Women's Parenting Styles That Contribute to Peace Building and Development: A Study of Three Districts(Makonde, Chegutu, Hurungwe) of Mashonaland West Province-Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Peace achievement has always been far-fetched in many parts of the world especially in Asia and Africa. One would wonder if such acts by humans could be natural or a result of upbringing. In most cultures, if not all, mothers dominate the early lives of their children. The purpose of this research was to assess the women's parenting styles that contribute towards peace building and development in Makonde, Chegutu and Hurungwe districts of Mashonaland West Province of Zimbabwe. The study was largely qualitative, employing in-depth interviews and case study methods to assess the parenting styles that contribute to peace building and development and data on the variables (peace, development and parenting styles) were collected from 90 both female and male adult subjects of the ages ranging from 30-65 years from rural and urban areas of the three mentioned districts. In order to find out why individuals have maladