, parental criminality, single parentage and seeing mothers working away from home. Controversially, the interviews with black families indicate the opposite, parents were overprotective and disciplinarians.

"…they don't seek the help they need for fear of having that child removed, and the child being labelled. I think that's some of the reasons why we have high representations, or high portions of number of black children in the systems", (Dr John).

7.24 African Organisation

In recent years, the UK has seen the black African British challenges increasing in different dimensions, including child welfare and youth justice disproportionate. To respond to Black children's over- representation in social care, particularly those in custody and prisons, England found a significant emergence of organizations and churches addressing these concerns.

A repeat of the black people rising to stand, protect, and educate their people was exhibited by some African centred organisations' formation. Sub-heading (4.10), these include Ghanaian Social Workers Association (GHASWA) (appendix 1), Zimbabwean UK Social Workers Associations (ZUKSW) (as seen on their websites), and many other grass-root community associations. Some churches have been taking the lead in educating their congregants by inviting them to different professional sessions which included social workers meetings. Currently, pressing issues are mainly disproportionate in social care, custody, and prisons.

"…my background is residential social worker, and in the residential home that I worked, it was ninety percent Black children, you know what, I couldn't sleep, when I go home I couldn't sleep, and I used to have nightmares, I just couldn't understand why, these children are being taken from their parents, and the parents come to visit their children, the children will cry, their eyes out. So, I was looking for a way, to make a difference, that's, why I decided to move

from the residential home to come to field work. And then I began to understand why the children were taken up there…. Because the children's culture was not taken into account. Yeh, so, I decided in that case, so that could be a service, in the system itself which will ensure, that these children's culture is considered, you see my background is residential social care and those years when I went into social work. You know so, I try to unify the parents and the children, and find out what was going on. But that was residential social work, and my role was limited to the residential. So, what I decided then was to go into field work, ye, and I will be able to do some more work with some power behind me to do that. I went into field work and then I realised that such that, the problem was much bigger and complex than I thought. But that service it has to be in the system, because if its outside it cannot do nothing. So that, the long and short of it, is how the African organisation come into existence", (Aunty Anne).

Summary

This chapter has analysed the experiences and perceptions of African first generations who are raising children in the UK. Extensively, the African parents expressed that they are duty and culturally bound to raise their children the way they were raised and they are firm on their expectations. The majority indicated that their children should highly esteem some cultural values, particularly respecting the hierarchy. The hierarchy being the people in authority

particularly their parents. This research shows that respecting of authorities was engrained in the African cultural fabric and there was no room for compromise.

The research exposed those disciplining children was found to be on the high agenda of African people, which was found to be a point of controversy with the state, particularly on levels of disciplinary thresholds. The parents strongly believed that there was a good relationship between use of the rod and good behaviour on a child. Parents claimed that they were a perfect example of a positive outcome of such disciplinary methods. Both the literature review (sub-heading 5.5) and the interviews that parents did not know where discipline ended, and abuse began.

This research indicated that disciplinary methods applied to a child have different outcomes, the literature review has shown that some methods led children into misbehaviour. Whilst majority of the parents approves of it basing on their personal lives which turned out well. This was also consistent with Kenya (sub-heading 5.5).

Children's rights were seen to be unwelcome within the parents, as alleged to be taking parental rights leading to excessive children abusing their parents. Children's rights are perceived to weaken parental authority to the point of intimidating the parents. Henceforth, it seems to empower children against their parents. Parents were seen to be afraid of social workers and perceived the profession as inhumane towards them. It was also, found that African parents were deemed incompetent in their parenting skills and felt that they are misunderstood by professionals. In this research it was found that, there was a rise of African

organisations to educate African families on child protection within the UK. This would also help to minimise the number of black children in the care system. The interview data confirmed the fear of parents over interferences of state agencies. In this research professionals were interviewed to express their perceptions over disproportionate rates of black children in care.

Chapter Eight: Professionals' Interviews

8.0 Introduction

This chapter reflects findings from 12 professional participants who were involved in child protection. Also, explored on the reasons why black children are overrepresented in care leading into their disproportionally representation in Youth Just System. This study raised important questions about the views of different stockholders involved with the safeguarding of children as expected within the multiagency participation. There was a growing need to understand why there was a strong relationship between the children in care and care leavers in criminality. As suggesting that care leavers accounting for the majority in the custody and youth justice system, sub-heading (3.4).

This research data was collected from different stakeholders: three psychologists, one medical doctor, three secondary teachers, three ministers of religion, two police officers, three professors, two social worker trainers, three social worker managers, one leader of an organisation and seven practicing social workers. Among them, some contributed their views from a parental capacity. Psychologists were the first to contribute to this research.

Psychologists have recognised the importance of children to form bonds with parents which can only be attained through leaving together. Have argued that lack of attachment to parents was one of the bases of deviance behaviours. The assembled data demonstrated the importance keeping children within the family, since that outweighed the benefits of removal them into

care. The chapter also revealed the conflicts between the multiagency professionals during child abuse investigations.

Teachers expressed, how child safeguarding was paramount in their profession, but resulted into a witch-hunting of abuses. Ministers of religion had to argue over a controversial subject regarding discipline as a requirement from Christian perceptive. Interestingly, social workers in the social workers who are in academic and social workers in the frontline had opposing views on the disproportionate rate of black children in care. That included inequalities, race, culture, discrimination and professional incompetence's. The chapter concludes by exposing some factors which contribute to black boy's knife crimes in the UK, and that includes school exclusion.

Table: 2 Professional Profiles

Name	Age	Profession	Country of Origin	Gender
19 Prof. Alice	Late 60s	Professor /SW	British	Female
20 Abbie	40-45	Social worker/ masters	South African	Female
21 Dr Raymond	65-70	Former Police inspector/PhD	Jamaican	Male
22 Bishop Joseph	55-60	Social worker/ sec. Sch. Teacher/ minister of Religion/3 master degrees	Zimbabwean	Male
23 Aunty Anne	55-60	Senior manager/social worker/	Ghanaian	Female
24 Collen	45-50	Social worker tutor	Nigerian	Female
25 Dr Joan	35-45	Psychologist	Zimbabwean/Jamaican	Female
26 Dr Rose	55-65	Psychologist	Jamaican	Female
27 Prof. Peter	65-70	Social work/academic	British	Male
28 Prof. Martin	55-60	Criminologist	British	Male

Loughborough University. Conference.				
29 Simon	55-60	Social worker/ Sec. Sch. teacher	Zimbabwean	Male
30 social work conference				

8.1 Psychologists Interviews

The theme which dominated among the psychologists was the need of attachment between a child and parents. Psychologists supported children's need to be removed from the home where significant harm was imminent but contested against unnecessary interventions. They emphasised on weighing the outcome of removing children from home. The interview highlighted subjects on delinquency found among the care leavers and of children in care. All the psychologists agreed that children in care tended to be overrepresented in criminality.

"…. We see often as a lot of regression, a lot of anger, a lot of frustration and we will talk about the lack of contact with mom or dad. May have a massive impact on this child's level of

regression. Level of upset some children think if they break down the placement they will go home and those are types of things that we will often comment on. It's that, you know", (Daisy).

"*… I think I have worked quite a lot in Social Care Services department and I have seen that sometimes there is risk and they need to be removed or to be protected to, but in another occasions I have also seen sometimes where the difficulties between the social workers and the families mean that the threshold might not have been met for those children to be removed but the social services go for removal", (Joan).*

8.2 Broken Bonds and Delinquency

This theme presented the conflicting and complex views that most participants experience when they decided on behalf of children. On the other hand, children had to be separated from their perpetrators, unfortunately they happened to be their parents. Some of the concerns psychologists raised were the breaking of bonds between the children and their families. As explained under sub-heading (5.17), the findings of the criminologist Hirsch (1969) suggested that delinquent behaviour was seen mainly in children who were not well integrated into their families. It was found through Hirsch's attachment hypothesis that child attachment to parents reduced the chances of delinquency. From the same sub-heading (5.17), Durkheim, who supported the later view, argued that the more the group was weakened to which one belonged, the more one drifted away from depending on it and the more one depended on self and had no regard for the law of contract. This eventually leads to delinquency behaviours. It was not just

delinquent behaviour that affected children who were separated from family, but created insecurities and distrusting other people as Daisy explained:

"…I think my concern about these cases is the breaking of bonds so often these children are older, they are not babies or small, they have a very secure attachment to their parents they also have awareness of their place within the family so removing them really starts to break those attachment bonds and cannot firmly……. to sort of distrust. Lack of trust with ……. has been also feeling rejected from their own families themselves,… think the damage that is done to attachment", (Daisy).

"…they have been removed from their own family, they are not able to make attachments with the people in their immediate vicinity and they go out and seek it elsewhere. An orphanage is a negative space, is a negative place. Yeah…. So, they have nowhere to go so they end up.... because they go out, they get into gangs because they are looking for family, they are looking for somewhere else to belong", (Joan).

"…But, we have input into that so we write a psychological report when we have our professional meetings often, they are on the side of what most of the professionals will think so that's school, psychology and then social services, so often we can't make that decision but we can inform it because that's what makes sense and we normally would write a report based on the attachment", (Daisy).

Speaking about their involvement as a psychologist, she had this to say:

*"…how you attach to anyone, families are having to tell you some of the most difficult things if you are going to keep changing that person and ……So because they won't accept, they don't go home they feel very loyal to their birth family, they will not attach to the foster carers because they feel its disloyal to their birth family", (*Joan*).*

*"…so when we think about these children, how can someone stab somebody else right in the street, these children, stubbing each other if you don't have those bonds and you can't have in your mind this person has a mother, father and a family who care for them, if you…., have that… how do you, are you able to put yourself in the mind of someone else", (*Dr John*).*

The narratives above supported the perspective of Hirsch (1969) outlined under sub-heading (5.17). That was regarding social control theory, claiming that people conformed because they had firm attachments with their parents, involvement, mainstream activities, and trusted in social norms. On the contrary, the adolescent with low stakes in conformity, weak attachments, or less participation in regular activities, no regard for societal norms had a higher chance of being involved in delinquency behaviour.

8.3 Need of Family

Eichorn's 1925 publications, as cited by Burke (2018), suggested that offenders he encountered, lacked full conscience development, which was an outcome of deprived or absent intimate

attachment with parents. Further, propositions meant that parenting could not be substituted, since that the offenders in question were fostered at some point.

"…these children in care often don't have that, they have people who are paid to look after them and the person paid to look after you doesn't want a call on their day off to say I'm stressed out and I need to talk its, and they see it as you are paid to look after me, that's why you do it",….for a lot of children in care, they don't have that because this is a transactional relationship. I'm a worker and I'm paid to look after you when I clock off at 10:00 I go, even if you need me when you are having a nightmare in the night, I'm at home I need to get home, I work here you know, (Joan).

. This could increase insecurities among children in care and potential make them feel unsafe. They suggested that these were some of the reasons which drove black boys into carrying knives. Another aspect was distrusting the state agency, possibly due to some past lived

accounts of other community members.

"… You know, or anyone, anyone who doesn't feel safe, secure with the structural agencies policing, safeguarding agencies they will availably being fear of their lives… may have to carry their weapons" (Dr Ronald).

"…That's the other thing a lot of our young people, because now, no one can make you feel safe and secure, they carry weapons", (Joan).

8..4 Lack of Parental Authority

Sub-heading (5.7) discussed that within the family context there were favourable rules that rewarded children and deterred bad behaviour. From the same chapter 5, (Burke, 2014) mentioned that the way people have been increasingly separated into different residence locations and employment had subverted the former united community or society's moral authority. From this context, people were more prone to criminal behaviours. The same notion applied to children who were removed from the home and deprived of parental authority. People who deviated from the community's acceptable norms of society to which they belonged were prone to criminality (Freud 1927) cited by (Burke, 2014).

Additionally, the author noted that offenders often had a weak conscience, which was fundamental parental responsibility to encourage whilst raising children. Largely, it was to do with moral values and guidance and clear boundaries on what they should do. On the other hand, morality was closely connected to those with high consciousness levels, who felt guilty after misbehaving. Those who felt guilty were more likely to have a strict conscience that would avoid criminality. Guilty feelings resulted from a deep and engraved feeling which developed as the child grew. This was a result of the reaction of parents when a child misbehaved, as Freud (1927) puts it (Burke, 2018). As discussed above, these facts were supported by the participants of this research, particularly psychologists.

*"…but remember these children are very vulnerable because there is no parent to say where are you going? Why are you going there? … With that, where did you get those 40 pounds from? You know parents would look at these things", (*Joan*).*

"…but also empathy, ability to empathize because ability to empathize offered, we learn it from others, we see it in others and often if you see your mother you might do something upsetting to her and she is angry but she makes you dinner and she makes sure……", (Joan). This research unveiled the impact of separating children from family and the trauma children experience during child abuse investigation processes.

8.5 Traumatised by Interventions

Sub-heading (3.24), Williams-Mbengue, (2016) stated that 80% of the youth who had been in touch with the child welfare system in the USA required mental health services and intervention because of behavioural, developmental, or emotional issues that crippled their ability to play a part positively in the society. That implied children's experiences significantly impacted the development of their brains, particularly the part of the brains which governed the learning processes, personality traits, and stress coping mechanisms. In addition to that (Williams-Mbengue, 2016) stated the traumatic experiences of foster care or removal could severely affect a child's future. These facts were consistent with the notions of the psychologist, who said:

"…even if its warranted, the social work process itself is damaging, having a child going for a medical is traumatizing…it is traumatizing for an adult, for a child, it is even more traumatizing….this incident happened last year and now this social worker comes to the house the children starts screaming, screaming, screaming ", ……..."…the true harm now, so when the social worker goes to try and help the family. Shut down, get out of my house look what you have done to my child, my child and it's all messed up because he's screaming at night, he's worried someone is gonna take him. He doesn't wanna go to school now. The attendance officer is going to come to here and say why is the child not coming to school because literally walking him to school he's screaming and she has to take him off and then she has to sit where there is a glass for like an hour so he can see mom is still there mom is still there she's not going ", (Daisy).

However, psychologists were more utilized where there were issues of family separation through divorce or death. One psychologist implied that one of the reasons they could not carry their duties efficiently was the financial burden which the state had. As mentioned by some parents before, under sub-heading (3.15), that social workers were one-sided, they did not consider the welfare of a child holistically by including the child's environment and parents.

"… So, I think social work fails because they fail to reorganize that. Social services only concentrate on the children, whatever is going through with the parents they do not care. That behaviour does not stop, even if they take that child away. Unless they train them and say, hi this is how we work. Thank God I have passed the stage. I know when I see abuse and I know

when I see chaotic behaviour. Chaotic behaviour can be miss understood as abuse. Because I work in the field, I know the difference", (Daisy*).*

"…I think the law and sometimes to be honest with you, social workers should use common sense than the law" (Joan*).*

The conflicts which happened with professionals within multiagency did not help the child but added to their difficulties...

"*…If I think about a family I was working with recently, where the social services and I kinder fallout because what is very important for me, is to be clear about what they want me to do. So, that I can be clear with them family about what I am doing with them", (*Daisy*).*

As mentioned before, sometimes social workers failed due to cultural incompetence or other known or unknown reasons. The impact of their flaws affected the family and the child. Also, it touched the whole system, including the cost of looking after the child. The social workers were in control because they were the only professionals with a statutory duty to remove children.

"…So, we have done a lot of explaining as well because I do a lot of staff around issues so black, particularly black African, black Caribbean issues because there are some things that could be very damaging to a family in the report, so in court, it looks very damaging but actually when you look it as a cultural issue you will understand why that happens", (Joan).

"…Ha, they don't want anybody to know. So, by the time you get to know, the case is in court. You see and all what you can do at this time is, ask them if they have got an expert witness assessor involved. As nine times out of ten they are on legal aid, you have to ask if the legal aid will pay for an expert witness assessor", (Daisy).

8.6 Teachers Interviews

This section analysed the views of schoolteachers regarding child protection within the multiagency involvement. According to Bishop Joseph's comments where he said teachers could be viewed as 'witch-hunting.'

"…. teachers were spying on parents through their children because some teachers interrogated black children over their families. Teachers seemed to be pressured to identify abuses inflicted on their pupils, …. the teachers, like social workers, worked in pursuit of covering their backs, and it was about them, not the child's welfare, which drove them to comply with safeguarding", (Bishop Joseph).

"…As A teacher my eyes are wide open, if I am suspecting any abuse, I will inform the safeguarding team. I can't take chance. I would rather be wrong, proven wrong but make sure that the child is safe, that's the way that I feel as a teacher Even if it is slight you have to report

*it, even if you are not quite certain you have to report it. Because if you don't, you yourself, teacher you will be in trouble. You tend to over report", (*Washington*).*

Having gathered how the teachers reacted to child protection, further questions were asked on observing a child's safeguarding in their views. Like any other parent, they also felt the need to apply discipline. This section demonstrated that professionals had double standards in their dealings between professionalism and personal life.

*"... My children know that, if need be, the rod is available. I talk to them through, but physical punishment is the last resort in our home, yah it's available though", (*Washington*).*

"...Definitely if a kid, if that is a recurring thing, the kid knows that you should not answer back and the kid still answer back, there is a problem there that needs to be addressed, that's "in a rude way" discipline issue. The child has to bear the consequences by punishment", (Washington).

"...Discipline has to be given in a way which works for you, and if it is not dealt with, it normally brings up maybe a child, or eventually an adult who is anti-establishment ante-boundaries and that person I think end up their lives would be completely different to where it's meant to be", (Dr John*).*

One of the aims of this research, was to critically analyse how professionals who are involved in child safeguarding, view child-discipline. Washington' believed that in the application of

the rod of correction as the last resort. The same as Dr John who believes that discipline which works for individuals should be applied. From these findings it clear that even those who are aware of child safeguarding view physical punishment as an appropriate measure of discipline a child.

8.7 Social Workers Who Have Become Academics

Additionally, explored on their views over the causation of overrepresentation of Black children in care and subsequently in the youth criminal justice system. The claim was validated by different research findings, as seen in this study. Correspondingly, David Lammy's review exposed the inequalities in the youth justice system resulting in the higher representation of black youth. The overarching answer to explain these reasons was deprivation. They were proposing that black families tended to dwell in deprived places. However, Professor Peter, disagreed that black people were over-represented in such settings.

"…. Firstly that, am, I am not sure if you can say straight forwardly that, that black children are overrepresented in the system, firstly the socio-economically circumstances of the families …. black families are much more likely to be leaving in the areas of high deprivation and probably that means that's the best measure we have got. The last point is certain true that the black children are overrepresented in the criminal justice system, but, for children social care it has been the assumption for years there has been very little research (Prof. Peter).

Prof. Peter appeared to be avoiding the apparent notion, which suggested that racial disparities played a part in the causation of disproportionately but kept on highlighting the impacts of poverty and suggesting that it was an assumption.

"..., it's the assumption that has been over the years that the black families are overrepresented. This is all in this recent paper we publish at the end of last year (2018). So again am, it looks like the rates of black African Children are lower than far lower than the white children but ah and they are lower still then, it does so look ...it's much more complicated, its much less simple picture than say black children are overrepresented in the system", (Prof. Peter).

His argument was based on the claim of an under-researched subject but contrary to the findings in chapter 3. The Adoption UK reported that black children are overrepresented in the care system according to national statistics.

"…*but that's because more research has not been done, that's the first thing*" (Prof. Peter).

Prof. Alice had the same views as Prof. Peter, which had been widely known as the causation of children in care not just isolated to a particular group.

"...There are deeper roots in terms of greater socioeconomic equality you know, it's easier to bring up kids well if you have got a descent house and income. (Prof Alice).

The overrepresentation of young blacks in the youth criminal justice system is undisputable. It was probably due to being a subject over talked about on public platforms and media platforms. At the same time, care concerns were restricted to those involved.

"... which is one of the reasons why, I think the assumptions of an overrepresentation of black children in the care system has gone kind of unchallenged. Ah, and in both cases what we did find is this, very, very big overrepresentation black children in the poorest neighbourhoods. So, bigger representation of depression is a key factor in children's social care" (Prof. Peter).

Prof. Peter further argued and suggested age patterns between white and black children were to be considered.

"...the age patterns for black children are also different from of the white children. In our data amongst the very young children, children under five children under ten and the proportions of the Black children in care were lower than for White children, the young children the rates were lower. For it was true, by the time you go to the sixteen, to the seventeen-year-olds the Black rates were very, very high because that's where the Black, Black, Black children are also in the criminal justice overrepresented .... A lot of Black children [are] in care", (Prof. Peter).

The discovery that the older Black children were more dominant in social care, as suggested by Prof. Peter, sheds light on the central questions of this research. He suggested that the age of a child and the time spent in care could be contributory factors. The assumption was one of the emerged themes in this study that it was more of assumptions without a basis that black

children were overrepresented. Prof. Peter failed to acknowledge some research done by other researchers, which recognised Black children's overrepresentation.

And what we do not know for them is whether it is the coming into care in more significant numbers or whether they are not getting discharged from care as fast. So, they might be coming in at the same rate but, say if Black, Black children stuck in care or as White children go home or they go …. when *I talk about disparities quite often people would come to, ..Old fashioned assumptions, they assume, they make assumptions that Asian children have low rates because of extended families. And they assume that Black children are overrepresented in care because of absent fathers' kind of absent fathers or, or weak family forms. And I think those explanations they are partly just because of defensive. Ah, and partly they don't explain they, they don't just explain the evidence that, that we now have. We talk about the national to all the office report on children services ethnicity scarcely get mentioned* (Prof. Peter).

One of the aims of this study was to critically evaluate the legislative and policy relating to framework, which potentially affected the black children. In addition, how it was viewed through the lenses of social workers in academics.

8.7 Policy Debate

Inequality was one of the factors which were scarcely addressed, as Prof. Peter put it:

"… But one of the things we have argued is that there is there is no police objective, of making children's services more equal. So, in education and in housing, of the government has one of

*the policy priorities is to make ah, is to make people more equal. Is so with children's education, and a bit lots of staff and kind of closing the gap between different groups of children and there are lot of programs in the health programs to reduce health inequalities, because there are policies. The children social care, there isn't that police objective. So, there is no public measure of inequality of children's social care. Am, because, because it's not an objective, policy ….If we start looking at the whole system's from an equality perspective it will raise these very difficult questions…answers for them, but there ought to be, policy around this, saying these degree of inequality is too much or this is too little or whatever. because as I have been saying it's, it's there is this absence of discussion in policy and there is also, absences of research", (*Prof. Peter*).*

More, factors which contributed to the overrepresentation of black children in the care system were unearthed in this research.

8.8 Inequalities

The unfairness experienced affected some races more than it did others. In chapter 3 Bywaters et al. (2017), suggests that child inequality mostly affects children whose parents are socially disadvantaged and face inequalities systematically.

"…the inequalities of income, the inequalities of healthy, inequalities housings and the kind of neighbourhood the people leave in, all those things", (Prof. Peter).

This showed that the systems created a considerable demarcation between the working class and the non-working class on social benefits.

"…. We have this very unequally society and these things reflect social structures so, you know people are well- off are able to pay for their for their children's education by paying into their children's education. They buy advantage and am, those are structural patterns, which individuals, am, are affected by. It's, so, the disparities and inequalities in children in social care, actually infect reflect those societal inequalities" (Prof. Peter).

There was a need to rewrite policies that positively affected all races considering that the current was more inclined to Euro-centric. According to Prof. Alice, the policies were not constructed for the families to be supported efficiently. The cost of removing a child was not put into perspective instead of supporting the child at home.

"So, you might find it's worth finding their policies. Ar, .. ar legislation is about provides the capacity about supporting families but the legal duty has got a sharp end that's why the cost of removing a child has to be met as for the cost of proving parenting and class to the whole community is optional …..we need more social workers with more time to actually go and help families.ar, am, that's why people go into social work" (Prof. Alice).

Some professionals pointed out that the policies were Euro-centric, which meant they did not accommodate African families' values or needs. Prof. Peter acknowledges the need for more

emphasis to be put on supporting the families. Understandably, more talk about supporting families raised the parents' perception but does not seem to be true. To them, the policies were more incriminating against parents than supporting them.

"... The excessive risk from individual children is really about shifting the balance back for the services to support families better" (Prof. Peter).

Prof. Martin spoke about policies that focused on maximising the children's positive outcomes, which was the opposite of the current status-quo.

"...When we are talking about children, we need to be talking about maximising the outcomes that we get from interventions, we should be concerned about the evidence we should be concerned about the quality of the academic research that underpins policy and practice." (Prof. Martin).

Professor Alice argued over the weight of cost on the taxpayer's shoulders, which was unnecessary if the child could be supported from home. In this regard, policies had to be revised.

"...the cost of taking a child into care would pay for 24-hour home help. (Laugh), but it's the way things are funded and sorts of ar, ar bizarrely if you take a child into care that money has to be provide than to keep a child at home it's an optional source of value", (Prof. Alice).

8.9 Social Welfare

"...The work which I am now doing is working with some signs of safety which is an approach which very much tries to help families create safety within their social networks and not remove children" (Prof Alice).

Prof. Martin reiterated the same concept of lack of knowledge of challenges in the children's welfare. This has made it challenging for this study to get to the root of the problem. That implied everything researchers had been saying was more about hypotheses than reality. The sad part was when a problem was not accurately diagnosed, the treatment offered could be erroneous.

"...the other thing about welfare is about treatment, the idea that we can identify, the causes of delinquencies and therefore implement measures, to counteract, completely nonsense. We have got no idea, at all in research terms about the causes, of young people and offending, and we have got no less of an idea of how to intervene effectively, through some kind of treatments, in order to help that young person, that part of the problem with this system" (Loughborough Criminology Conference 2019).

The above, depicts irregularities in the social work field which might be the contributory factor for the disproportionate rate of black children in the care system.

8.10 Flaws in Social Work

The interviews held with social workers, trainers, and academics showed that social workers were reasonably equipped to face their clients, yet their practices were questionable. The challenge lied between the interpretation of theory and applying it to the day-to-day encounters. Sub-heading (3.6) has clearly shown that social workers are well trained and informed about their job.

"…Right, there is in the Children Act 1989 section 22, 5c, which states clearly, that the Local authority should take into account the child's culture, blur, blur and linguistic background ……the social worker didn't know that the team manager didn't know about this, that's why they were doing what they did…the social worker may God help them where they end up." (Aunty Anne).

Sadly enough, and because I also train, I can tell you for a fact that some of the social workers are not even aware of the act to this section ...this is a qualified social worker, with a master's degree (Collen).

8.11 Eurocentric / Cultural Competence

The interviews established that practitioners faced challenges when meeting clients from different cultures. The UK approach stipulated a Eurocentric position, which conflicted with

their black clients' perceptions. Professionals were found to lack competence when working with African families, as articulated by Aunty Anne, who has witnessed this gap.

Section 15 *"…that African psychology it's a concept that, this African psychology is not taught as part of the social work training in the UK, it's not. It was developed in the States by the association of black social ah, workers, because the euro centric models wont working with the black children in States…this should be part of the social work training, they wouldn't because there is monopoly of knowledge in the western society", (Aunty Anne).*

"…Social services, I will say, whilst they have good intention to help children, there are children who are abused, I don't dispute, I do believe most of the children who are in care I not even meant to be in care. They have loving parents, who were just correcting their children based on their culture, but because the society they find themselves in that doesn't understand their culture have now to leave with their consequences of losing their children", (Sarah).

8.12 Children's Rights As Hindrances

Throughout, this thesis children's rights were perceived as a hindrance and that they interfered with effective parenting. From the professionals' perspective, rights were a matter of argument. Prof. Martin expressed the confusion, which was packaged together with children's rights, yielding undesirable outcomes.

"...I don't like rights because, the principle was derived from the that raft of the UN documentation, which sets out minimum rights minimum standards, even so far saying a child in prison should have minimum amount of space, when we are talking about children, we should be talking of maximum outcomes not minimum standards, not minimum rights", (Loughborough Criminology conferences Prof Martin).

Professionals were leaning towards the potential misjudgement of a child.

"...some of the children, get embroiled in criminal justice system, they will never see very far of their future, for all sorts of reasons" …… "...child has no ability to see beyond the moment, will change over the course of the day, particularly when children get bored or they are excited, their horizon shrinks, so they are less likely to be able to see the consequences of their actions. But you can see, relatively young child you can see it into the future. You ask a ten-year-old what they want to do for a leaving, they don't even have a clue. So, our essential argument then is that children essential are in the moment" (Loughborough criminology conference, Prof. Martin).

8.13 No Evidence of Claims

Prof. Martin's argument was unequivocal over the relationship of hostile conditions lived by a child resulting in the offending behaviours later in life. This was the same argument by which the participants made clear that the way they were raised, though perceived as harsh, made them better people.

"…there is no serious academic research that shows adverse child experiences cause offending, or targeting adverse child experiences were reduced future, no it doesn't exist" (Loughborough criminology conference, Prof Martin). This is still debateable from different researchers. For instance, on the level of attachment and bonding as mentioned through the research f psychologists, both participants (Joan) and literature (Swann, 2019). suggested lack of bonding with parents likely increase criminal behaviours. One of the distinct themes was centred on three different cultural aspects, in child rearing and professionals' interactions with their clients.

8.14 Culture Clash

Differences in cultural parenting methods was found to contribute to conflicting childrearing perceptions within the professionals and parents. The parents had a culture of their native countries of origin and of the host country. Potential that forced the children to float between two cultures which led children to form their own ethos.

"..in the UK the threshold is very, very low, even minor things could actually lead into child protection. So, someone who is coming from a high threshold contest, into a low threshold contest, takes this much to be a mismatch, until they lower their threshold. Because this is how they were brought up. They were brought up to say,…, sometimes you can say certain things to a child, and that still is okay, it will take a little bit, when other people can actually say, I think what you are doing I think it is not right. Ah, in the UK, those same

things can be seen as very dangerous line you are crossing. Anyone, who is coming from that contest of high threshold, low threshold, contest, will find it a little bit, there is some tension for some time, before you actually adjust," (Christopher).

It was found that the threshold for perception of harm differed from culture to culture and was related to background upbringing.

"... partly because, the contests that they are now leaving in, will not, because of their low threshold that means their tolerance is also low. They are likely to say, anything that happens, their children can end up in care. If they were back to their country of origin, that would not have happened, that would not been seen as, reached the threshold. So, there is that, so its party possible, that some of the children, who are in care, probably don't meet the criteria, and as a result, there is high, a number of those children in care, over representing their population because of this movement from a high threshold to a low threshold criterion", (Christopher).

"...while the abuse is not accepted the child turned up at school with a bruise that's not accepted in this context but you need to understand how the parents see that, do they see it the same way that the people see it, or do they see it differently....most families don't trust social workers or the services and in the sense that you are implying you know, they think that social workers see things in quiet differently from parents", (Prof. Alice).

Professor Alice acknowledged the different approaches of other ethnicities and saw it as an offense if a white person disciplined their child the same way as she explained.

"…you are not breaking a norm, but you do it when it's in your culture, but you have to learn how to do it here otherwise. You, you come, you are doing it for a different, motives than an English person who was always been told it was wrong", (Prof. Alice).

This research suggested that parents were not well informed on how to discipline children. Professor Alice explained how parents were ignored and lacked their parental voices during the child protection processes. She also confirmed that in England, children could be smacked which participants of this research had no knowledge of it.

"…ar, and they, ar, and people do have far too little voice… But, parents do get ah, side-lined, good Social Worker, should always try to speak to some families, it's about trying to help up their kids the way the parents want to bring them up, without then causing them serious harm. Yes, they can be smacked. In countries that have completely barned any physical punishment, which we haven't, they always begin by having a huge ar, public ar, education program, for other ways of discipline children, the first thing is to teach people alternative ways of discipline before you stop using it (laughing)", (Prof. Alice).

"…the government at the moment is really making a big push on the local authorities, to remove fewer children because of the cost…and there is nothing moral about the government" (Prof. Alice). In this instance the above participant, indicated that the government controlled through the local authority funding (money), than the needs of people.

…….Ar, the sadness is that the partnership takes more time and skill, when you have got unsourced. When you have got high turnover, you have less experienced staff. It's a vicious circle it's going down and it's only because of the expense of removing so many children", (Daisy).

In the previous chapter, it was described how 'spare the rod and spoil the child' was a catchphrase for parents devoted to Christian beliefs and values, which prompted the research to gather information from the ministers of religion.

8.15 Ministers of Religion

The first question was how they interpreted this expression. Their interpretation was modest, accommodating both discipline and moderation.

"*To me as a pastor, I don't agree on discipline which harms the child or leave bruises just as the act states. My problem is excess…w*e *stick to the bible, but the rod now, if you are going to injure the child in the name of correction or sparing the rod, for me that's not the way it goes*" (Pastor Selina).

There were some tensions arising in childrearing particularly for parents who were members of some strict churches as illustrated,

"… We cannot compromise with our children's future because of men made laws, what God says no men should fight it. There is no government under the sun which is above God. Choose

ye this day, whom you will follow God or men. I would rather listen to God than to men", (Joyce).

After discussing other players' views on child protection, it was necessary to hear social workers' views.

8.16 Social Worker Accounts

Anna's commitment as a social worker stretched her beyond what she was expected. Her response to the fate of black children reflected that some social workers were truly devoted and selfless as individuals, as she explains:

"...my background is residential social worker, and in the residential home that I worked, it was ninety percent Black children, you know what, I couldn't sleep, when I go home I couldn't sleep, and I used to have nightmares, I just couldn't understand why, these children are being taken from their parents, and the parents come to visit their children, the children will cry, their eyes out. So, I was looking for a way, to make a difference, that's, why I decided to move from the residential home to come to field work. And then I began to understand why the children were taken up there" (Aunty Anne).

The following case study is an account which was witnessed by one of the participants.

Case Study 2

This was a case scenario A in a Local Authority (LA) H, in which parents came from an African country G were assessed. Child A was 12 years old and had started going into internet chat

rooms where she was speaking to unknown males and possibly was under grooming for sexual exploitation. When the father found out, he reacted by slapping Child A in her face. Child A then reported the matter to school. The school made a referral, and section 47 was triggered for investigation. An investigation was undertaken as a child being at risk or have suffered significant harm between Police and Social Workers. It was concluded that the father had was wrong. For he used more force than was necessary, resulting in Child A sustaining a bruise to her face. The harm was consistent with the allegations she had made against her father following a Child Protection (CP) medical examination being undertaken. As per CP protocol, the child was removed from the risk of further harm by asking the alleged perpetrator to leave the family home during the investigation

The Father of Child A was a teacher and a person in a position of trust. His employers were notified of this investigation, which resulted in his job suspension and eventually would lead to loss of his employment. Child A's mother worked on night shifts and as a sole carer while the father was out of the family home. She also stopped working to assume this sole role of caring for the children. The social worker who was narrating this case said. However, the LA and Police took appropriate steps in following CP procedures, the intervention was appropriate, but the negative results outweighed the benefits. Interventions should be appropriate and take into cognisance of ethnic historical backgrounds of families. Parents grew up in some African countries where physical chastisement was used as an appropriate

*disciplinary technic, and it was acknowledged that there was no justification for biting the child, but education was needed so the father could understand the law of the land (*Sarah*).*

8.17 Incompetence's in social work

Several factors played a significant role in determining the effects of the child's removal into the care system. Factors such as the attitude of social workers' failures and how families were paying the price for the professionals' negligence as indicated under sub-heading (3.4), (Font et al., 2012). That also, suggested that racial disproportionate was due to systematic circumstances and cultural incompetence of social workers.

"*… over the years there has been concerned there has been concerns about ahm, the attitudes and the competence of the social workers that is to work across the cultures"*, (Prof. Peter).

"*…ah I think, it seems to me that at times they are judging families against some ideal rather than against how bad it is…. But it worries me that people are sort of dealing with the individual family and not exploring why they are doing it and because the motivation of your actions are huge factor in how serious problematic, they are…… I think within social work there is partly there is level of not fully understanding ar the culture, the cultural differences is they are not so problematic if you stop and ask and listen ar, and I think that ar".* (Prof Alice)

As discussed under sub-heading (3.16), social workers were found manipulating some families to cooperate (Trotter, 2006).

Social work incompetence had its impact on the families as much as on the children they seek to protect. That could be a lifetime mistake that would leave scars which no system or form of compensation could erase.

"…we see often as a lot of regression, a lot of anger a lot of frustration and we will talk about the lack of contact with mom or dad may have a massive impact on this child's level of regression, level of upset some children think if they break down the placement they will go home and those are types of things that we will often comment on, it's that, you know", (Daisy).

"*…so, all these things have got an impact, on an individual. So, its understanding that, social workers need to understand how each of these systems impact on individual",* (Tola).

…they do not explain anything, they just go there and tick the boxes", (Elaine).

"*…I think the law and sometimes to be honest with you, social workers should use common sense than the law*", (Elain).

In this research, a lot of social work inconsistences were revealed through political dimensions within the profession highlighted in case 3 and 4.

Case Study 3 on Victoria Climbié

As reported in The Guardian newspaper in 2002, probing questions Titled on the paper, "Political correctness or poor practice?"

'Cultural sensitivity' has been blamed for compromising the safety of Victoria Climbié. But were black social workers involved in the African girl's case hindered by institutional racism"

*The reporter wrote how initially the evidence provided confirmed worst stereotypes of social workers representing a culturally sensitive profession. In this case the author said its "politically correct" concepts were influencing professional decisions. In this case, cultural attitudes were mistakenly misinterpreted by Lisa Arthurworrey, one of the social workers who dealt with Victoria Climbie's case. Arthurworrey confessed that she misinterpreted fear as respect a gesture she also upheld as an African-Caribbean. Mr Neil Garnham QC who led the inquiry, was driven by Arthurworrey evidence to say "**assumptions based on race can be just as corrosive in its effects as blatant racism …Race can affect the way people conduct themselves. Fear of racism can stop people acting when otherwise they would. Fear of being unsympathetic to someone of the same race can change responses**,". It was also noticed that incompetence of black social workers involved in this case, were not challenged by their leaders due to fear of racism allegations.*

Carole Baptiste, a manager of Victoria Climbie's team was alleged to have carried out poor practices and that contributed to Victoria's death. She was alleged to have spent most of her time addressing her experiences as a black woman to junior staff. Mary Richardson a white service director admitted that Baptiste was a weak manager, who led the black social workers to cover the mistakes of their team manager on the bases of her race. On the other hand the

white consultant paediatrician at North Middlesex hospital, Dr Mary Rossister, said in some cases her opinions were ignored by black social workers.

The black social workers held the view that they were more competent in relation to ethnic minority children. The Race Equality Unit, the charity which trains social workers on race awareness, director Ratna Dutt said ethic minority employees are keen to challenge some practices due to their personal racial experiences. She went on to say that white professionals especially managers should not excuse themselves from the responsibilities through hiding behind concerns of cultural sensitivity. She opted to be labelled a racist rather than to give poor practices. She condemned supporting poor practises because it was to do with relationship of black client and black worker. That would be accepting poor services for ethnic minorities under the pretext of superficial cultural competence. She went on to say that it compromises good practices with anti-racism.

However, Ratna Dutt claimed that in a predominantly white organisation, black people are perceived to have the cultural and race expertise and sort for advice. That would be the only time they are recognised, regardless of their misgivings they provide the advice. Unfortunately, the status of black employees goes as far as when they are providing service to black clients. They would be given inappropriate duties and humiliated when they make mistakes. Henceforth, they don't get support on professional development resulting into progression of bad practices. She went on to say, in the case of Climbie, the impression of employing black people as a bad idea.

Additionally, Dutt, said that media's involvement ignores racial prejudice allegations in child protection agencies. She gave an example of Angela Mairs the Haringey team leader, who claimed that Metropolitan police, officers regularly avoided her and black social work managers to consult with her white colleagues. It was questionable, to suggest that Victoria Climbie's care was due to race equality, but Angella Mairs and Lisa Arthurworrey were suspended whilst Mary Richardson was made a director of social services at Hackney. As a result of her new appointment received a higher salary.. Dutt added that largely finger of blame was always pointed at black workers leading to their dismissal and that explains institutional racism.

Case Study 4

A project conducted by Goldsmith University led by Professor Claudia Bernard unveiled corruption between the affluent parents and the social services (BBC, 14/05/2018). The affluent were alleged to bully social workers. Social workers unveiled emotional abuse and sexual exploitation. Unfortunately, the cases were not escalated to courts because the social services managers blocked them based on their connection with the affluent class. Social services were biased against poor parents, and the child neglect cases for the rich were swept under the carpet. Her report disclosed that generally, people were convinced that child neglect happens around dysfunctional and low-income families. In the same research, frontline social workers expressed frustration with the harsh and undermining treatment they received from wealthy families during investigations. Due to their affluent status, the parents under investigations

coerced with the social workers. The social workers were scrutinized so much that they dropped their cases before they had gone far. Bernard cited one social worker who said, "They go on to their local counsellors someone whom they go outing with or play golf with." The research was conducted in 12 local councils in the UK. One exceptional case was the bullying of social workers that involved the school nurse. The girl had disclosed sexual abuse she was incurring through her parents. The case reached the Local Authority for investigations. The school nurse turning against the social workers in the presence of the child's mother, claiming that nothing happened. The research also found that some teens who were in private boarding schools were separated from parents due to family complexes.

8.18 Challenges of Social Workers

So far, this research has highlighted more flaws in social work practices without giving enough attention to how social workers felt. Some questions asked were on how they viewed their work in connection with their clients. Despite these findings of the failings in social work, the profession presents numerous challenges, particularly at the beginning of their careers. The major problem spoken about was on misunderstanding their service users and failing to marry theory and practice as expressed in sub-heading, (3.2).

"*…I have worked culturally when there is a miscommunication culturally so sometimes the respect that children have shown their families particularly some social workers have taken it for abuse in fear",* (Joan).

*"…ar, and what, we got are people who are over worked and then got up with high turnover because the job is not intricately satisfying", (*Prof. Alice*).*

Munro, (2008) mentioned that some cases were in the grey area, which was painful for the most experts and well-informed social workers on the best judgement like baby Peter's case (as mentioned in the earlier Chapter 3). She said that decisions were made under challenging circumstances, such as insufficient resources and the burden of time limits to ensure the child's welfare.

"*…what I saw a lot of people following procedures and procedures, sort of applied to people blindly and ar, and may also if you become very defensive you are very scared of being blamed you are always on the side of caution and you take a child away* (Prof. Alice)

"*…And the third thing that would help with that we, at the moment, we collect information about children who are in contact with social care. We do not have any systematically date about their parents. We don't, we need much better data much better information about the parents of children who come into social care attention. So that we can, so that the services can meet their needs*", (Prof. Alice).

Jupp, (2005) (chapter 3), describes social workers as more profoundly influenced by neoliberal demands in society and some institutions like children services than they were by reasonable interests. Some social workers indicated that the amount of time they took on paperwork was far more than they have with a child.

*"…the practitioners are pressurised around, including meeting Ofsted requirements", (*Elaine*).*

This was long raised in the '80s (Hasenfeld and Paton, 1983) that the status of a client had the potential to influence choices of working procedures, sub-heading (3.18).

Parton, (2014) stated that social workers suffered anxiety regarding children they wanted to protect but also feared protecting a targeted one group of families, such as the black community, and this is consistent with the Victoria Climbie case.

"Yes, or Yes, nothing ethical about the government (laughing, hard). Ar, I would like to see some few removed for moral reasons. You should not likely remove children; they have the right to be with their birth families and we should do more to help them with their families. Ar, and I think you know, I see good practices as well as bad,"(Prof. Alice)

Social workers suffered challenges within their administrative work and bore labels from their clients and the childbearing community. They were branded as heartless professionals who were insensitive to human feelings as they snatched children away from their families into care.

"…baby snatchers, baby snatchers, honestly it looked like that. I never thought of them as people who support you. They are fault finders, fault finders….I feel I am incapacitated it felt like that, maybe. It's more like fear mongering and you think that the authorities are there to

find fault in you not to assist you", (Collet). In this regard social workers are viewed as people who are inhumane.

8.19 Conflict of Being a Social Worker and a Parent

Social workers who were parents faced a conflict whist trying to reconcile their profession with their parenthood.

"*… I would be tempted to apply the same principles of engaging with my children to the care children but could not. It is more frustrating when one knows what works better according to personal experiences, but one has to stick by the book" (Sarah).*

"*…Conflict then arises in that though I may have the same high expectations for the children I work with I do not have the jurisdiction to exert the same pressure I would to my own child" (*Abbie*).*

*"...but the challenge in me trying to parent my children in respect of the guidance of my professional career is difficult, and yes this does cause conflict in me as an individual" (*Elaine*).*

"...there are a lot of conflicts to be honest, because you are a professional working in this environment you don't want to go to work with your own sensitivity and everything", (Naomi)

.

"…This then raises conflict in me as a parent because, I am of the view that in most situations parents who care for their children discipline them out of love or having high expectations for them and not necessarily wanting to hurt them… So, we realized that we could not do what we were subjected to do when we were growing up", (Abbie).

*"…anything that was conflicting with my culture, I have to forget my culture to enable to do the job…but I think when I look at the British system, it feels as if it does punish parents more, compared to other systems….", (*Elaine).

What stood out under this section were the remarks of Prof Alice.

"…you know statistics has lost the human story, its every person they interfere with", (Prof. Alice).

Lack of cultural awareness was discovered not in the social care system but in other agencies that dealt with children. This cultural incompetence placed the black children and their families at a further disadvantage.

"…we had a similar situation when I was an officer, lack of cultural awareness, lack of cultural contents around diverse communities" (Dr Ronald).

8.20 Discrimination

The findings have significant implications of racial discrimination, which might be why black children were over-represented in the social care and youth justice system. The discrimination did not just start during child protection investigations processes but at a given time of a black child's life. The police in the UK were alleged to perceive the BAME youths as the typical suspects for criminality when Lammy (2017) investigated. Coles and Powell, (2020) said the disproportionate rate of removing black children from school was the starting point of their life experiences of negative consequences compared to other races sub-heading, (5.12).

*"...they are quick to pass judgement, it's so quick and so easy to sanction a black child. A black child fall through the crack, unfortunately the word disparities mean", (*Prof. Peter).

*".... The other term used was cultural match when it comes to fostering. A white family can foster a black child, but a black family cannot foster a white child under the term cultural match. In school where I taught stereotyping of black children was rife under the pretext of being victims of the "Social Learning Theory" they were termed to be aggressive and violent because they have been brought up in violent families as black man are deemed to be violent. This created lots of problems in way pupils were sanctioned if they misbehaved as black boys in particular were excluded permanently or for long periods of time as they were deemed risk to other pupils while their counter parts continue with education", (*Simon*).*

Sub-heading, (5.11), also, discussed about the history of black slavery being still being lived in the 21st century. Suggesting that, black people were still interconnected to historical

misconducts against black communities and individuals (Marable, 2006). According to Marable, black people's history was ineradicably and could not be divorce from the present lived experiences.

"…But you also have to recognize that historically, you know the spirit and soul, cultures and nationalities come through the whole slavery piece and imperialism and colonialism and institutional racism created the self-loathing, approach", (Dr Ronald).

Previously, (Mercer,1984) reported the same changes affecting black children were institutional racism as key factor. This was identified as a continuous oppressive aspect of black families in the UK, chapter 5.

"…institutional racism is a system failure, based on disproportionality because, of person's colour, culture", (Dr Ronald).

Finigan-Carr, (2017) suggested how racially disproportionate school suspensions hurt black young people. School suspension was a punitive way presented as a disciplinary stratagem by removing students from school grounds. School exclusion was looked at as an inherently anti-black policy that excluded or removed black children from school.

"*…there are issues of visibility, is it? It's about who gets referred for help and that could be discriminatory assumptions that people make about black children about black families this. So, there is lots of work in the school system and in the criminal justice system about*

institutional racism, in the system, and it will be surprising if that didn't appear to some extend in children's care as well", (Prof. Peter).

8.21 **Black Boys Predicaments**

The Chicago School theory highlighted that different human beings were mutually dependent on each other as they shared the environment (Burke, 2017) sub-heading, (5.17). Aunty Anna could relate to the same perception as she called it a 'Black boy thing'.

"…It's fifty, fifty so heavy to have to be absolutely clear, what is it that you are impacting on the children. There are certain behaviour characteristics of African children which has been engrained in them. It is in their DNA. No matter what they want to do it's in their DNA and one of that is the concept of 'we'. I am because we are, because we are, I am. They will exist in groups. Black children will always exist in groups…this is all these gangs, and all this foolishness is about. They will exist in a group. I am, because we are, because we are, I am …" (Aunty Anne).

Sub-heading (5.17) stipulated those black children were perceived as bad, guilty, not fully humans and misbehaved (Gilliam et al., 2016). One mother related her own experiences,

"… You cannot tell me you haven't been influenced by the news, or what you've seen in movies or how our community has been portrayed…So, because of that …Most of the time what I've seen, [teachers] come into the classroom scared already..."

It was established from different studies that teachers feared Black children (Bailey,2016) because teachers failed to build effective relationships with the Black students as seen in America.

"*…young Black men. It's well documented that when Black man when they are in primary school, they are small and childlike, no problem. Once they develop you know physical, when they go to secondary school their behaviour now is quite described quite differently... I think people sometimes are not even aware that they have this kind of apology prejudices and bias and that means that, ah, that means at every step there is a little bit of a nudge towards problematize or ...size Black people's behaviour, same as the mental health system…ahm, and I think that's probably why ah, they end up at the sharper end of the care system*", (Collen).

Black boys had no room for errors and were not allowed to make innocent mistakes. Even though they were children most of the parents repeated this theory. Another mother gave her account of her son's dilemmas at school:

"…They used the fact that he was smart against him... Like nah he's very aware... and I was like you realise you're talking about an 8 year you ..That's the thing we worry about as Black mothers of boys….they see them as this giant whatever and to us we know who they really are. They're our babies… but to other people they see them differently....." ... (Powell and Coles, 2020, pg. 11

8.22 School Exclusion

School exclusion was one of the contributing factors of social deviance of the youth. School suspension was always increasingly on the rise historically, particularly with Black boys in the western countries.

As mentioned under sub-section, (5.14), Irvine (1990) commented that schools were places where Black children disconnected from their identity. In the same manner (Dumas, 2016b) viewed schools as a set up for black youth to exclude them from education as demonstrated by the rate of suspension even through petty issues in comparison to similar circumstances performed by white youths. Sojoyner (2016) recognised school exclusion as a passageway to prisons but realised that schools themselves were forms of prisons. Prof. Martin's argument was on the ineffectiveness of punishment of offenders by the state.

"…the more punitive you are, the more increase in reoffending likely, punishment is an entirely a negative venture, you are not going to get any positive outcomes from punishment at all. You can't talk about welfare as a safe net, there is no way welfare can be seen as a safety", (Loughborough criminology conference, Prof. Martin).

"…*they are easily misjudged or mislabelled is also the reasons why some of our black boys are said are not doing well at school, they are easily excluded from school. It happened with my two boys who were labelled for special needs*", (Lena).

"…*I always tell my students about having a giant toddle in the body of a, a fully developed body, hormones are out of control, they are so unreasonable but, you can't respond that you have to keep your ground you*" (Collen).

Hirschfield, (2008) said what was being experienced in the schools emanated from historical roots that Black youths were unteachable and criminals. This left the educators imposing a corrective action in an uninformed position.

"… *My son, who is now training as a medical doctor, was labelled to be unable to do anything. The teacher told my son that medicine was not a profession for black people, where have you seen one? That demoralised my son and started truanting till we changed school"*, (Bishop Joseph).

Why stabbings among black boys take place:

"…*it's more prevalent amongst black children, it is, perhaps it's more prevalent amongst poor children as well. Ya, you know it makes a double jeopardy of race and poverty that sometimes makes them overrepresented*" (Colleen).

Summary

Drawing upon interview data this chapter has examined the involvements and perceptions of professionals who work in child protection systems. The emerged themes helped us to understand and allowed us to scrutinise the impact of professional's services to different generations of their clients, especially parents and children. Firstly, the elaborations of

psychologists were essential over the consequences of removing children from home. The trauma and the outcome of removing children into care were more detrimental than supporting the child at home. The psychologists emphasised the need of a family and parental authority as fundamental importance to every child. Secondly, teachers had their different views on child protection which suggests that they do it for duty, not out of concern. The controversy on child protection and 'sparing of the rod' was discussed where the minister of religion emphasised the necessity for the application of the rod as a godly order.

This chapter revealed the dynamics within the social services, how they affect the workforce and children and their families. Largely, the impact of race and culture was seen from a different light through case studies 3 and 4. On a broader level schools' exclusion of black boys was found to be a major source of prison inmate suppliers.

Finally, this chapter has added more factors which lead to disproportionate of black children into care, hence care leavers into criminal justice system. Some significate issues have been emphasised to assist with reduction of overrepresentation of black children in care and care leavers in the youth criminal justice system. This chapter has exposed lack of research over disproportionate placement of black children in care including addressing racial concerns. The following chapter draws all the finds from the literature review and data assembled from participants.

Chapter Nine: Discussion on Parenting

9.0 Introduction

One of the main aims of this thesis was to focus on, the research topic, "An analysis of families of African origin, who feel at risk of accusations of abuse, whether investigated or not, and stakeholders' perspective". In an attempt to respond to this, an analysis was conducted to acquire more understanding over this subject. Later, it was found out that much of the parents' fears stemmed from child protection agencies and interferences of social services. The initial stage was to understand what it entails to safeguard a child and highlighting the policies and procedures for child safeguarding. The thesis uncovered that parenting was central to the fears of the black parents who are raising children in the UK. The black families shared their painful experiences and fears as raise children in the UK. Before scrutinising the fears of black parents in the UK it was essential to analyse what parenting entails in the UK through the former Prime Minister David Cameron's views.

9.1 Discussion on Poster 1: David Cameron's Speech

In this thesis a poster was created to illustrate and analyse David Cameron's speech after the 2011 riots focusing on the involvement moral guidance of parents to their children. His speech had some indications of failed parenting and conveyed conflicting messages regarding the state's attitude to discipline. Three participants, Bishop Joseph, Abbie, and Lilly were asked to give their opinions on the PM's speech to enhance the study. The poster outlines how parenting

was expected in everyday life according to Cameron. Apparently, it seemed the PM had realised that there were elements of parental undermining among the British youths at that time. The first questions on relation to parenting as shown from the poster 1 was, that the PM asked of the whereabouts of the parents and why the kids were not kept indoors. That question suggests failed parental responsibilities, by not controlling their children. Henceforth, that also revealed that Cameron shared the same sentiments with some interviewees over the behavioural control of children. According to this research, Cameron's speech was answered differently, by suggesting that parents lacked clear rules or guidelines to assist them with child disciplinary measures. Henceforth, the black parents indicated that they feared to draw the attention of state agencies, were punishment unintentionally overlaps into abuse threshold. The thesis also highlighted the black parents' ethos of their culture.

The African parents expressed that respecting of the hierarchy, particular younger generation to older generation; that is a fundamental value of their culture. Nevertheless, they feel it is undermined by state expectations on parenting. The findings of this thesis suggested that parents felt respect was a way of controlling and asserting authority on children. They built ethical and moral values upon respect. Parents regarded disrespected as a behaviour which undermines parental involvement and authority. That's the same ethics Cameron echoed. "…If it hurts families, if it undermines commitment, if it tramples over the values that keep people together, or stops families from being together, then we shouldn't do it" Though, this was not related to placing children in care or some policies contrary to childrearing, like what Lee

(2017) interpreted the CRC Article 12 as an organ to undermine parental rights. In this research parents reflected that their parenting methods were undermined by the state. Unfortunately, after Cameron's speech no meaningful involvement to assist parenting was implemented by the government. Unfortunately, the situation has deteriorated since then as reflected by the ever-increasing numbers of juveniles in youth justices.

These behaviours of children getting out of control are lived tales of the African families whose hands are tied though they want to control their children. Africans believed if children were taught to respect authority, there would be fewer youth delinquencies.

Respect varied with different cultures and societies. The research revealed that Africans have their own interpretations of respect.

The findings of this research and other literatures suggest that parents desperately long for respect from their children. Respect is not just subjected to relationships between children and parents but is applicable to all humanity. The young are expected to show respect to their elders through their behaviour when interacting with them. To those who take the biblical principles seriously, respecting parents meant avoiding bad things happening later in life.

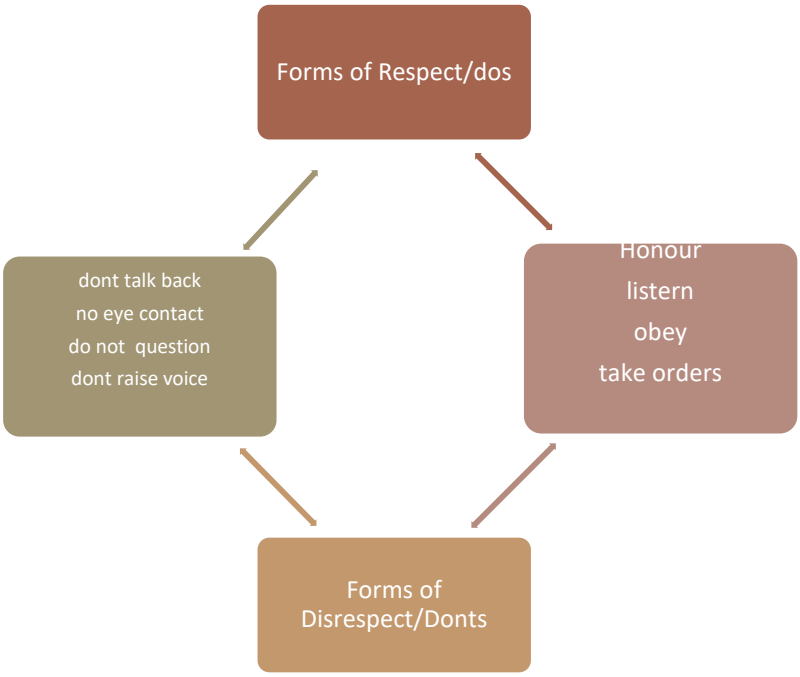
Furthermore, respect is interchanged with honour. Respecting an elder or authorities is displayed through how an individual conducts oneself before them. The African's emphasis of respecting of authorities was also assessed through symbolic and linguistic norms. These are structured as not to talk back or look direct into the eyes of elders. These demands or

expectations of respect through bodily gestures were not isolated to Africans only as (Shwalb and Shwalb, 2006), likened that to Japanese cultures whose languages had an honorific bodily gesture and speech that displayed respect towards other people. Psychologists' interviewees elaborated their experiences on how bodily cultural gestures could be misunderstood by incompetent or ignorant practitioners. Joan mentioned that in her experience working with stakeholders, one social worker interpreted the meekness of a certain fifteen-year-old boy as a timid child. In that context, respect was given to people according to their roles and older generational status or power. In the African culture, eye contact by the children to the elders was viewed as a challenge and rudeness, but in Western culture, that showed confidence and self-esteem. These were contradictory views between home and school for children. Unfortunately, some culturally incompetent professionals might view their practices as constituting an oppressive or dictatorial approach**.** From an African perspective, it was an obligation for children to render respect to their elders.

The research proposes that respect was dictated through the dos and the do nots as children interact with their elders or parents. The do not's included disobedience, speaking back to elders, direct eye contact, which was viewed as challenging behaviour, raising up of voices and not taking order

Respect Was Conveyed Through Actions and Words as Indicated On

Figure 2.



The above diagram demonstrates the importance of respect in the African culture exhibited either in words or actions. For a child to give direct eye contact was interpreted as challenging the elders, but unfortunately, some social workers would not understand. However, Joan defended the practitioners' views as she said that eye contact was important for it showed good communication and confidence. If a child lacked such attributes the teacher would describe that in their report as an intimidated child. An incompetent practitioner's documentation can report contrary information according to their interpretation and put weight on their suspicions. Such uninformed reports could influence negative judgment against families with implications that lead to children being removed into care.

Nevertheless, these problems did not occur purely with Africans. Joan accounted for her experiences with the Bangladesh family she had worked with within family settings. Parents were always the central point of respect. From the interviews, one could conclude that respect calls for a child to listen and do according to instructions. Respecting behaviour was expressed through what one expected to do or not to do. These were values and norms which these parents lived by and felt obliged to pass on to their children. Respect from children towards parents were more of an obligation and not an option. That also goes to some beliefs particularly Christian faith.

These findings revealed that parents' Christian beliefs had a significant part to play in their demands and emphasis for respect as cited in *"(Ephesians 6:1-3, KJV), Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right, 2 Honour thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise, 3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth".* A possible explanation for parents to stress respect was driven by fear of consequences befalling children if they disobey. Respect was also viewed as a deterrence measure against evil or negative occurrences on children. The reward of respecting parents came with a promise of wellbeing and long life. The driving force imposed on children, and correspondingly the myths that say dishonouring parents bring terrible luck in the future, especially after the parents' death.

The participants showed a high level of convictions and genuinely believed that respecting parents was more of a guarantee to prosperous future. The overemphasis of respect from children to elders revealed how much parents were concerned about their children's wellbeing.

As articulated by some participants, respect or honour benefits the child more than it would on the parent. Respect was the pivoting element and determined how the parent reacted to a child, and any wrongdoing is attributed to disrespect. Joyce explained how she dealt with her aggressive child who was on the verge of beating her, '*I read the scriptures of honouring parents to my child, I did not want to evil happenings on him'.*

Israel's voice echoed that it was clear that respecting parents was not an extraneous expectation, and it was not portrayed in a punitive way. Neither was it intimidating to the children as some stakeholders regarded. This study has shown that African discipline has more emphasis on the future of the child.

On the same note, black parents highlighted the importance of good education and personal dignity and that the children should aim to be good citizens. This was contrary to the UK, which focused more on the child's rights and best interests. That reflected child centeredness, and that empowered children to be selfish. Respect was a tool or skill to enable the child to face the outside world. They believed that respect must start at home, as charity begins at home. Once respecting attitudes were mastered at home, it would be easily transmitted to anybody, including peers. Dr John mentioned that lack of respect led to disrespecting of the value of lives to the extent of degrading one's life. If respect had been adhered to, there would be fewer gun and knife culture cases within the UK's black youth. Respect allows one to value other people. Dr John's views suggested that the black boys who have been stubbing one another currently lacked respect and did not value life. Respect for parents was crucial in the family environment

and went beyond the communities, schools, and society. Several participants indicated that their parents gave them strict rules to avoid shameful behaviours. The same concept is reflected under sub-heading (4.5), explaining how Japanese people followed some set rules to prevent the risk of shameful behaviour.

This study proposed that one of the factors which increase deviance was tension between parents and children. The war between parents and children was identified as triggered by children who disrespected parents in many ways. This included disobeying and dishonouring that were found among the teenagers. African parents look as if they cannot to cope with such defiance. Essentially, such behaviours were deemed taboo, a conduct not generally held lightly.

The above demonstrated a socially constructed system that had taught children to be self-centred. Children grew up thinking it was all about them in the world. The parents held the views that disrespect from children was a socially constructed behaviour, yet the practitioners expected the child to do better outside home. The African Charter *Article 31 states that every child shall have a responsibility towards family and society, the State and other legally recognised communities, and the international community…., shall have the duty: (a) to work for the cohesion of the family, (b) to respect his/her parents, superiors, and elders always and to assist them in case of need.* The Africans placed responsibilities on their children, obviously putting age-related obligations into consideration.

According to this research, disrespect was interpreted in different forms. Mainly when a child answers back to parents or talks over them. Washington was deeply emotional about the subject and that would not compromise on that matter. However, that did not mean a child should not make conversation with their elders. The implication was more on the child's attitude during reprimand or when given orders. Such attitudes as being rude, arrogant, noncompliance and many more were not tolerated on the African views. The study found African culture had some harmful elements on the approach, for example, rules were meant to be followed, and if not, there could attract evil consequences along one's way. The rules were bound by fear of the unknown.

The female participants, who were the majority, reflected conflicting views. The middle class and below 50 years old were reluctant about enforcing respect. This class had more parental flexible styles than other groups. They appreciated cultural diversities. Some of them condemned some rigid and negative parenting skills, and they were calling for change and accepted tolerable practices from other cultures. Whereas the over the fifties and working-class and churched, showed an uncompromised emphasis on respect through their authoritarian attitude. The rigid parents highlighted some significant issues which needed to be addressed. They held on to who they were and would not alter their beliefs to accommodate other 'ungodly' cultures.

Figure 3: Parent and child relationship

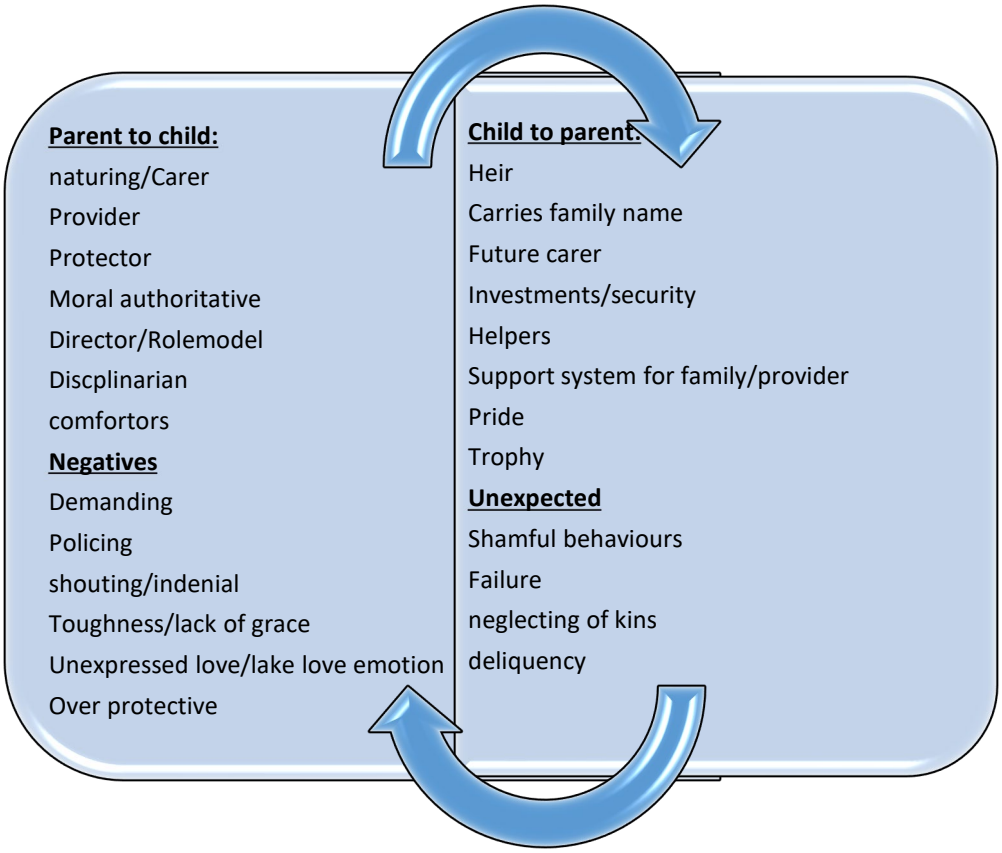


Figure three was created to demonstrate and highlight the parent and child relationship and expectations from both ends. The points were largely drawn from the participants of this research.

Both ends' expectations and responsibilities of the 'parent and child relationship' are reflected in the above diagram. The parents' expectations were an endless list in comparison to the children's expectations.

The research showed a payback time of children to their parents in the later years, as reflected on the list presented. The data above indicates that the child's expected roles, included caring and support for parents when they are older. That means responsibilities and burdens of parents

would be transferred on the child. That supported the contentions of Flekkoy et al. (1997), who said in the past, children had a price tag value to what they could contribute to the family, sub-heading (2.6). Correspondingly, reflected from the diagram was that parents work from the end backward regarding their children, modelling them to be what they perceived to be their best interest. From an early age, the parents crowned one a doctor, lawyer and many more and then started to pressurise the child to achieve the set and established goals. That could not be achieved in some families without conflict, especially with children raised in western societies. Western countries encourage their children to pursue their dreams, unlike African parents, as clearly demonstrated in the research. African parents obligated their children into a particular occupation because of the reputation and security afforded by certain professions. As reflected by the participants' professions, most of their jobs were focused on security, particularly nursing, teaching, and social work. These were the jobs that were easily available to black community as discussed in the later part of this Thesis.

Furthermore, this research's findings recognised that parents' perspective over their offspring were that children were not only viewed as children, but family members with different age-related roles. Children's responsibilities increase with age, it was more apparent with low-income families where children grew faster than their peers. In some troublesome circumstances, some children terminated schooling to assist parents, and they were regarded as the workforce or a form of family assets. In the early years of a child, it is commonly assumed that generally, parents were asserted to be the first port of call for care, support, guidance, role

models, and more. The parents put their children through training and education which was interpreted as an investment to the future carer and heir, and this was engrained in the fabric of Africans. That was largely seen from Africans immigrants in western countries, as they continued with the responsibilities of families back home. Most Africans sent money back home to look after their parents and extended families. This research showed that African immigrants secured themselves decent jobs that afforded them comfortable lives. Due to the responsibility, they were born with, they ended up supplementing their income by taking extra jobs. In so doing, some parents compromised Child Protection Regulations by leaving their children unsupervised in their homes whilst they oscillated from one job to another. Unfortunately, this has seen some of them falling into child negligence investigations.

Child neglect was on the top list of factors which called for a child's removal from the home, as stated in The Children Act 1989. This research revealed that the socio-economic problems which parents experienced were not due to lack of jobs but that their income was distributed to multi-outlets. The findings suggested that when the parents aged there would be a 'game-changer' children became sole carers of their parents unless they were of the middle class or had some insurances. Most of the participants were from African middle-class families, where education and training were mandated, but the experiences were similar, as reflected in the above diagram. Parents were strict because they aimed higher for their offspring's achievements.

African parents respected titles with status, particularly the earned ones such as a doctor, teacher, and pushed their children accomplish. A child's success was visibly and audibly expressed through celebrations, an achievement even a mere BA degree within the African culture is celebrated with a party. That becomes their pride and trophy to show off to family and friends, by that virtue, children are pushed to the winning point.

Nevertheless, globally children depended on their parents, from the vulnerable stage, which was not exceptional to African families. Though that was so, it depended on the family class and individual abilities. The diagram revealed how the participants viewed their parents when growing, which might be the same as their children. Children saw their parents as carers, protectors, comforters, and many other elements. However, due to some unforeseen circumstances, children had to take a parental role at a tender age.

As discussed before, parents invested in their children through education and other home trainings. They did that in the best interest of a child and for the entire family. An older child was usually required to take an active role in educating the younger siblings and fending the whole family where the parents failed.

However, one of the participants contested the above views as she stated that children equally deserved respect. She looked at how respect was overemphasised and deduced it to be more of obedience than respect. According to Professor Alice, respect was not to be enforced, and it should come through the way the parent contacted themselves in loving and caring for their children. Demands for respect constituted some form of oppression that could backfire on the

parents later years. That could be argued as respect could not be earned or deserved, by virtue of being a parent.

Parents judged respectful gesture through the child compliance as the parents set out rules. Rules were set to guide children in their various relationships, be it parents or teachers. Setting out rules enabled the child to attain their expected goals and excluding certain behaviours. When analysing 'respect' as demanded from children by the elders, it looked like an oppressive contact and falls short of the UN child rights and the Children's rights expectations. Children deserved respect if they were denied the freedom to express how they felt. That was deemed as violation of the Children Act 1989.

The African parents took a constant policing attitude as a form of supervising children. Harsh or enforced parenting style could be misunderstood by the stakeholders. However, parents looked at the future more than they cared much about their everyday comfort. As deduced from the literature and this research, black children did not have it easy in the world, particularly in the Western world. The black parents viewed parenting as transmission of virtue and values to children and not an art. They felt they had to be tough to prepare their offspring against the unfair world, which was the survival of the fittest, particularly for the black people. Black parents believed in training children from the militant approach, that would enable their children to soldier the battles laid before them through discrimination.

Theoretically, one could contest this and say that in the African countries, black people were still suffering, even if there was no racial discrimination. The facts were real, but without

considering the history and the effects of colonialism, that could be an endless debt. Due to colonialism impact African parents forced their children into education as security or investments of a prosperous future.

Their attitude, still driven from the biblical truths, like such scripture which states that the "the *sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in use*" (Romans 8:18). Africans are more futuristic driven as they prepared their children for self-reliance, hence taking a rigid approach. That was consistent with how an under ten years old child was fending younger siblings in the event of the absence of parents due to death or sickness. Painful as it could be these children became a lifeline for the younger siblings before charity organizations intervened for rescue. Otherwise, circumstances could force them to mature before time as shown on the 'Zimbabwe Forgotten Children' documentary (BBC 2, August 2010). Child cruelty was far from that kind of parenting, rather a misunderstood approach that had its roots embedded in struggles. On the other hand, they felt that the practitioners were not consistent with their child protection standards.

The parent who reprimanded a 15-year-old for bad behaviour like that of Case study 2 (pg.218) was exaggerated, whereas a child who engaged in criminality at age ten would be prosecuted. When disciplining the child, both physical punishment and prosecution of a child may be condemned, and one leaves physical scars and the later emotional and physiological scares. History has told us that the care system had its kind of child abuse. Howath (2000) stated that the abuse is perpetrated through the lack of retaining experienced or trained staff. There would

be no consistent or quality care given to the child in care without qualified or experienced workers. Taking the child from home did not make the child safer than before. Yes, the child is free from the parental rod of correction but bound by uncertainties and become victims of professionals' incompetence's.

However, various challenges in child protection were identified, such as discrimination in care widely documented in the literature. The care system was assumed to be the safest place from home but led a significant number of children to the streets life, ultimately resulting in unpleasant destinations such as prisons. This research confirmed that some children were subjected to control, which seemed to be one of the parenting styles which led to family tensions.

9.2 Control Theory

The strain theory or anomie theories revealed that human beings are moral animals longing to obey rules under sub-heading (5.15). That proposed that people can be pressured to behave in ways that are inconsistent with their own personal internalised norms and the desires they have towards others (Durkheim, 1960). Social control can be broken down to individual, family, church, community, and societal levels. From the family's perspective, 'social control' is the application of boundaries and punishment imposed on children. It was found that the application of physical punishment is a deterrence factor against misbehaviour. As with deterrence theory, it stops people from committing a crime, and in respect to children, it should

stop them from delinquency behaviours. In respect to this study, it showed elements of parental fears.

9.3 Fears of Parents Likely to be Convicted as Criminals

This study interpreted physical punishment as a crime and a violation of children's rights under the Children Act 1989. Subsequently, physical punishment that leads to significant harm to a child is considered child abuse. Parental crimes were detected through abuse and neglect, which is measured by set thresholds. Parents who carried out these acts had experienced the same treatment in their own their lived lives. This was consistent with this research and previous literature findings. For further explanations, sort to establish the causes which drove parents to engage in what is classified as a criminal offense on children. Sub-heading (5.10) explained that there were other forces which led parents to break the laws. For instance, the Situational Action Theory (SAT). SAT as a moral action directed by moral rules which distinguishes between right and wrong in different circumstances.

The labelling of parents as criminals was in line with one of the five situational action theories applied to reveal conventional criminological theory. Burke, (2017) stated that SAT identifies how people are consequently, transformed into criminals due to circumstances perceived as criminal offenses as a feasible alternative and a genuine way of achieving the anticipated outcome. Some actions, notably beating, psychological and emotional control on a child was classified as crime in this thesis largely because it’s the root of child protection investigations. SAT referencing to deterrence theory some people chose to comply with the regulations and

laws due to fear of getting caught (Wikstrom, 2019) as reflected under sub-heading (5.9). This explains why some parents opt for the lax method when parenting. In general, disciplining a child was not a crime, but the outcome defined whether a crime had been committed or not. Parental criminality can be influenced by broader social conditions, including segregation and social integration and the individual's life history. In this research, they also articulated that they were subjected to their lived life experiences and would not do otherwise in their parenting techniques.

Causation of crime has different factors, but relevant to this chapter are life history and social conditions. Both life history and social conditions influenced parents to make certain disciplinary stances to deter their children from future consequences. Parents committed such acts of crime because they found them tolerable, more so, being irrelevant to some circumstances. Furthermore, under SAT action process is motivated by either temptation or provocation, of which the latter corresponds to this study. Going back to the way parents respond to disobedience or disrespect entails a provocation which leads to disciplinary measures. Regrettably, some result into child abuse and later classified as a criminal act. As revealed in this research, some parents continue to physical discipline, knowing that the method can harm the child resulting into state investigations.

Additionally, criminal individuals are due to choices they consider as a viable action alternative or because it is a habit or simple deliberate. Habitual behaviour is the application of experiences grounded on moral values of conduct. This was consistent with parents who had always known

and developed a habit to beat a child in reaction to wrongdoing, as (Wikstrom, 2019), explained. Deliberation focused on the future and a valuation of the best possible action implying that crime might be chosen if it was only the best option (Wikstrom, 2019). Some interviewed argued that physical punishment was not ruled out but a possibility as the last resort particularly to children who pushed boundaries unreasonably.

Case Study 2 is a clear demonstration of deliberate action where the father chose to physically chastise his daughter to deter her from sexual perpetrators. The degree of deliberation may be different depending on the professed importance of the choice made. This shows that parents had to adopt different suitable parenting methods.

9.4 Parenting Styles

Most participants said they had no regrets about how they were raised, deduced as an authoritative and constant monitoring style. This theme speaks of the uncompromised parenting attitudes of their parents. African parents reveal more of the authoritarian and authoritative parenting application style. There were four kinds of parenting dimensions and different forms of outcomes learned in this research: authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and uninvolved/neglectful parenting styles. Authoritarian parenting style is characterised with low warmth and high control over their children, authoritative shows high warmth and high control were as permissive has high warmth and low control (Baumrind,1991). From further findings, uninvolved parenting, both warmth, and control are minimum or not there. Some research revealed various outcomes on children associated with the kind of parenting approach

applied to them. Authoritative parenting style has been related to positives outcomes. These suggestions confirm the association of the way the parents were raised themselves they were brought up and what they became. They emphasised the need for toughness in parenting to achieve good behaviour and positive outcomes in the future. In contrast, adverse outcomes that include depression and low self-esteem was a behavioural response to authoritarian parenting practices.

These are the traits that Dr John said are not easily found among African children, except those who chose to rebel against the values and norms of the families. The findings resonate with those of Hillarker et al. (2008), who point out that parental behavioural control was linked to adolescent social competence. It may be that these parents benefited from authoritative parenting just because they did not know anything different. Some parents said they did not know anything different and embraced it as the norm, and no one viewed it as a form of abuse. It was common to hear adults' comment that a child was misbehaving because *"they have not been given a beating,"* as Abbie echoed. The delinquency of youth has been ascribed to a lack of discipline during childhood years. Interestingly, this is the same concept proposed that Prince Andrew should have received discipline when he young. Hastings, (2011), Daily Mail, 8th March 2011, *"How very different it might have been had someone spanked Andrew's bottom when he was young" and how the mother*, "*She leaves her children to go their way for good or ill,"* the mother's parenting approach fits in the permissive parenting method as discussed in this study.

His Royal Highness Prince Andrew is the second son of Queen Elizabeth II, appointed to be Britain's overseas trade envoy who was involved in some scandals. From that behaviour, suggested that he lacked discipline at an early stage of his life. That was the point where the participants emphasized disciplining children while they were young in support of their biblical beliefs of training up a child when "*he is young"* (Proverbs 22.6). Arguably, this research agreed on the need to discipline a child, but the African parents' challenge is how it should be implemented. The question was how to do it unfortunately there still has no answers. The study found that there were presenting issues prevalent in the black African community. Especially when they come into an interface with the child protection laws, processes, and procedures, parents lacked knowledge.

Fundamentally, most black African families are not aware of the Child protection laws being first generation immigrants in the UK, only to be confronted with them when they violate the laws. Some parents only got to know of different styles of parenting through the social work profession.

However, most parents clearly said they had no regrets of how discipline was applied to them since physical chastisement was used proportionately. African parents had been labelled by social workers as too controlling and intolerant, as the literature and this research suggested.

The parents viewed that controlling was a positive approach on parenting showing the involvement and assertiveness of a parent. The parents attributed their successes to the parenting methods of the former generation, hence acknowledged that they were in a different

environment where that method was accepted. That was reflected in research conducted in Kenya, reflected under sub-section (5.1), Correspondingly, parental behavioural control was linked to adolescent social competence Hillarker et al. (2008).

As revealed under sub-section (5.1) that Kenyan children, are pro-social behaviour and were higher in participating in family obligations because that was normalised in their environment. Unfortunately, in the UK there is the likelihood of being misinterpreted by the practitioners as child labour leading into the child's removal. However, the state intervention failed to acknowledge the negative consequences caused by detaching a child from a parent, such as mental, psychological, and emotional, which might occur in the future.

African disciplinary approach could not go without challenge and condemnation from some participants. They said though their intention was good, the approach was sometimes mixed with fury components, which harmed the child. Participants pointed out that it was abnormal when parents delivered physical punishment by using instruments. Sometimes, driven to those heights because the child had not done the homework. These behaviours there would not be classified as a thin line between discipline and abuse, but purely cruelty. One might call it a form of a child abused responding to the child's failure to comply.

This research exposed the growing need to educate parents that discipline has no bearing on abuse. Parents need to understand that discipline and child abuse were closely related and find a way to separate the two distinctively. More importantly, this study explored on why physical

punishment became so prevalent in African families and a common phrase ‘the rod of correction’.

9.5 Controversial Practices with the Rod of Correction

Black parents who physically chastise their children, risk drawing attention of social services. Possibly, resulting in removal of children into care considered to be a route to prisons as the statistics confirm. Spare the rod phrase was strongly associated with Christian beliefs when it comes to behaviour moderation. Unfortunately, it was difficult to trace whether child chastisement was in the same package of the Christian missionaries who supposedly took the Christian faith (gospel) to Africa? Another possibility could be that the gospel enhanced the norms of discipline in the African culture. The fusion of African culture and Christian faith could have built a stronghold in favour of physical discipline, resulting in its legitimisation. This study could not identify the forms of discipline Africans employed on children before the entrance of missionaries and the colonial masters.

One participant emotionally suggested that their four fathers were beaten by colonisers for incompetence at work. They in turn took the same approach and dealt with flaws of their wives and children. It became a normalised behaviour which was then faithfully passed to their offspring's suggesting that violence was the solution to correct any bad behaviour. Further suggestions indicated that historically black slaves lived in a culture of severe discipline (Coles and Powell, 2019). Williams' studies confirmed that the culture of discipline was evidenced through violence inflicted on punishing blacks. Lack of information on this topic might lead us

to speculate on corporal punishment was visibly present in the African communities. Different theorists varied in their opinions, as suggested before that society deals with the inter-generational influence of parenting styles. Physical punishment of a child was associated with violence and delinquent behaviours in juveniles and adulthood, as found by (Gilbert et al., 2009). Another question could be was it the reason why London, has high delinquent behaviours among the African boys exposed through their knife stabbings subculture.

Gilbert's theory could be contested in this research because most of the participants declared that corporal punishment was administered to them, and they have turned up to be better people. From this research's perspective, Gilbert et al. (2009) claims are challenged based on the grounds of lack of explanation to suggest the study included the African immigrants. Gilbert et al. (2009), were not focusing on first-generation African immigrants, but generic research which might not have covered Africans in western countries. On the contrary, the participants were optimistic about physical punishment which they received since it did not leave them with psychological and emotional scares. Subsequently, that supports the findings of the Kenyan study under sub-section (5.1). Though, some parents admitted having adopted different parenting styles at the same time believing in the importance of physical chastisement.

This research has established that the Christian faith has a strong relationship with corporal punishment, and it were supported by most Africans who are of that faith. This interpretation was consistent with a study undertaken in the US on conservative Protestantism's attitude over corporal punishment. The findings showed that evangelical, charismatic, and fundamentalist

are disproportionately likely to support physical punishment (Alwin and Felson, 2010). Considering the above beliefs, that could be the reason for corporal punishment within the Africans as a command from God. In the UK that practices ware snare for easy removal of children into care, since child protection was on the high agenda. The study shows that African disciplinary methods of a child were at odds with child safeguarding requirements. This might explain why black children are overrepresented in social care and later involved in criminal behaviours, in the act of pursuing freedom from parental control. Some children in the care system were not physical injured but were found within the likelihood of significant harm after parental chastisement. Overrepresentation in criminal justice was not because of parental discipline but as a repercussion of being removed from the family.

de Guzman et al. (2005), said that certain practices were normalised to the level that children believed and expected any kind of conduct or discipline on them. African children brought up in the UK did not see it that way, and that increased tension with their parents since such practices were not normalised. There are several reasons ascribed to people who applied physical chastisement on their children.

One of the reasons Africans preferred corporal punishment was that people exposed to civil war applied corporal punishment (Morales et al., 2016). They considered that most African countries had a fair share of civil wars, such as South Africa, Kenya, and Nigeria. The parents who applied physical punishment could have been victims of the same method in their own childhood. That was consistent with Gage and Silverstre (2010), whose findings revealed a

strong relationship between physical punishment victims in childhood and those that applied the same method on their children. In this research, parents tended to prefer the parenting method, which was applied to them even if they did not appreciate it when they were growing up. It was demonstrated by the encounter of Psychologist Abbie, when her client was alleged to had beaten her child, in her, defends she said because she experienced it when she was growing up, and it worked for her. She later confessed through her interview that she did not like the kind of discipline she received. The application of their parents' disciplinary methods could be influenced by its effectiveness regardless of the pain.

Pedagogy of the oppressed Freire, P., suggested that once one was oppressed and did not like it when they got to a place of authority, they behaved the same as their oppressors (Kina, V.J. and Gonçalves, A., 2018). These people looked at the oppressors as a role model and what they did was the standard regardless of one's dislike of the acts. So, that could be another effect of the over-application of physical punishment by black parents.

Conversely figure 2 reveal some African parenting weakness such as, verbal abuse which was prevalent, that includes dictating and show no importance of listening to their children. It would be remiss not to mention that African parents should recognise the harmful aspects of the culture, including the absences of the African child's voice and parental controlling behaviours.

Participants indicated that love was unexpressed within African parenting, as if they lack love emotion towards their children. However, children knew that they were loved though they do not get the cuddles and kisses in comparison to western parenting. Parents' understanding of

love was more on providing necessities and knowing that children always have room at home at any time regardless of age. The participants expressed that an African child was not entitled to opinions or options to pursue their dreams. Overprotection of parents was not appreciated as they felt it takes away life experiences from the children. Some participants felt they would rather make mistakes and learn from them than feel owned by parents as property. This might be viewed same views of Jan Narverson's (1995), who felt that children could be perceived as "eligible for ownership" of their parent (Burke, 2017).

Furthermore, African parents were found to be very imposing. They imposed their beliefs, culture, and many more, on their children based on those expectations, which could potentially create tension on their relationships with their children. Though the participants acknowledged that it was cultural to respect hierarchy they felt that should be reciprocated to both sides. Furthermore, parents are called to be mindful of afford their children some privacy they deserved. Regardless of accepting some parenting styles as norms, the need for change was verbalised. Moreover, it was found that African parents are rooted and settled in their traditional discourse but found wanting for enlightening and reorientation, which called them to move with time. They needed an orientation that would bring them to a more current approach of raising children and disregarding beliefs in disciplinary actions, which develop into violent acts.

Conversely, it was appreciated and acknowledged that specific aspects of the African culture kept children from being victims of self-harming. Dr John mentioned that very rarely will one

see African children involved in self-harm and eating disorders. This could be the results of overprotection and too much interference, which could be some of the protective factors within African culture. It was inherent in the African culture, for example, that some of the protective factors were tied up in their beliefs and higher disciplinary threshold levels. One could trace back those African children were taken into care more due to discipline/abuse than neglect. More so, parents defined child abuse differently including sexual abuse, overworking someone's child, keeping a child away from education and physical neglect. Their insensitivity to hitting children wrongly was a result of a lack of local knowledge. Through this research, it was easy to notice that parents were against children's rights impositions.

9.6 Battle on Childs' Rights

Clearly, the participants anonymously expressed the crippling effects of children's rights on their parenting. Naturally, parents work on achieving things right for their children, implying rights are already available ensuring parental responsibilities were the vehicle to deliver the children's rights. The enforcement and over stressing of children's rights were the root of confusion and conflict in the families. Arguably, children's rights impose limits on parental rights Tuckness (2010). Participants blamed child rights for youth delinquencies and deviant behaviours. Some parents acknowledged the need for children to have rights, but in a reasonable measure that allowed the parents to override individual decisions they envisage to be detrimental to the child's future. Though the children's rights were supposed to benefit the vulnerable children, it did not consider those who care for them, such as the parents. This

would have been more convenient if the rights were given in conjunction with responsibilities as suggested by some participants. Children might fail to interpret legislations and assumed that rights were equal to freedom.

The participants found that children's rights increased conflicts in families. Tuckness (2010), cited a compilation of Cardiff University School of Law reported the challenges mothers faced with their children. One mother explained how she sought help from the social worker over her challenging son. At the end of the counselling session, she felt more shameful and demoralised. She expected the social workers to have addressed her son's violent behaviour, resulting in exacerbating the problem. The social workers failed to intervene and left the son believing that he had immunity to intervention. The study deduced that families which did not tolerate disrespect where the children excised such rights resulted in like a ‘war-tone zone’ home.

Unfortunately, the state and the parents do not appear to sing from the same hymn sheet and as legislators were viewed as working against parents. Another elephant in the house was the best interests and wishes, and feelings of a child. Some parents expressed that it was a snare set by the state to take children into care. The research found that crime levels increased after implementing children's rights as the young people bait on their rights. The parents saw that as injustice to the children, degeneration of behaviour and morality, and affected their education. Later in life, their childhood rights would work against them and put them in a vulnerable state as adults and potentially become social capital for the state.

Children’s rights gave children a higher responsibility for the burden they could not bear, resulting in a generation of vicious circles of a lost generation with no accountability. Parental confidence was taken away, and parents felt that they were the wrong parents in the wrong system. It was the wrongness of the system that was created by legislators and negatively impacted the families. The implementation of children’s rights made parents perceive that as a perfect weapon used by the state to control or destroy family unit. A simple act of forcing the child to go to school could be interpreted as infringement of children's rights and respect. As the research suggested that respect is the core value parents imparted on their children, which meant that if they do not submit to instruction, the possibility of conflict increases. Children's rights are too excessive and are not welcome within the black families, as reflected through this research.

The police makers on children’s rights might have written that in good faith without foreseeing the consequences as extrapolated in case study 1 on Kiera's transgender process (pg.84). At birth, a teen whose assigned gender was a girl blames the adults in her life for not supporting her psychologically. This explains why children's rights are excessive, including the implication of wishes and feelings and the child's best interest. The child's best interest should include how it would impact the child's future. As mentioned earlier, African parents focus on decisions that positively impact the child in the future. Case 1 reflected how eventually the children's rights worked against the child, including the state itself, particularly if a system was challenged through the courts. Kiera wished adults in her life, including professionals who

treated her, had challenged her illusive ideas, and she regretted that she was encouraged into childish, immature decision. She acknowledged that she was just a teen in her fantasy world where adults were supposed to have stepped and provided good guidance. Her legal team felt the same that children may fail to weigh up the impact of such transformation and how it would affect them in future. As young as twelve-year-olds, received treatment that stopped hormones of their assigned gender at birth, leading to puberty-related changes such as facial hair and periods. Such behaviours were deemed a taboo within the Africans who participated and could trigger hostile reactions if a child chose such, and that potential could propel social workers' interferences.

A further examination on Case study 2, where a father reprimanded his daughter over chatting with an unknown man online, also pointed to excessive rights that child possessed. The African parents are surrounded by tension in their childrearing endeavours. Additionally, they failed to explain or interpret the wishes and feelings and the best interest of a child. Keira's case is an apparent conflict between an adult's humane responsibility for a child and child's rights.

Unfortunately, children's rights are not clearly understood by both parties, the parent and the child. The timid parent flows along and supported the so-called children's right to avoid tension with the authorities, and the child rides on that to fulfil childish fantasies. These reactions could lead to child neglect if the child pushes boundaries, this in turn could alarm the stakeholders for intervention. Parents do not have full information about what entails children's rights, and

they assumed children's rights exist to empower children to do what they wish. Nevertheless, the state still expected parents to set boundaries for their children.

However, the termination of parental rights is subject to how both parents and stakeholders interpret Article 12. Chapter 4, pg. 87, Thomson (1990) approved the idea that parental rights were subject to be overridden based on the account of parental rights thresholds. That meant parents had some level of rights that could be terminated if they harm the child. As long as parents did not harm their children, their parental rights would remain unaltered. Severe neglect or abuse constituted the termination of parental rights. Nevertheless, this information is not known by the immigrant parent, all they understood was children's rights and parents' responsibilities.

9.7 Parents' Response on Parenting in the UK

Many parents shared their fears of raising children in the UK due to state's interferences. Parents articulated their upbringing that influenced their parenting methods a continuous transmission from past generations and affirmed by the new cohort. Black mothers were historically presented victims. Some parent's response was to relocate, whilst others opted for permissive parenting. They expressed that cultural conflict goes in three dimensions that involve parents, children, and the host country, leading to the lax approach. The literature described permissive parenting as a lax method, where parents allowed their children to behave as they wished. Permissive parenting gave very limited boundaries, and willing to compromise and was void of parental authority. African parents emphasised more on boundaries and

expressed that what was permitted or not. African parents applied radical authoritarian approach which in this research was identified between authoritative and authoritarian. That was assumed to be appropriate within the African communities, when raising children in the in western countries where black people are subjected to work 'ten times' as hard as their counterparts. Some parents echoed that if their children were not driven to work ten times as much as their white counterparts, their future would be uncertain.

As discussed earlier, that though some parents had no ill feelings about physical punishment, they felt they would not continue with that legacy. This research revealed two different kinds of permissive parenting, one a deliberate approach the parent chose to be lax about and the other was fear motivated. Permissive parenting due to fear was one of its kind as found in this research. To distinguish between lax and fear motivated permissive parenting methods a new term was created in this study and called the later, Blind and Deaf parenting (BaD). Through this research, some external forces crimpled and interfered with good parenting were the fear of stakeholders and internal fear of their children. Parents were afraid to be reported to the authorities by their children that could lead to criminalisation and removal of children into care.

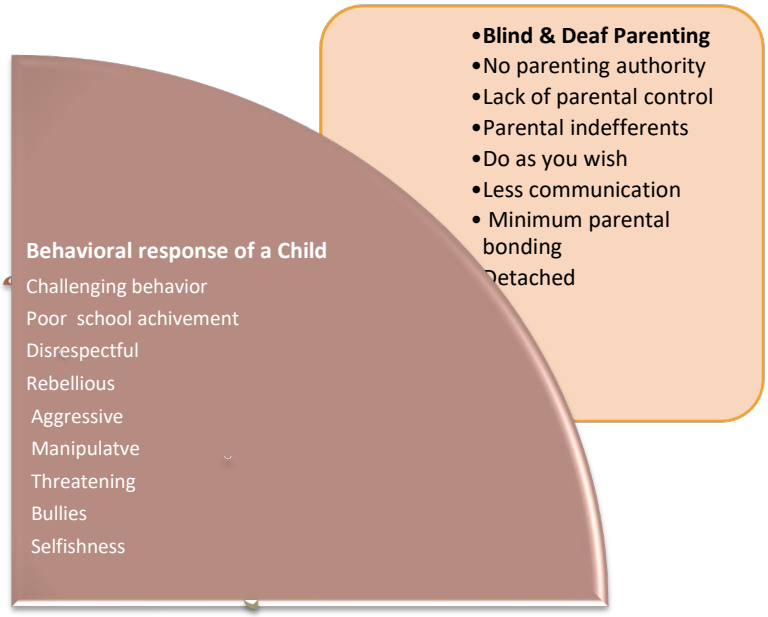
As discussed before, Joyce said she would not dare to correct her daughter because of the state agency's intervention. She expressed that she did not want to end up with a criminal record. Fifteen parents indicated that it was better to ignore the naughty child than to give room and opportunity for social workers to come and harvest them all. Parents weighed the benefits of

correcting one child and facing family breakdown in case they failed to discipline appropriately or go beyond the threshold.

In this research, it was found that African methods of discipline had very high thresholds which in some cases stretched beyond the expected UK levels. Correspondingly, based on other findings suggesting that there was a fine or thin line between discipline and abuse. African parents expressed the same implication, which suggested different thresholds to work around. Their concerns were the inability to know were discipline ended and where and when the abuse began. The manipulation and misinterpretation of rights by children made the parents feel they should let the children behave as they wished, resulting in parents resorting to the BaD parenting method.

Figure 4 has been created as result of identifying the social constructed parenting within Africans who are raising children in the UK. It shows that BaD parenting method was driven by fear of the authorities considering state interferences during child abuse investigations. However, the impact on a child was like permissive parenting though BaD style was detached from the child whilst permissive expressed love. Furthermore, BaD parenting had similar attributes with neglectful/uninvolved parenting, though the neglected child shows different behaviours and attitudes such as feel unloved, and depend on oneself, as show on Figure 1. Figure 4 is an additional parenting method found through this research and argued that it is socially constructed for African parenting.

Figure 4 BaD Parenting Method



9.8 The BaD Parenting Method Created out of Fear

There were significant factors that came about to create the BaD parenting method, such as the endeavour to protect the rest of the family. Parents argued that they would rather keep quiet ignore the naught child than reprimanding him/her. The flawed parenting method was allowing children to behave as they wished with minimum or no boundaries. A parent's attitude was

being blind and deaf' to the child's behaviour because if the parent saw or heard, one might react inappropriately and go beyond the expected thresholds.

The BaD parenting method was a deliberate approach, which some parents opted for due to fear of authorities, including those with no immigration status. Parents were abdicating their parenting skills due to fear and hence working against themselves. They also suffered within themselves because of conflict failing to do what they should do as parents. In a nutshell, these parents will internalise their grief of losing control of what they should be in control of.

BaD parenting of some BME was by default because they do not want to be bad parents, but the has system driven them to be bad parents. BaD parenting was socially constructed, and the system imposed it on them. Another major factor in choosing BaD was not only influenced by losing children into care, but also a possibility of losing jobs. The BaD parenting method was also encouraged by ignorance of the expectations of the UK parenting methods. The parents were led through psychological defences, potentially to deter predicaments caused by social workers' interventions.

Sadly, people judged social workers from what they heard, through media, or what happened to other people, which is to say on third party information. Unfortunately, these parents were coming from a place of assumptions or insufficient knowledge, as found in this study. Though the parents argued that they were intimidated by social workers but that would lead them into neglecting their children. If the parent's disciplinary effectiveness was shut, they still bear the consequences of neglecting their children. Social workers expected them to moderate their

methods. Before this research, no existing literature was found to suggest that African parents in the UK lacked parenting boundaries due to fear of the state agencies, resulting in too much freedom for their children, which later resulted into state interventions and criminality.

This research revealed that some of the parents' fears were driven by racial elements. The findings were that black people were labelled as people who beat and shout at their children. For that reason, parents felt that it did not matter how much they could speak out their opinions because they were not going to be heard by the social workers. They expressed that in the event of child abuse investigations, their children would be removed without any explanation.

Where children were removed from home parents incurred several repercussions such as criminal records and loose of employment resulting in failing to maintain mortgages payments. Furthermore, parents feared the possibility of separation or increased tension in the family. Marriage and mental breakdowns were additional factors considered to be manufactured by fear of the state. It profoundly impacted children when parents opted not to discipline them and later resulted into moral decay.

Due to lack of parental or moral authority at home, children were likely to engage in deviant behaviours. Inadequate parenting methods had their consequences, which affected children in the outside world including schools. As a result, these children carried the delinquent behaviour at schools which led to school exclusions. In some cases, their behaviours brought them into gang association which resulted in conflict with the Criminal Justice System. The parents who practiced the BaD parenting method met the criteria of permissive parenting. Their hands were

tied up because if they raised their voices, their children and social worker viewed it as controlling parents.

The research analysed how the Africans arrived at such approaches and whether these practices were predominantly African. The research findings did not suggest that the African approach of parenting was exclusive to them only but a high possibility of being shared by many other ethnicities. Some studies indicated some similarities in childrearing across the cultures as shown under sub-heading (5.5).

The factors which called for the safeguarding of children were a response to child cruelty in the UK, which did not involve black children up until in the recent years of Victoria Climbie. These legislations and policies were implemented not to target black families but to protect the British children. Nonetheless, in recent decades white children, have been found to be disproportionately lower in the care system. It was further shown that abuses were still occurring in the white communities as in the black.

Some of the reasons black children were overrepresented in the care system, could be due to their different approaches to parenting. However, the black families were more prone to fall into the set net of child abuse due to their known approaches. On the other hand, that does not mean physical chastisement was a black practice only, but universal though applied in different measures and frequencies as mentioned before.

This was what drove this study to explore on why blacks are frequently investigated and seemed to have a substantial share in the social settings. When listening to the participants'

voices, there was an indication of why the African descent children quickly got into care and youth justice system. There were many opposing dynamics for black people that included deprivation, labelling and racism because there were no significant numbers of black people in decision making spheres including the police and legislation writers.

One of childrearing challenges for African parents included social workers' attitudes and practices more than deprivation. The nightmare of imagining one's child taken into care system and looked after by several people of mixed values was incomprehensible to an African parent. They gave examples of even how animals could not tolerate intrusion into their young ones. The research did not conclude whether African parents were extreme because the research was limited to African immigrant only. It only saved the purpose of highlighting their parenting methods because their children were overrepresented in social settings. It was also found that the system had contributed more to some of their parenting stances.

For example, enforcing their children to behave in a particular way to avoid negative encounters in the future or to fall into a lax attitude to avoid interaction with social workers. Neither did the application of the BaD parenting method nor the traditional approach deterred future adverse outcomes. This study confirmed that children who viewed their peers being raised differently tended to rebel against strict disciplinary measures. The above might be one of the reasons for increased conflict in families.

Addressing cultural incompetence claims should not be the influential component for social workers ill judgement on black families. Reasons being that it was in recent decades when

some laws were implemented. For instance, the Children Act 1989, was most likely written by a generation where physical punishment was applied, that is to say, corporal punishment was not aligned to one culture only. The difference might be that some nationalities had revolved in their approaches, and others were still trailing behind. In this research, it showed that Africans were following suit in adopting different disciplinary methods. It seemed Africans were two decades away from the British corporal punishment approaches. Since 1994 the British adopted the Children Rights 1989 Act. The older generation above the forties should understand that specific approaches are not new to British society though eradicated.

The study revealed that one is not an emotional abuser due their race, gender, age, religion, and values. It showed that social workers were not innocent of racial discrimination practices but were rather hiding behind cultural incompetence explanations. It has been a while since cultural incompetence has been discussed about here in the UK and attempts to address that are still ongoing. The interviews taken from the social worker educators reveal that they have a fair understanding of different cultures. Significant changes had been seen in accommodating different cultures in social work, but that was not the changing disproportionate rates of children removed from home. While it can be appreciated that cultural consideration were put into account, it was like giving a wrong prescription for a wrong diagnosis. Though there were significant cultural incompetents, that does not overshadow discrimination based on one's race.

Parents argument was that if legislators took heed and considered the inclusion of children's responsibilities in the policies that might significantly bring a positive change to the society.

As it looks now children are rights holders with no responsibilities. Research from prominent professors such as Bywater suggested that deprivation is one of the major causes of black children overrepresented in the care system. The black families disagreed with that notion because they feel they were equally deprived like other ethnicities in the same neighbourhood as supported by the Glasgow study discussed before. Clearly, there were no Boroughs where the blacks were the majority, suggesting that there are other elements beyond deprivations. Parents expressed placing children in care because of likelihood of harm was an inadequate safeguard. The Care System was found to be incompetent measured by outcomes of the care leavers.

Furthermore, being born black British does not necessarily mean a different white culture due to the same socialisation. There are more similarities in culture than differences in some cases. The Africans born in former British colonies had a shared culture with the British. For example, the young nation Zimbabwe which gained its independence in 1980, was more British orientated. That is reflected in their dressing, unlike other African countries that had national traditional dressing. One would see a Zimbabwean in a suit and tie in the middle of summer regardless of the heatwave, a dress code-imposed centuries ago by the colonisers. The Zimbabweans' behaviour has a high percentage of British influences, sadly, that goes to their food and abandoned theirs's as inferior. Their colonial masters long standardised childrearing. British institute seems not comfortable with the word racism but finds a word to cover as an

excuse. This research identified that as the social construction of whiteness and critical race theory and structured racism.

9. 9 Professional Discussion

The professional participants and existing literature review found that it was essential to understand both the parents' and stakeholders' perspective in childrearing. Some psychological and criminological theories gave a comprehensive discussion of parents' complexity, children, and stakeholders' experiences that involved social processes.

Aspects discussed were:

- Transaction relationships of children in care,
- Impacts of lacking parental authority,
- Conflicting views,
- Social workers/branded image/accounts/challenges/discrimination,
- Causes of delinquencies,
- Discrimination,
- Black boys' life journey,
- Cultural incompetence or racism,

9.10 Child Protection and Its Conflict

UN Conventions on children's rights, 1989 Article 19 required state parties to adopt all necessary legislative, administrative, education, and social measures to safeguard children from all sorts of abuse and neglect. Though the professionals were guided by the Children Act 1989, there was a need to include article 8 under Human Rights. This gives right to family life and the right to private life. Sub-heading (5.13) noted Carr et al. (2015), that though parents could be abusive, or neglectful children should be entitled to relate with their parents. Respect for a child should include respect for the child's relationships without ignoring the child's needs.

Social work theory and practice established the need to focus on ethnic differences as best practices. Nevertheless, nothing demonstrated that the social work approach benefited the BME group, particularly in child protection (Williams and Soydan, 2005). There was moral force illustrated in literature but failed to show evidence-based policymaking. Also, professionals did not carry out competent cultural interventions and assessments on BME children (Welbourne, 2002). There were problems of failing to implement what Lamming's report asserted with the legislative framework. Batty (2002, 2003) reported concerns over the inabilities or limitations of social workers' skills when undertaking assessments and interventions with BME children. Child protection should not just focus on abusive parents but on discriminating, and unjust social work approaches.

This research called for social services and other multiagency to facilitate the child's security against any forms of harm, including those inflicted by state agencies. According to the statutory guidance, some social workers expressed the dilemma of ticking a box but, even where they identified as no safeguarding concerns. This research reflected the dilemmas that some social workers faced over the conflict of personal judgment that mandated the removal of children from home. Black social workers expressed agonising conflict they endure when assessing black child. Black social workers shared the same views with the participating parents that they understood the notion behind chastising children as to deter them from delinquency behaviours. Some social workers confessed that they would apply the same disciplinary measures on their children just like their clients. They argued that the black parents' reactions to the child's mischief were not due to a cultural standpoint but from a parental position. Nevertheless, black social workers acknowledged the toughness of the African approach might require the lowering threshold to avoid harming the child. Social workers felt that should be resolved by educating the parents. The tug-of-war within the children's social work led some social workers to resign from their jobs or change and work with other social work departments. This research found social workers to be sandwiched between children and their families' needs where the 'Call of Duty' contradicted personal judgment.

They stated that the most significant challenges were removing children while knowing that the child's probability of turning into criminality was higher in care than at home. As found in this research that there were tensions between African families and social services. Social

workers were allegedly insensitive to the needs of the African families and that resulted in the overrepresentation of black children in care. Social workers' response to the allegations was that the constraints of their job's nature had the potential to alter one's judgements.

Government Response to the Family Justice Review (2012) pointed out that several aspects contributed to the child protection system's difficulties. Several challenges encountered included inefficiency, lack of accountability, increased caseloads, delays, distrust, and ineffectiveness between different agencies and other stakeholders. Chapter 5 arguably showed that removing children into care was not as easy as imagined by the public. Literature review and participants indicated that removing a child was a strict and rigorous process. Though it might be seen as difficult to remove children into care, that does not correspond with the ever-increasing number of care population. One of the major concerns in this research were removal of children on the claims of likelihood of harm.

In the first instance, social workers were duty-bound to protect a child. At times they would assess whether a child was loved or not and that could potentially mislead professionals when basing assessments on parental love. Some parents stated that in their culture, love existed, but unexpressed. Social workers who were aware of their clients' culture found it challenging to do otherwise than to 'tick boxes' during assessments, leading to detrimental outcomes for the child. Later the case would be finalised by the judge in the courts. There was no doubt that the family courts of justice's decisions could change the child/ren's future for better or for worse.

The accounts given in this research shows that it was difficult for black families to celebrate social work. What struck the researchers was their personalities more than the duty of protection. They branded them as people who possess arrogant attitudes, untouchables, and too powerful for comfort. Power balance was another factor that made parents feel inferior and intimidated. Some parents said social workers need to show empathy and humanity. The front liners in social work admitted that they did not need to use their judgement because the policies and legislation took away their human capability to assess the situation. Social work was a judgment based on ticking of boxes. In this research, it is evident that there is no harmony between parents and the practitioners, which increased difficulties in helping the child.

This research found that during child protection investigations parents felt that their opinions were irrelevant, regarding decisions made about their children. This argument was consistent with Zimring (2004), who argued that criminologists should not just accept public opinion but respect and engage with it.

9.11 Parents' Wishes and Feelings

Chapter 3 showed how wishes and feelings were a fundamental value for children. That drove the practitioners to pursue the mandate to fulfil and observe as stipulated in s1 (3) of the Children Act 1989. While it was vital to uphold children's wishes and feelings, there was also a need for a holistic approach that included the parents' wishes and feelings. Parents expressed that they wished well on their children's future, which they felt would be achieved effectively

through parental guidance. Some parent prioritised their Christian beliefs and desired to live with their children. Parents also, agreed on the removal of a child to care were a child in endangered, but still wished for closer involvement in their children's day-to-day affairs.

Parents also felt the social workers should understand that though parents might have shortcomings, they should be given full support. Some parents said they wished to cooperate with social workers during investigations, but that was difficult because of the professional, intimidating attitude. They said social workers created a hostile environment, which resulted in parents failing to engage. This led them to hide in the defensive cocoon fear of being incriminated. Parents also voiced that they felt undermined by the stakeholders and needed their feelings to be respected. During the investigation process parents wished they could be listened to and not judged before they were declared criminals. Parents perceived social workers were influencing judges, juries, the police, and the prosecutors due to fluency in speaking. The disadvantages parents head because of fear and failure to articulate their case through. They felt that social workers did not consider that they were dealing with their children who were other peoples' children but perceived as the property of the state.

9.12 Academics and Frontlines/ Conflict In Social Work

This study has revealed different perspectives of social workers in their various spheres of operations. Social workers practitioners and social work academics showed different views on why black children are disproportionately placed in the care system. Questions were asked on why black children were overrepresented in care leading into the youth criminal justice system.

An astonishing reply came from Professor Peters' findings which were contrary to some other claims. His arguments were based on historical claims and were just assumptions with no evidence that black children were overrepresented in care. In his discussion he suggested that the primary reason was deprivation and the environment where black people tend to dwell. However, the same author in his published articles a few years ago mentioned that black children were overrepresented in care due to racial discrimination.

Nevertheless, several researchers, such as Dominelli, (2019), strongly believed and evidenced that black children were overrepresented in social settings. Professor Peter's argument explained that his most recent findings confirmed overrepresentation was related to disparities in the areas where one lived. His research measured rates of child protection intervention mainly based on low areas affected by inequalities. Cowper and Harrington's social workers carried out a study in Glasgow, published in Professional Social work magazine, (2019), whose findings challenged Peters' claims. Their investigation was motivated by the disproportionately rising of black Nigerian children into care. These children resided in a primarily deprived Royston district, a white working-class area that accommodated asylum seekers. In that area, Africans were 2. 7% of the Glasgow population, yet their children under child protection were 28%. The statistics from the front lines confirmed disproportionate rates of black African children living in the same area.

The academics and the frontlines sent different messages about their profession. This research was more inclined to agree with the frontlines who experienced realities in their everyday

encounters, unlike academics. Aunty Anna's account says about 90 percent of care children in her setting were blacks. Prof. Alice also made a claim which suggested that it was more to do with deprivation than race. Bishop Joseph was working with 26 children, 22 were blacks and 4 white children. However, some academics view race as an equal factor as deprivation which caused removal of children into care disproportionally (Dominelli, 2019).

Dominelli, (2019) differed from her counterparts because she spent more time in the field as a social worker than others. Prof. Peter and other academics may have been subjected to social services in remote areas where black people were numerically insignificant. In this study poverty was not the major issue with the African families. They complained that they were misinterpreted and overlooked. Cowper and Harrington confirmed that the significant factors were failure to understand the African parenting approach, and their findings discounted some academic results such as Prof. Peter.

Sub-heading (7.21) highlighted the lack of parental voices within the African parents as one reason for being misunderstood. The academics revealed critical elements as socio-economic disparities and social work incompetence, whilst the practicing social workers suggested that it was about Euro-centric policies and racial bias.

9.13 Cultural Incompetence or Racism

Competence was a fundamental ability required for social workers when making assessments. Social workers were meant to interpret the law correctly in order to recognise the threshold criteria of significant harm (Searing, 2017). They were meant to strike the right balance in

judging a child's fate during abuse investigations. Some social workers were incompetent both in judgment and in interpreting regulatory laws and policies. That resulted in families bearing the consequences. Ahmed, 1994, Thanki, (1994), revealed how, in the UK, BME families were easily stereotyped. Case 3 of Victoria Climbié presented muddled views within the professionals, specifically the frightened child was believed to be respectful (pg. 220-222). Arthurworrey indeed misconstrued Victoria's condition, because the African culture does not portray frightened people as a sign of respect. The case of Victoria depicted a child who was abused both at home and within the system through the incompetence of practitioners. Largely, opportunities were presented to redeem Victoria Climbié, but all were missed due to blaming culture.

It was unfortunate that racism has gone beyond the point of making black people see themselves shielding abuse in avoidance of racial attacks. Henceforth, incompetence was fed from both ways where the white professionals ignored abused children as they feared to be labelled as racist.

There were grey areas between professional incompetence and racism in social work. Nevertheless, there remained some elements of racism concealed as cultural incompetence. This research addressed cultural incompetence as disguised racism. The research was drawing from the participants' interpretation of the social workers practices and attitudes. Social workers attitude to the black parents was branded as intimidating, hard of hearing, and too judgemental. All these claims do not fit cultural incompetence but impeccable racism. If cultural incompetence was a genuine reason for the overrepresentation of black children, then

it should have affected other cultures, such as Asians who were underrepresented in the social care system.

This research discounted the claim of Prof. Peter that cultural incompetence was attributable to the prevalence of African children in social care. Mixed race children also contributed a more significant percentage in care. This erased the theory of cultural incompetent since those children belonged to both cultures. Both cultures' influences had the potential of enlightenment concerning the social services' expectations over child safeguarding in England

Cultural incompetence in its hinging stereotype was a blindfolded –race perspective that dismissed cultural values. Labelling cultures and cultural incompetence were adopting labelling which is a racial element. Williams and Clark, (2015) comment on deracialising racism as a new approach that could make it difficult to mention racial experiences among young black people. Unlike the previous generations, discrimination and human abuses were done openly without remorse, and the modern dehumanisation was hidden within the systematic structures. Discrimination was discussed in different spheres such as the general public, media, and lawmakers, institutional discrimination and expressed in the school practices.

McGregor-Smith (2017) said how the UK government failed to name racism and was stereotyped as a strong racial connotation. Cultural incompetence was demonstrated by removing African children whereas their counterparts do not make any references of incompetence, particularly with Asians who were equally immigrants. The approach was

rooted in racism, which suggests that other people's ways were not appropriate. Nevertheless, the new breed of disguised racism as cultural incompetence was mainly related to institutions that affected the children.

9.14 Impact of Racism on African Children

Throughout this research, themes on slavery and colonisation featured more than expected. Smith et al. (2011) came up with new kinds of stresses that were racial and socially related. It was part of the institutionalised and historical ideologies which controlled behaviours, cultures, and norms of society. Racism added race-related stress on black people and other BME groups. This could be another factor that added to the black people's behavioural challenges. Racism was practiced in schools, workplaces, social work sectors and many other sectors. Parents complained against teachers and social workers' attitudes. This research included race-related and societal stress as some of the causations that influenced BaD contacts in parenting. Colonial mind set engraved in some African parenting could suggest parents were traumatised by historical events. The experiences of young people confronted by micro-aggression racism seemed not to be acknowledged by the stakeholders and welfare policymakers, Rolon-Dow, (2011). The system devalued black children by removing them from home to face prejudice in care, much of it affected the black boys.

9.15 The Tale of Black Boys as (Potential Care Candidates)

Stakeholders exaggerated high levels of incompetence in parenting within African families as mirrored by statistical measures. The research analysed some of the prejudiced black boys' agonizing experiences. Chapter 7 found that black boys were subjected to harsh discipline aimed at achieving parental set goals. Education was paramount with the African families and was profoundly stressed that left no room for failure. Failure was deemed a punishable offense. Cowper and Harrington pg.270 findings revealed that the African families had the indestructible promotion of education. The situation was more dare with African boys whose parents were the first immigrants than other black boys.

However, schools were essentially the trying places for black boys and exposed the extent they carried respectful attitudes to the teachers. The African parent had long established that adults were always right, which disarmed children to make complaints against schoolteachers. The parents administered their disciplinary measures as articulated in chapter 7. Regrettably, the parents have not been in an English school to understand school politics on BAME that labelled black children as offenders and unteachable (Hirschfield, 2008). Irvine, (1990) stated schools had become breeding grounds of mischief and a set to disconnecting children with their identity. That became obvious with the black children. Parents failed to support their children with homework because they were unacquainted with the British education system, and they also needed to balance their jobs patterns which consisted of shifts.

COVID-19 global pandemic evidenced the kind of jobs ascribed to these parents. Parents were invited to school meetings because their children failed to engage academically. It was inconceivable for parents to learn of the poor performance of their children and that was a punishable offence. Chapter 7 discussed that African parents crowned their children with different professions from young followed by vigorous push aimed to outperform peers. The authoritarian parenting approach was not always accepted by some boys. Unfortunately, the same parents with high expectations of their children did not support them particularly with homework or listening to children's problems.

One participant testified how she has been counselling several university students who were bitter with their parents for lack of support when they were at school. In some cases, they did not dare to report any abuse or ill-treatment because the parents did not believe them. From those views, they found their way through life without the assistance of parental support. Black parents failed to investigate any complaints the school claimed over their child because they always viewed teachers as always right. Parents' assumptions suggested they were suspicious that their children were trying to avoid schooling. The teachers talked down on blacks and when the child tried to protest, the parent would turn against the child. White parents did the opposite by challenging teachers, as revealed in the study of Prof. Bernard. Her studies exposed a white parent who challenged their child's teacher for giving their child's grades that were too low.

Due to the recent Covid-19 pandemic, debates were raised after GCSE and A level exams were cancelled and proposed to award pupils according to their predicted grades. The argument was that disadvantaged ethnic minorities pupils who were always underrated. They acknowledged the evidence, which pointed out that there existed stereotypes around black students who got lower predicted grades and their white counterparts. The national results exposed the corruption in marking down the black children because students were not identified by names but numbers.

Consequently, the black mothers could not dare to intercede for their children because of the stigmatisation and the label of 'angry black women.' The mothers were already vulnerable to the system as their children. In this research, the history of colonisations still impacted the African family negatively. It was presented on constraints the parents struggled to integrate with a society with constructed structures prohibiting fluid progression. Parents persuaded their children to be kind at school however the boys felt obligated to be kind to an unkind system. This study exposed that black people, particularly men, pay the price with his life and still bears the scars of the forefathers' wounds through the way they are perceived and treated by the systems. Furthermore, black men's scares are on the surface, but underneath were ongoing wounds of the past generations inflicted through slavery or colonisation.

Following, stigmatisation some black boys accepted the label 'bad boys' by translating it into the norm and tried to overcome abuse through rebellion. This study reveals that some African children's struggles start in their childhood through cultural traditions and structural contracts

at school. This study confirmed that the boy did not have rights or a voice. Chapter 7 demonstrated the challenges which haunted black children. The environment is set to fail black children as they go through belittling attitudes that knocks down their confidence. In respond to being rubbished the boys were overwhelmed psychologically and failed to fit, resulting in fighting back.

The application of parenting methods revealed its contribution to the delinquency of black children growing in the UK. Lack of dialogue between the parents and child and the remoteness of a parent before the child's teachers did not encourage good outcome. Parents defended themselves saying children did not understand that their parents were weary of the historical pain directly targeted to them. Because of that they had to show that they were on the side of the teachers. They had to agree with the teacher without questioning them.

Washington stated that African parents forced their children to write an apology letter to appease the teacher over trivial issues. Another parent said she had a secret visit from a black teacher from the school where her child was attending. The parent was told not to question the teacher or make any complaints because her child was on the verge of exclusion. She said she chose to be on the teachers' side from that time. Parents had to calculate the costs of confronting the school over unjust practices or intentionally play the fool.

The parents knew that they would not win the argument even if they were to take it through the courts, confrontations would be escalated. The child could be exposed to ill treatment and picked on, talked down till his/her confidence and self-esteem were destroyed. Chapter 5.14

discussed about a mother who befriended schoolteacher including administration staff to the extended of improving her education. The mother aimed was looking for acceptability for her and son. These are few of black parents' experiences and revealed the anxiety within the black community over the achievement of their children. Some pupils who confronted the unfairness at school were labelled by teachers violent and eventually led to school exclusions. These are the conducts which makes education system a structure that pushes children from school to prison. It was during the times of contentions between parents and child or school and child or parent, more of a triangle, became a potential setup for the interventions of social workers. In the event of social workers discovering harm on the child the likelihood of removal would be imminent a clear path to deviance behaviours. The findings from this study suggested that children separated from families lacked the moral guidance authority.

9.16 Path to Deviance

An African child's deviance path was not largely deprivation, absent fathers, and other known factors, but lack of communication between parents and children as revealed in this research. That included cultural differences and the conflict of the parents' values and norms on their children. In the Glasgow research, Cowper and Harrington's noted that the African children were so polite and calm. Further confirmation from Joan expressed that a social worker was astonished by how a 15-year-old boy was composed and subdued. Bishop Joseph also spoke of his social work colleagues who always preferred to work with black children because they

were mannered, the respectful conducts were noticeable. Analysing from the findings of this research, these social workers opted working with black families because no parent challenged them. In comparison to white parents, as findings of Professor Bernard, who said white mothers could confront the professionals and succeed. Henceforth the African children became easy subjects for bullying from other children. Eventually, the African children got to a breaking point where they could not take it anymore and reacted in any way they felt best. Sojoyner (2016) agued how socially constructed exclusions took a child from school to prison. This research supported the notion however, the stopping point was social care the worst fears of the parents. The African boys' eruptive deviant behaviours as a reaction to mistreatment was unlike the Chicago school deviance.

Chicago school deviants resulted from the social disorganisation of different context of circumstances. The boy expressed the inner pain, and some actions were a loud cry for attention. The first port of call was through the parents, who could not hear the boy's agonising cry due to their limitations. The parents' failure to understand worsened the situation and further drove the child away from normative values. Burke, (2018) said the youth drew the attention of others who were experiencing the same predicaments. This echoed with the African boy who formed his new subculture with other boys. Together the boy and friends unavoidably created a different option of values and norms, ended up with the opposite rejecting the mainstream expectations. Potential, that would raise high risk for the boy to affiliate with the gangs. Youth gangs followed patterns of the established traditions that came naturally to

respond to social disorganisations (Rodger 1988). The African boys were not associated with (Cohen, 1955) concept, which noted that youth were motivated by pleasure neither Merton's theories, assumed that gangs were motivated by a financial benefit. The black boys were seeking a way of escaping or an ear to listen to their cry. The black boys had no voice and help was remote for them. Their actions amplified their voices bitterly, unfortunately that earned them a new title, 'delinquency, or disobedience'.

Cohen, (1955) suggested that the working-class youth were not likely going to internalise the values and norms. Henceforth, the absent father's theory did not align with the African boys, who came from a communal setting. They are not short of male role models as they belong to a world of uncles and aunties. Chapter 7 stated that African families sent their children to trusted family or friends like uncles or aunts for cancelling and discipline when appropriate.

The black child failed to fit within cultures neither of the parents nor of the host country but floated between different cultures that included adapting to different friends. At this point, when the child's behaviour was out of control that increased conflict at home, and the state intervention was obvious. The boy's circumstances afford the practitioners' ticking all boxes and qualified him for child protection. Consequently, the reports from school would be unfavourable and directed them to be looked after children.

If discipline overshot the limits with evidence of wounds Child Protection Act will be triggered. The boy could begin a further marginalization journey bearing a new label, 'the care child' or 'looked after,' and his birth-assigned identity vanishes away. The adolescent could embark on

a journey, leading to uncertainties and becoming an additional number to children in the care statistics.

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9.17 Wilderness Journey

"*…and when they are now trying to protect a child from the parent what they are doing they are just taking the child into the wild beats in the street*"(Joyce).

This research has revealed the hopelessness encountered by the black boys, starting from home where they felt unsupported and discriminated at school. The parents' approach to education and discipline seemed to drive the child away into a defenceless and 'walk alone' journey. As the situation heightens, the children start truanting which could lead to school expulsion. Unfortunately, that will draw the attention of social workers and lead into removing children into care taking children into unfamiliar territories. That is what this study defines as a wilderness journey experiences.

The journey commences from the time investigations would be carried out, placing into care, and possibly continue for life. Sadly, there is high likelihood of looked after children losing their identity, norms, culture, beliefs, and many other values, and even family members. There are three care settings for looked after children that includes, adoption, foster care and care home. Adoption was one of the best options for under 5-year-olds, that gave a child a permanent home. Unfortunately, that is not easily presented to black children who are said they are 6 times more unlikely to be adopted as discussed in chapter 3.4. However, black children

were easily placed in foster homes where they experienced rejection at higher levels of humanity. For instance, the early stages of placement, foster parents were not allowed to make any choices on behalf of the child such as cutting hair. The expects' argument was that such decisions were made to avoid bond formation between a child and the foster family. February 2018, Daily Mail newspaper published an articular exposing the restrictions imposed on foster carers on children in their custody. They were prohibited from showing affection to the child, that included refraining from hugging and suggesting haircut for the looked after. Such a law reveals inhumane to a vulnerable child, who in some cases might have seen the foster parent hugging their children. Awkwardly the child might not understand other than interpreting it as being worthless to receive affection. Sadly, it will be worse where the foster parents keep dogs or cats, as pets' owners normally show affection by cuddling or stroking on their pets. The impact would be great to young children who most like will not understand the governing legislations and polices. This thesis endorses Professor Alice's opinion that suggests that there was no morality about the government and that the state had lost the human story.

Additionally, in that case, children's feelings and wishes were not considered, and this might interpret it as discrimination in a place they assumed to be their home. The children would lose the human touch and felt undeserving. Indeed, the UK government depicts a state with no morals and human story as it treated its children as objects or accessories with no feelings and wishes. On the other hand, foster parents' human instinct was suppressed by being prohibited to show affection to children in their care. Child abuse suspicions were raised against foster

parent who had kissed a baby's tummy after a nappy change. This reveals laws which are out of touch with humanity and black children are the victims of such, since this thesis has established the overrepresentation of black children in care.

Lack of establishing bonds between children and foster parents encourages breaking of placements. This caused instability in the development of the children and that would drive them into criminality. It has been suggested in this research that lack of bonds with family has a relationship with deviancies. Some children were detached from normal life as they lived in the care system. As the children in care system cruised in their wilderness life experiences, some were led into deviance and ended up in youth criminally justice systems including mental institutions.

Professor Peter assumed that black children stayed in care longer than their counterparts, which was most likely after assessing the trend of how black people were treated in general. The removal of such a child caused further distraction of the remaining bonds. It was just one conflict that had the potential to destroy all attachments and relationships.

Findings from this study suggested that children from one care placement move encountered difficulties forming lasting bonds and found it hard to attached to their fostered parents, schools and other social activities and were prone to delinquency, as discussed chapter 7.

9.18 Deviance Behaviours

The BAME group offending behaviours were primarily carried out by Black African and Caribbean children, in comparison to Asians. Chapter 7 found that the child who is attached to gang members will easily lose their birth assigned identity. Without identity, this could push them further away from mainstream norms and values in pursuit of belonging. Black youth stabbings and gang crimes became common in black communities. That contributed to Black children overrepresentation in the justice system. These problems were drawn from low parenting accounts, moral decline, deprivation or disparities, or adolescent rebelliousness. This was an enlightenment for the social factors that played a role to the black youth. The following points were identified to be contributing factors to first immigrant African children's delinquency:

Home: child experiences

- Lack of dialogue with parents, could not go home and complained about school.
- Cultural clash, the child floated between cultures
- Blamed and not trusted for outside accusations, e.g., if school complained
- No explanations were made to create the child understand certain stances
- Lack of support with school due to parents working patterns and language/accent barrier
- Unachievable expectations
- No room for failing

- Felt intimidated

When a child leaves home after the above experiences, he/she find it hard to trust the first adults in their lives, parents, and teachers.

School

- Bullied by other pupils.
- Discriminated: pupils/teachers/dinner ladies.
- Labelled as an underachiever.
- Picked on and down talked
- Punitive system
- Culture clashed
- Failed to fit/trust
- They constantly feared school suspension/expulsion
- Stigmatised/ stereotyped
- Discriminated
- Deprived
- Accused
- Racism

Police

- Suspected
- Stopped and searched

It was striking that Black boys were alleged to operate in groups; however, this research could not establish the claim from any existing literature. Auntie Anne's observations that were not validated anywhere else could be through her long years of experiences in her various posts in children's social work. It has been widely documented in both existing literature and the current research that Africans operate within a communal environment, inferring that they were not individualistic. Also, black boys' grouping could reflect a hopeless or aimless situation considering the previous discussions that pointed out that they were overrepresented in unemployment and school exclusion.

This research revealed how parents were disappointed by what social work has become, and it seemed that social workers had lost their first calling of caring and supporting families but appeared to lack empathy. Their first call was a call of care and protection, and this was to embrace all human beings, not just to serve one and destroy the other. This was expressed by the parents that they were criminalised and ignored in the process. The youth's structural behaviours reflected independence from parental guidance as they were made to embrace an alternative family which is the state or social services. Wherever any alternative was presented, the chances of getting either were fifty, fifty and these children left with the idea of choosing between home and care. The alternative option was contrary to parental guidance, which led them to be the state's children until age 18. Most likely outcomes of these children resulted in

conflict with the law as suggested by the statistics of care leavers consequences, their alternative 'parent' the state turned against them and imposed penalties on them.

The problem presented in this research was the approach the African parents presented for their offspring's best interest. Enforcement of education, future-focused and extensive boundaries, training which toughened them prepared them to face the harsh world. The parental discipline was meant to deter the children from the punitive hand of the state. The Africans believe in the suffering of today for the benefit of the joy of tomorrow. In the interviews on the definitive word was,

"If we do not punish our children today, the state is awaiting with its heavy hand and unforgiving and merciless heart to put it on our children, (Joseph)."

Parents took punishment as an effective deterrence basing on their personal experiences and how it impacted them positively. Though others opposed it, some parents still viewed the importance of the values and beliefs supporting the call for physical punishment. This research unveiled that parent were the victims of the system particularly when their parental rights were revoked and had no say over their children.

9.19 Policies and Legislation

The study showed that the negatives outweighed the benefits of removing children into care. Furthermore, cultural incompetence could be window dressing dissolving institutional racism

debates. On the other hand, political leaders seemed to be unsympathetic, and no motivation or political determination to attend to black people's needs. The lack of political drive led the politicians to place the interest and needs of the black people low in the allocation of national or local government budgets. Another contributory factor was that a small number of black people were represented in the ranks of power to intercede for their people. This qualifies to be called institutional racism. Arguably, there were barriers purposely put to block black people opportunities to reach high positions. Black youths were seen to be blocked from accessing facilities and educational provisions that would benefit them in future and enable them to contribute to the national causes. This would be unattainable due to school suspensions and other factors such as placed in care where progress and development were minimum. Unequal opportunities were given to them and hindered them from developing skills and knowledge to become self-reliant. It was discussed earlier that black boys were perceived to lack motivation yet desire to succeed but aspired to engage in drug abuse and delinquency behaviours. This contributed to black youths being overrepresented in the youth justice and mental health services in comparison to their white counterparts.

Black boys are characterised by conflict, the pressure largely amounts when coupled up with home tensions and external hostility such as discriminatory experiences at school. This research reflected that education was high on the agenda in an African family, which was one of the factors that put parents and children at odds. The research confirmed that there were failings of black children due to racial grounds. Both approaches are punitive to the boys that's home

disciplinary measures and school punitive procedures are liable for destroying the boys' psychological, emotional and many more. School exclusion was commonly known to affect black boys as suggested in chapter 5.

The African boy did not have it easy in life as it was exposed in this study. As a young boy one failed to interpret tough training from the parents possible ignited tensions that directed to state intervention. Some parents weighed between applying or avoiding disciplining children, due to the fear of the authorities. For example, were one child fell out with parents, that probable lead to state intervention, and that could trigger a high possibility of removing all siblings, based on the likelihood of harm.

Likelihood of harm policies should be subject to scrutiny and review, especially where the harmed child displayed provoking behaviours. The removal of the other siblings because of one child's harm was a practice to be reviewed and called for alterations. Some other factors attributed to African children removal in numbers was deprivation and poor housing.

This research disputed the above notions because deprived areas had little to do with African immigrants, for they were not easily qualified for housing due to immigration restrictions on public fund recourse. The research went on to explore how some black boys respond to their predicaments.

The study found out that rebellious was a route to escape from pressure at home and rejection, inequality and labelling school as deduced from chapter 5.16. Rebellion was a way to freedom, and care was conceptualised as place for freedom based on the findings on manipulations. This

study defined rebellion as an unconventional way black boys communicated their pain, distress, or displeasure. This thesis contest against social care as a cure of deep-rooted inherent problems of the black boys' agony. What could have appeared as help for black boys has been pushing them to brush against the law resulting imprisonment.

This research could not support the factors which point to cultural incompetents as the main reason African children were overrepresented in the care system suggested in chapter 5, but evidently racism.

This research suggested that Africans were affected more than any ethnicities in the circumstances, such as disparities, discriminations, and stigmatisation, including school exclusions. This thesis claimed that racism was the mother of all factors against black people exposed in their experienced them. For example, if black people were allocated a social house, they would be likely be placed in troubled neighbourhoods, where deprivation was prevalent. If a crime was committed somewhere, the first suspect would be a black young man, as documented in Lammy's Review (chapter 3.4). Lammy's Review revealed that black youth boys were overrepresented in custody and youth criminal justice. The list continues, and black youths were the subject of all the negatives and that could be interpreted as racism from both individuals and institutions.

9.20 Transactional Relationship

Some participants mentioned the inefficiency of the care system based on the transactional relationship. The relationship was not a commitment to the child, but for the employing organisation. Children in care were looked after by organizations which did not actually constitute a family. Children were cared by workers who were salaried which makes a big difference with home care where one had a full attachment with their parents and siblings. There was always a difference in caring for a child between home where care comes instinctively, and organisations care goes by reading policies and regulations. These were subjected to change when contested against. Organizational care is manly on paperwork which was said it consumed much of the time at the expense of children. The children in care were found to lack attachment or bond with individuals which is a procedure to criminality and that had a greater impact on black children. There has been an ever-increasing tension between the black people and social services. The black children were always pushed around like parcels from one care home to the other as suggested in chapter 5. Care providers chose children based on behaviour of the child and how much the child could bring to the organization. The looked after children have a price tag and make profit care providers.

Summary

Sadly, the chapter establishes unimaginable fears of black families regarding their children under child protection. The parents felt uncertain about their parenting methods which were subjected to judgement and scrutiny. Much of the parents' fears were on the fate of their children in the future particularly when they are exposed to state intervention. Additionally, discriminatory environment in the UK, increased the levels of indecisions to raise children where life was not equal. Due to fear of the state agencies some parents opted to abdicate their valued and respected ways transmitted to them from previous generations and created a new parenting technique defined as BaD. BaD was found to be a product of fear caused by social structures within child safeguard.

The chapter clarified the different opinions between frontline social workers and those social workers who are in the academic; regarding causations of over representations of black children in care. The academics held the view suggesting that deprivation was the main problem whereas, the frontlines argued that it was due to cultural incompetence, workload and biasness of the practitioners. However, the research contested against professionals, views because in many places the black people have never been the majority in number. This was consistent with the Glasgow research on Nigerian families who were considerably fewer, but their children were disproportionately more in social care. The thesis also disagreed with the reasons of the frontlines which suggested that cultural incompetence was the main factor for high rates of African children in care. In this chapter it was recognised that social workers are taught on

cultures, but caseloads subjected to frontlines were found to be a valid reason for black children disproportionate placed in care.

Sadly, this chapter confirms that the black boys have the highest level of system victimisation driving them into rebellion. Unfortunately, rebellion contributes to the criminal justices' involvement of which places black children disproportionately.

The chapter concludes by expressing that care system is not ideal for African children since it's a transactional relationship and prohibits children to be attached to other human beings. The following chapter is concluding on what this thesis has analysed and found.

Chapter Ten: Summary, Recommendation, and Conclusions

10.0 Introduction

This thesis has been constructed from the previous research and the data assembled through interviews. The main purpose was to understand the fears of parenting within the African diasporic community and the perceptions of the state agencies in child protection in the UK. The thesis has analysed the parenting practices of the previous generation of African parents and how it has influenced their parenting. The thesis expounded on the impact of African parenting methods which conflict with British standards expectations. It has also examined the views of professionals and revealed some factors which drive black children into criminal justice system. This was attained by applying and snowballing technic drawing upon analysis of qualitative data with African parents and professionals in child protection. It has exposed that putting African children into care had no positive outcomes.

Basing on the interviews with parents and professionals, the study revealed the high demands of African parents on their children which were found to be unrealistic. Also, not consistent with the support they afford their children. The parent interviewees revealed parenting methods that bordered between an authoritarian and authoritative parenting style that led their children, particularly sons, easily repelled the discipline. This approach was a liability to the boys who were already born with a stigmatised of being a black boy. Impartation of values, norms, and beliefs within the African culture were the driving force for Africans parenting. Unfortunately, that became the sources of conflict with children and social workers. The children were coming

from a background where they were seen and not heard. Conversely, the literature review in this thesis indicated that if such practices were experienced in the country of origin where such cultures were upheld, the children would not resist because it would be expected as the norm.

Regrettably, it had adverse impact on African children raised in the UK. African parenthood practices were confronted with the following challenges.

- Overstated and unrealistic demands of parents on their children
- Enforced cultural beliefs, values, and norms on children
- Children resisted the parental methods, and that instigated tensions with parents
- Parents felt disrespected by their children
- No clarity on child rearing afforded to the parents by the state agencies
- Parents conflicted on cultural differences of the host country
- Parents felt threatened by social workers
- Lack of balance of power between parents and professionals
- Parents had no voices/opinion.

This has expressed that participant strongly believed that respecting for elders was a necessity within cultural norms and prepared children to be good citizens in the outside world. Parents argued on the impact of the way they were parented that it yielded good results though it is condemned in the UK as abuse. Physical punishment was seen as a deterrence to future deviant behaviour was first on the agenda of parenting. The thesis confirms that Africans had higher disciplinary thresholds opposed to the UK and this has become the basis of conflict on levels

of disciplining thresholds. Other than following a proved and parenting method of the previous generation parents. The parenting method the parents are exposed to are said to social constructed. For instance, the black child had to be toughed for the outside world which was not conducive for them. As confirmed in this thesis that Africans were more concerned about the future of their children and that influenced their parenting approach to deter bad behaviours or happenings in the future. The black African parents argued that, considering, that they had to work ten times more than their counter parts, to them good outcomes are easily achieved through authoritarian parenting method. However, to avoid the interferences of state agencies in is important for parents to lower their disciplinary threshold into authoritative style.

This has reflected that The Children Act 1989, which governs the UK child protection, has a grey area in disciplining children. Unlike the Scottish government, which recently abolished physical chastisement, "*Scotland has become the first country in the UK to make it a criminal offence for parents to smack their children"; BBC* News (3 October 2019). There was no written law that suggested parents should not smack children. Had the law been clear on child chastisement that would have helped the parents on their parenting endeavours than to be leaving them limbo. If guidelines on disciplining of a child were clear, possible that would show a decline of looked after children. Information on not to use items during discipline should go out to the communities who believe in 'spare the rod and spoil the child' practices. If such information is not shared that will justify participants who said social workers are there to punish us and are hunting for our children.

However, the thesis made known that some participants condemned physical punishment and resented it when it was upon them during childhood. Though Selina was convinced that it was a necessary 'vaccine' against delinquency she states that it helped her in her early.

This thesis highlighted that the African parenting technique was misinterpreted as abuse, whilst the parents viewed it as an effective approach, particularly disciplining children. The findings indicated gaps in understanding one another between the African families and state agencies. Participants perceived a lack of empathy among social workers, whose attitude was interpreted as intimidating during child protection investigations. The parents pleaded for a need to build a good rapport between the parents and professionals and that could foster a warm approach without a suspicious attitude. The thesis identified that removing children from home had a high possibility of separating the entire family, as demonstrated in Case Study2 pg.218.

However, social services were aware of the increasing numbers of children taken into care and they worked hard to minimise the numbers. Some social workers confirmed that it was more difficult to remove children from home into the care system than leaving them with family. They spoke of the several meetings that occur before the removal of a child and later finalised by the courts. Social workers claimed that before a child was taken into care, they looked for alternative placements with relatives or close friends, which they called kinship care (Department of Health, 2011; Farmer et al. 2013). O'Brien (2012) confirmed that there was a rise in kinship care placements which reflected the state's increasing recognition of the need for a child to be established and maintain close ties with family and develop naturally. In

England, kinship care was defined in terms of care with relatives such as grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, and friends (Department for Education, 2011; p. 7). Indeed, this was a positive move in child protection, but this alternative might not have been appropriate to migrant families who left their kinship abroad. The African diasporic families could face a further disadvantage, which might be another reason why their children were overrepresented in care. At the same time, their counterparts were spread across different forms of care. Due to data limitation in this thesis, no information was found concerning African children in kinship care and this suggest future research. Lack of such services for the African children contributed to their overrepresentation in the care system.

The thesis exposed the imbalance of power between professionals and their clients during safeguarding investigations. The parents' interviews characterised social workers as bad people labelling as intruders especial when interfering during child abuse. Both sides of participants saw the growing need for parents to understand the system of their host country. In this thesis, African parents were portrayed as resisting their host country's laws and refusing change. Without changing or altering their actions, it might be difficult for them to work together with the state agencies.

Indeed, in the UK, the necessity for parenting support programmes was identified as an essential tool to enhance immigrant families' parenting skills (Smetana, 2017). Although Baker et al. (2011) stated however, that the state agencies failed to recruit families into such programs. This service was mainly afforded to those who were caught up on the negative side of the law.

The state was recommended to extend these services to everyone through forceful advertisement (Baker et al., 2011). Social workers services to clients should be warm and approachable without implying that parents have already failed but suggesting new techniques for parenting the new generation. The attitude could also invite parents and include parents from different backgrounds to share their experiences while learning and teaching one another. Within that interaction, parents would feel they were contributing other than they were told how to parent. Fundamentally, the method of encouraging parents to interact, should also include British law's expectation on child-rearing stressing on some parenting methods which may lead into criminality. Parents expressed how their children are conflicted with contradicting voices, which are social workers and parents. The thesis exposed the discord from both parties and called for parents and professionals to sing from the same hymn sheet. Indeed, the need for further research was fundamental to the relationship between parents and their children. Parents were surrounded by different stressful challenges as they tried to adjust to their responsibilities and roles in parenting while adjusting to a new country.

Parental authority was found to be a good moral compass that deterred children from engaging in criminality. Removal of children from home was not seen as the best solution for this group of participants but working in a more tolerant partisanship approach. The social workers acknowledged that they worked in partnership with parents, but the imbalance of power incapacitated them.

Deducing from the data, social workers were meant to reason and understand parents' pressures who were aiming to push their children to achieve. There was also a need for social services and other authorities to become more culturally compassionate and competent. The African youths who grew up in the UK had a different perspective from their African parents who grew up in Africa. Unfortunately, it was the high levels of threshold that brought the African family to the notice of stakeholders. To strengthen diversity, culture and inclusion, the social services could include favourable policies from the African Charter, for example, children respecting their parents and elders. The study found that there is lack of information about child rearing which embraces immigrants according to the British expectations. As the government liaises with schools and addresses safeguarding policies for asylum parents and children in the early stages, child protection policies could be put together with beneficial information for asylum parents. Parents expressed the need for professionals to support the parental perception over emphasis of respecting parents and responsibilities in line with the African Charter.

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The thesis recommended change for African parenting approaches, particularly physical punishment. Parents should have time to explain things to their children rather than quickly getting into discipline, as reflected in this research. Fear was found to dominate the African community as children feared their parents and parents feared social workers.

This thesis found that the police associated black boys with gangs and thugs, that polarised a relationship between black youths and police. The thesis saw a growing need for educating the

police against being biased. As much as the social workers were required to be culturally competent, the same view should apply to the police, particularly where they labelled and stigmatised black boys. As much as the social services have initiated working partnerships with parents and other state agencies such as psychologists, their involvement should give full participation. On many occasions, Dr Rose mentioned how her involvement in keeping the family together was abruptly discontinued due to lack of funds from social services or the social workers' negative attitude towards their clients. This was consistent with Dr Joan's views that social workers felt insecure and intimidated by other professionals, resulting in them terminating others' input. Financial resources were the limiting factor for helping families stay together when faced with abuse allegations. Dr Rose suggested the importance of involving a family therapist could help in building family relationships. Much of the conflict within families was triggered by trivial anticipations such as parents requiring respect from their children. Employing a family therapist could potentially increase the levels of harmony between children and parents.

There was also a need to carry out a pilot study where support workers could support parents who conflicted with their children. There could be risk of possible harm to a child where a parent was monitored. The project could be cheaper than taking a child to a care home. The advantages could outweigh the negatives, such as the benefits of keeping the family together, which would increase attachment and bonding levels. As discussed before, it was found that children attached to parents had fewer chances of engaging in criminality. Removing children

from home had lasting effects, such as failure to keep the relationship in the future, as Dr Joan expressed. An alternative to removing the child into care was to support the parents at home as a model followed by the Hertfordshire children's social services (Appendix 2).

Academics and frontline social workers seemed to look at things differently regarding the causes of children's removal into the care system. Information originating from front liners was not consistent with the one that came from academics. That calls for both groups to coordinate or work closely with one another. This study recommends social services to engage with the African communities and understand their needs. The thesis suggests for social services to safeguard children without destroying the families or leaving the families in a worse of position.

This thesis outlined tensions between parents and professionals that stemmed from child safeguarding breaches. Parents viewed professionals' interferences as intrusion into private family life whilst the parents were viewed as child abusers.

This research was based on the interviews from both parents and expects in pursuit to causes related to overrepresentation of black children in the care system that led to their disproportionate rate in the criminal justice system. The research's focus explored the policies and legislation context, which governed the professionals in removing children from home. The analysis of literature immensely highlighted a broader depiction of child safeguarding. This simultaneously underlined the adverse experiences of BAME families, as well as black children's struggles in the care system, which were:

- The tension between parents and professionals
- Cultural clash
- Demonisation and stigmatisation of parents
- Lack of trusting one another (parents and social workers)
- Social workers lacking empathy
- The BaD only option for parents to avoid conflict with social services
- Likelihood of harm

Furthermore, this research emphasised black children's overrepresentation in the social care system attributed to many causations that included parenting standards. The diasporic African parents were seen as squeezed between two cultural expectations of child-rearing: one from their home country and the other from their hosting country, the UK. Findings showed that there was nothing stipulated for African immigrants related to British child-rearing expectations. Parents were disappointed with the demonisation of their effective parenting methods as they contested its positive results reflected through their lived experiences. The research underlined the tension between the social services and parents, where trust was not accorded to either side. Parents saw social workers as a system intentionally set up expressly against the back families and destroy their identity.

Relationships were contentious for both sides as black families were stigmatised and stereotyped. Social work was viewed as a profession of hard hearing people who had no time to explain to parents what they were doing other than harvesting their children. Social workers'

explanation was limited to their declaration that they had the child's interest and not the parent's. Interviewed social workers admitted that it was a work guided by stipulated guidelines and did not involve common sense. Some social workers said that they felt conflicted between reality and the policies and the regulations they followed. One of the few primary reasons for disproportionate black children in the care was the practitioners' cultural incompetence from the social work perspective. The social workers' academics gave a different view of why black children were overrepresented in care, and they argued that this was caused by deprivation. They also supported the idea that removing children into care was not the best option because of the outcome. The outcome had the care children disproportionately placed in the criminal justice system, mental institutions, and more likely to be unemployed. Some criminologists and psychologists proposed that the care leavers were disproportionate in the social justice system due to broken bonds and lack of attachments. These children had difficulties forming bonds and trusting anyone. Criminological theorist suggested lack of attachment was one of the factors which contributed to delinquency behaviours. In contrast, the social workers were ticking all boxes, which justified the removal of children from home as suggested in this research.

The thesis has highlighted the need for more consideration of minimising the breaking of bonds and attachments. This argument mirrored, that social workers were not just focused on the present need but also incorporated children's future likelihood. The same way they employed the likelihood of harm within the family setup, the same should apply to a child who entered

the care system. The statistics of care leavers who end up in criminality suggest care system is subjected to likelihood of harm. The research established that the care children were disproportionately placed in the youth criminal justice system and mental hospitals and are disadvantaged in the education, health, and employment sectors. This study revealed that the likelihood of deviance was high in the care of children.

However, there should not have been double standards for the likelihood of harm effect to a child whether at home or in care. This research highlighted the need for social workers to focus on the significant than likelihood of harm. They argued that disciplining one deviant child should not be the basis for removing all the children from home. Children were different, and the parents responded according to the needs or behaviour of an individual child. Significant harm was evidence-based, whereas the likelihood of harm was a claim founded on the suspicion that the parent/s could hurt the other children. This research highlighted the need for policy makers to revisit and alter such laws on the likelihood of harm. Further studies should be conducted on the outcomes of children who were taken into care based on the likelihood of harm particularly in connection with physical chastisement.

From the findings in this study, five points were presented that were related to disproportionate causation.

1. The tension between the parents and their children as a result of children failing to adhere to respecting their elders. This could leave parents in an awkward situation where they opt for BaD.

2. The odd relationship between schoolteachers and their pupils potentially resulted in the child's suspension.
3. The distrustful relationship between parents and social workers; and the lack of power balance between the parties.
4. The relationship between the child and social workers due to the lack of family bonds and attachments later resulted in criminality.
5. The legislation and policies were Euro-centric and failed to accommodate African cultures. It was primarily found that the system portrayed care and protection, which was not the reality as reflected by the predicaments these children faced in the care system.

Disproportionate numbers of black children are present in the care system and black care leavers and the youth criminal justice system in the UK ((The Care Leavers Association (2014) Fitzpatrick (2016), (The Laming Review, 2016). Cultural conflicts between parents and their children and those of the state agencies were the other causations that led to the removal of children into the care system. After intense analysis, this thesis suggests that racism had a greater influence of the overrepresentation of black children in care.

Racism was evident in school exclusion which was mainly targeted to black boys. The results were based on the interviews with the parents and professionals who were involved in child safeguarding. Clearly, this thesis has shown that both first-generation diasporic African parents and children are subjected to cultural clashes in the UK, resulting in unsolicited social services

interferences. The thesis highlighted the struggles exposed to the black children, particularly boys, that they were conflicted both at home and school. The combination of the African parents' expectations and disciplinary methods was overstated for a child's comfort. The social detriments within the African communities, inequalities in schools, and social care systems overloaded a black boy's disadvantages. However, this thesis could not explore much of black children's predicaments in the care system, resulting in their overrepresentation in the youth criminal justice system.

However, the thesis suggests the need for African parents to allow their children to express their feelings and opinions. Matsueda (1992) stated that some parents from ethnic minority or lower-class families labelled their children. Withdrawal of food could not be applied as punishment other than abuse. A dictatorship approach had the potentiality of increasing tension in the family. Consistency was needed to support the children so that they may achieve their expected goals.

10.1 Further Research

This research has identified the need to engage in more robust qualitative research on African young adults and above, especially on their perception of how they were parented. This age group would reflect the true feelings of African children who were raised in the UK. This could help the professionals to distinguish between abuse and tough love presented in the form of discipline. Further studies should be conducted on how the African diasporic families felt about

raising their children in this country. Lack of kinship was also found to contribute overrepresentations of black children in care. This suggest further studies to be carried out on this matter. That would enlighten the professionals to fully understand and help families effectively.

This research also underlined the life journey of a black boy in the western world. That included the expectations of the family and the label the society had unrealistically placed on them. Additionally, they were found to be prone to school suspension or exclusion. The relation between black parents and their sons and the schools was found wanting. Further research was called for to improve this relationship. Professor Peter raised a vital suggestion that the overrepresentation of black children in the care was related to the fact that children could be facing a delay in being discharged from the care system, hence making an accumulation of black children in the system. If so, why? This could be analysed by comparing between the length of time black and white children stay in care. As suggested in this research, the black boys were an easy target of exclusion. Further research should be carried on ascertaining the reasons and work to minimize such occurrences. This study has discussed that educators should be more tolerant towards black pupils.

10.2 Conclusion

The thesis has highlighted that all the tensions found around care system and youth criminal justice was centred on parenting failures, including the Cameron's speech. This thesis chapter discussed different factors that contributed to the overrepresentation of Black children in care,

such as parenting practices, conflict between parents and their children, deprivation, disparities, stigmatisation, and social workers' cultural incompetence. Overrepresentation of care leavers was attributed to a lack of bonds with parents and not attached to a particular place. Participating parents were more apprehensive about their relationship with social workers and its impacts on their children. On the other hand, the professionals sent different signals on the disproportionate placement of African children in the care system

This thesis highlighted the need to keep children with family, which was also a fundamental requirement of The Children Act 1989. The thesis aimed to encourage social workers to be sympathetic to African families and to understand challenged faced by parents in their parenting endeavours. However, it was concluded that more attention was needed in respect to power dynamics between social workers and African parents. It was also determined that the impact of negatives outweighed the benefits of the care system. Henceforth, attention was needed towards the African boys, who felt let down by parents and the system which should protect them. African parents felt that critical decisions were made for their children without their involvement and the expects exaggerated their parenting incompetence. Generally, race was found to have been a significant factor in the easy removal of black children as they felt not to be heard and intimidated. Largely, the fears of African parents were found to play a part in the way they raised their children. Although social workers' cultural incompetence had a significant effect on the conflict they had with African families, this had been outweighed by racial prejudice. More importantly, this research suggests that one of technique to minimise the

gap of African children in care was supporting children at home including parents. Institutional racism was found to contribute to the removal of black children into care. This research concludes that all these activities were socially constructed and victimise the black families. The conclusion suggested that the interference of the social services in parenting contributed to the knife culture among black youths.

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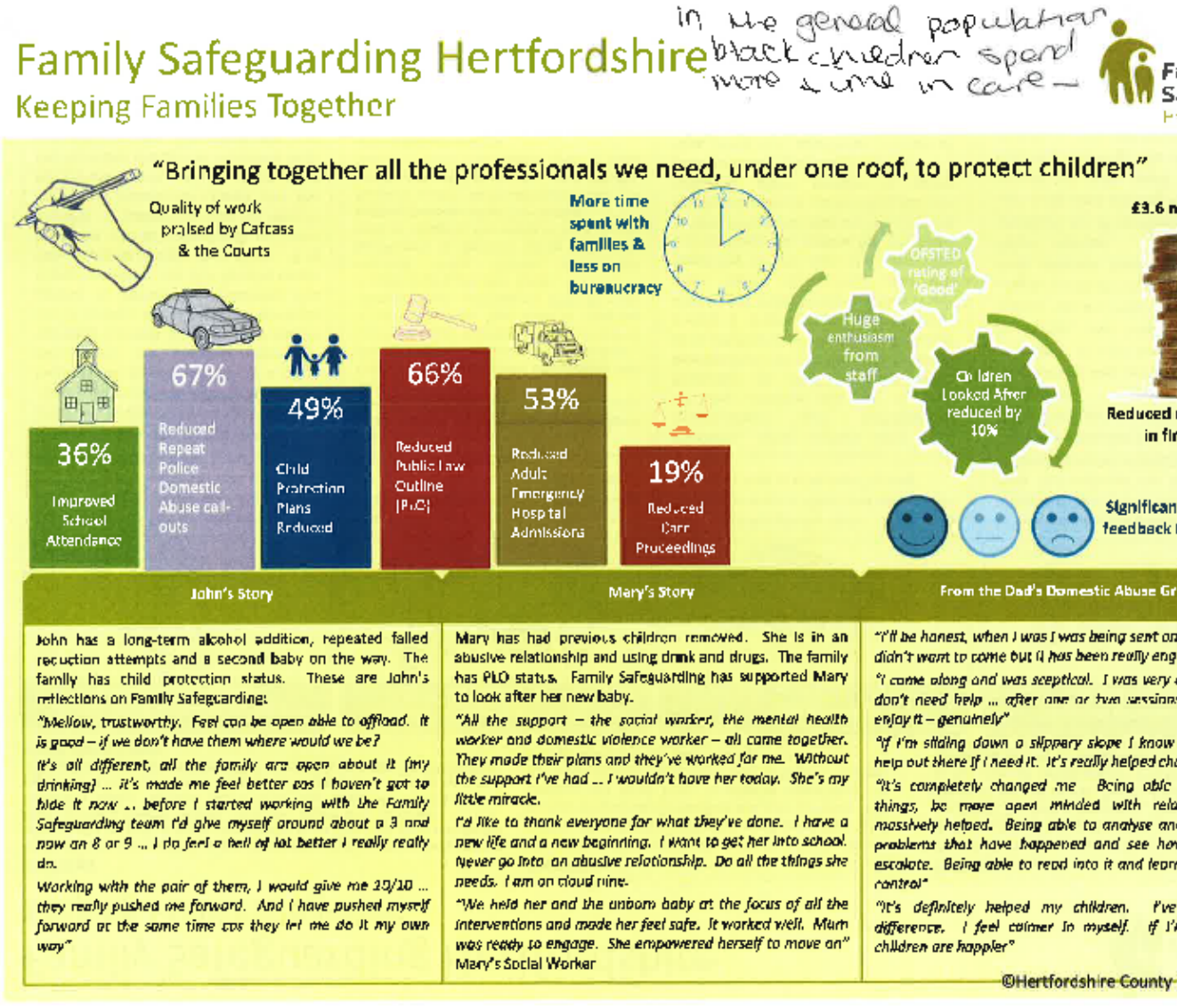
Appendix 1 – Ghanaian Social Workers Association

Appendix 2 – Family Safeguarding Hertfordshire



Advert

Section 1

"*…children in Africa, the general view is that those who are raised in my culture, are, are they, they, they do respect, you know. They respect their parents they respect adults" (Joyce).*

"*…That they should learn to respect and, respect the elderly and they should learn to respect one another, and ah they should also, learn to respect their neighbours", (Sandra).*

"...West Africans are raised to respect parents", (Dr John)

Section 2

"…my duties as a child was to behave, respect to honour them. Expected to be obedient whether being my parents or uncles as long as one is an adult. I perceive my auntie as a mother; she still has that significant role of advice", (Sandra).

Section 3

"*…the other thing is that the child, should not have challenge or like raise, or raise your voice when you are speaking to your parents you should always, respect them", (Lilly).*

"...It's for their future if a child doesn't know how to respect their parents, in fact charity begins at home. If a child doesn't know how to respect their parents at home, they will not

know how to respect people in the community they will not know how to respect the teacher in the school", (Tola).

Section 4

"...within our Black community is that children are raised expected to respect their parents. Respect I mean if parents say go and do this, it is expected that the child do challenge`The relationship between the parents and children, they look at it as respect", (Molly).

"...so, the African culture do believe in the biblical, a spare the rod and soil the child, so, it is not unusual for a child, to be smacked or probably, the more appropriate word could actually, be beaten", (Lena).

"...however they did not shy away from disciplining me using physical chastisement if the need arose, or scolding to show their disapproval of bad behaviour", (Sarah).

"...We stick to the bible, but the rod now, if you are going to injure the child in the name of correction or sparing the rod, for me that's not the way it goes", (Selina).

Section 5

"...I grew up I never knew anything called a right, these rights are against parents they are poisoners", (Lilly).

"…obviously, the word of God can change people even though you cannot apply a forceful rod on the flesh, the spiritual rod is much better which is the word of God. That what we will use, the word of God is very powerful to change people's hearts and behaviours", (Hilda).

"…so, the African culture do believe in the biblical, a spare the rod and soil the child, so, it is not unusual for a child, to be smacked or probably, the more appropriate word could actually, be beaten", (Lena).

"…We stick to the bible, but the rod now, if you are going to injure the child in the name of correction or sparing the rod, for me that's not the way it goes", (Selina).

"…the bible, I am a Christian, so, obviously I believe in what the bible says, the bible say, is am, it talks about the rod of correction, so I strongly believe that, there is a place, there is still a place for it", (Sandra).

Section 6

"*…Within the Children Act because, the Human Rights Act applies to them. This is interesting because the African Charter of Rights has clear duties on them for children as well as rights doesn't it. The African Charter on Children's Rights", (Chris)*.

"*…In the African culture is usually the whole family, the extended family. For example, if I go to the shops and I see my sister's child misbehaving I can actual challenge the child and the child can actually listen to me within the African contest", (Dr John)*

Section 7

"*…In the African culture is usually the whole family, the extended family. For example, if I go to the shops and I see my sister's child misbehaving I can actually challenge the child and the child can actually listen to me within the African contest", (Dr John)*

"…During the time I was growing up rarely did parents hurt children in the name of discipline through physical chastisement", (Selina).

"…We do use harsh discipline like hitting the kids which is really unfair when a child is a teenage and so on", (Tola).

Section 8

"… but I think for me, I think there are, probably better approaches, to discipline kids than, just the physical, just that just how I view things", (Washington).

"…I don't support any angry parent to discipline the child. I think you should take away your anger first", (Matthew).

"…and I think if you need to be aware that if you over discipline the child, then, chances are that you will lose the child, the family could, could split. I will try to find other ways to discipline the child, rather than physical corporal, call it corporal punishment", (Tola).

"…That might be fault, if you believe that spare the rod, you spoil the child. You inflict your child with a rod just because you have a religious belief, then that would be child abuse", (Dr John).

Section 9

"*…My mum...but she did a lot of talking, and if I can remember very well, maybe very little of using, the rod on me, maybe being the youngest as well, I would want say, I was spoiled", (Sandra).*

"...In some other cultures like here were we think it was abuse but, I think it was right. Whatever they corrected us the punishment they put on us made us what we are today", (Sarah).

"....I would like to say I do not regret the way I was parented, because I feel physical chastisement was used in good measure and proportionately. ... I believe that because now I know different parenting styles I can parent differently, but I do not feel that physical

chastisement left me with any hard feelings or emotional or physical scares. Therefore, I have no regrets", (Abbie).

Section 10

"...for that child to become something in life. If discipline is taken away from a child, the child will not amount to anything in life", (Eunice).

"...European person sanctions and discipline their child, it's different from Afrocentric approach so it's not one side at all. The Eurocentric environment they only think the only way you can deal with it is within Eurocentric framework", (Dr Ronald).

"...It is very, very simple to instil some discipline in a child from the 0 to 12 years. (c The minute they hit age thirteen it's a lot harder to what they have established in them. So, these are the ages that you have to get it right, you really do have to get it right", (Hilda).

"...but in any context, I believe that anything in discipline that is not your hand, or withholding anything to nourish the child, its child abuse", (Lena).

Section 11

"...think I am a parent so, I would say this, ...for what I know about social theory and child development and you know, if you beat your child as the means of discipline of behaviour modification you have to, the beating much include that child knows that violence is

the way, to settle differences and to change behaviour if that's your only tool I think its problematic", (Tola).

Section 12

"…I think. In the UK the SW are only concerned about voice of the child, (Naomi).

"…parents are challenged by the fact that they are the custodian of the child but the child to some extend may present as wielding more power than them due to professionals stating that the voice of the child is paramount and needs to be listened to", (Collet).

"…for instance, the west African mother of Nigerian mother or parents, more likely tell the child what to do more than asking, what the child wants to do", (Lena).

Section 13

"…while my children were still young this word was so scary even right now, with my youngest, about eighteen, it's still a scare to me because I have to thing now and again how I should be treating my child some social workers maybe question me", (Martha).

Section 14

"... My background is residential social worker, and in the residential home that I worked, it was ninety percent Black children, you know what, I couldn't sleep, when I go home I couldn't sleep, I just couldn't understand why, these children are being taken from their parents, and the parents come to visit their children, the children will cry, their eyes out", (Aunty Anne).

"...Ah, so, I qualified in 1997, and it was my first degree was Law. I found a volunteering opportunity in a place called ...night shelter, in west minister.... And I was volunteering for about, nearly a year and I realised after sometime, people I was working with. Some of them were employed and they were employed to do the same job. And I thought how can I do such kind of a job and I spoke to them, how I can be a social worker. I made plans and moved my life around and to be trained as a social worker", (Collen).

Section 15

I was talking about the, African psychology and its impact, you know, the impact of the history, the colonisation the slavery. The impact of all that and the psychic of the black person, I was talking about that. And I was analysing it from an African psychological view point and I was quoting (Na Acber) Now Na Acber says, this history has impacted us mental, and has placed us on into four categories of disorders", (Aunty Anne).

Poster 1:Former British Prime minister David Cameron’s 2011 riot speech.

David Cameron	Public Opinion & Reaction/ (according to my participation)
Was it outrage at single mothers, absent fathers, or the youth?	Labelling of single mothers
1. The question people asked over and over again last week was 'where are the parents?	Lilly: The parents are the state who are in the board room, maybe discussing more on children's powers. Have you forgotten that you the government and social workers you are the parents. **Joseph:** Fault social policy with a lot of social inequalities. A demonstration which reveals the nature of social policies of any given government, allowing children to behave as they wish. **Abbie**· The state has become a "Nanny State", there is interference from the state failing to acknowledge the right to private family life. (ARTICLE 8 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT). · Parents feel their parenting rights have been taken over by the state.

	· Appears to be blaming parents for lack of control over their children. · Parents feel they are lacking in their knowledge of the child protection processes.
2. Why aren't they keeping the rioting kids indoors?'	**Lilly:** They are not home because they are excising their children's rights and best interest. **Joseph**: Cameron did not see the social divide 'it takes long for a pot to boil' there is a time for boiling or explosion, 2011 was the time. **Abbie:** The children are exercising their rights.

	· The children are exercising their wishes, feelings, and best interests. · There is a lack of adequate social and leisure activities for teenage children. · Parents feel that their parental rights have been taken by the state and they have no parental authority over them.
3. Well, join the dots and you have a clear idea about why some of these young people, were behaving so terribly	**Lilly**: Because the parents do not know what the government expects from them, no clear guidelines on discipline, (thresholds differences). **Joseph**: Cameron is judging and forming judgement against the young people and their families, but he himself failing to take political stance to review and reflect social policies and legislations. The laws which impact the young people and their families. For example, legislations are segregate, they do not

	support certain sub-cultures which affect Black youth. The legislations should promote the BAME group that the youth may adopt and integrate into the mainstream adapt and feel accepted. Inequality will not go unnoticed that includes when they are at school. Already there are jobs tailored for Black people. Black children and White children are on different social standing. For instance the likelihood of a White child getting a job as young as 16 is higher than of a Black child. Their advantages are many one through established family members and connections in jobs, or independently being White is an inherent opportunity.
4. Either there was no one at home, they didn't much care or they'd lost control.	**Lilly:** Yes, parents long lost control, because the children are not given any clear responsibilities and parents are easily criminalised.

	Joseph: Stereotyping and labelling and already forming a wrong opinion over people you have responsibility over. It is a tragedy for a nation to be lead and label an already marginalised group of the society and on a public platform. That kind of attitude helps in create and advance right wings agendas. The blame is given to the helpless and vulnerable parents which he is enhancing. As a matter of fact it is his responsibility, it is the system which has lost control than the parents. The reason is the parents' responsibilities have been overshadowed by children's rights, and further undermines parental moral authority. It is an divisive attitude from the leader of the nations which empowers some stakeholders.

Family Matters 5. I don't doubt that many of the rioters out last have no father at home	**Lilly:** Clear stigmatisation and marginalisation of children and their families in those circumstances. **Joseph**: Mockery of women, in a way he is undermining the parental capacity of women and it's his assumption being a sexist. The prime minister is supposed to unite the families instead divides; some abusers can put it on their wives that they are incapable **Abbie**: Stigmatisation · Did not take into account the change in the family set up in modern day England, where children come from single household families.
Family Matters	Lilly: Insulting and of Labelling of single parents and their children.

5. Perhaps they come from one of the neighbourhoods where it's standard for children to have a mum and not a dad	**Joseph:** How could he touch on the neighbourhoods which are socially constructed. Such as social housing, which are signed to mainly the poor and the Black family's dwell. The government has created such places, interestingly that the PM knows about those places but no policies are put in places to rectify the problem. Meddling with mothers, how would single parents feel that's destroying their self-esteem. **Abbie:** Prime minister demonstrated lack of empathy and did not take into consideration children who due to unfortunate circumstances have lost parents eg death through illness, accidents.
6. Where it's normal for young men to grow up without a male role model, looking to the streets for their father figures, filled up with rage and anger:	**Lilly:** state has to take responsibility, some of the fathers grow up in care, and do not know any different. **Joseph:** Some of the children had dads and not mothers, it's a middleclass mind-set full of tags in their minds to label the underclass. The young people were angrier with the system than their environment. These

	children were not protesting against their parents but destroying systems. **Abbie:** Include Bandura's Social learning theory on this point. That the young people have lacked positive role models. There is a lot of acceptance of unacceptable behaviours from young people, eg displays of anger and violence that is not tackled and managed appropriately such that we have angry young people who cannot be managed. This cannot be entirely blamed on parents, as the state appears to have taken parents power to reprimand children appropriately
7. So if we want to have any hope of mending our broken society, family and parenting is where we've got to start.	**Lilly**: Through empowering parents and give children responsibilities at home and give parents more rights whilst minimising of the children. **Joseph:** In this regard he contradicted himself, he acknowledges the failure of the system which the politicians have destroyed. If the government want change, they must have positive change through

	legislations for parents and children which inclusive for ethnic minorities.
8. So: from here on I want a family test applied to all domestic policy	**Lilly**: put into consideration cultural, values and belief aspects of other races. **Joseph**: Eurocentric, looking at social standing are at the bottom of the ladder which is the measuring road. Looking at the social ladder where are the African children? **Abbie:** Looking at the Children 1989 and analysing where it has negatively affected parenting rights. Involve all stake holders in policy making. BME GROUPS

9. If it hurts families, if it undermines commitment, if it tramples over the values that keeps people together, or stops families from being together, then we shouldn't do it.	**Lilly**: Yes! Minimise the removal of children into care Lots of policies hurt the families and leave them bitter and angry, it unsettles families, that truly hurts the family. **Joseph:** No confidence no identity. UNDERMINES the families' views and opinion, values and beliefs are undermined. Loss of authority, leaves a dependent family, violated and subjected. racial profiling; ethics and values of family are impacted in a huge way, they are working according to the higher social authority being hurt and undermined. If tramples over; contextual –children –partners-, and spouses- protect their family; they are no longer human, the way they see their values being handled fear to protect their value predominantly mothers According to my evaluation and public opinion-what you are saying has not changed because things are still the same—social political forums they say things out of touch of the general public.

10. More than that, we've got to get out there and make a positive difference to the way families work, the way people bring up their children	**Lilly**…Understand the culture, values, norms, religion and stop racism including structural and institutional racism. **Joseph:** its policy draws the framework of behaviour of the community Policies are made in parliaments with the minority; policies should be tested against the lived experiences of family and impose- because they do not want to experiences Social workers do not want to acknowledge the lived experiences of family and impose there on values. Public have experienced difficulties yet the legislation have no idea about poverty. Middleclass have structured lives. **Abbie**: Reinstating of children centres and sure start centres to support young families from an Early stage on what positive parenting looks like. Recognising the

	role faith and religion plays in forming the identity of people and shaping young lives. Looking beyond boarder's and looking what successful countries are doing right e.g., Scandinavian countries. Looking within boarders and looking at what has brought us to where we are? Where our children are killing each other with knives, rioting and burning down a city.
Children without fathers.	Lilly What a disgust insult . What about those bereaved
11. We are working on ways to help improve parenting - well now I want that work accelerated, expanded and implemented as quickly as possible.	**Lilly:** Start now, bring parents on board, and hear them. **Abbie:** Form focus groups in schools and hear what parents have to say Family and parenting has to start. · Giving parents power.

	· Giving the children for responsibility and making them accountable. · Minimising children's powers.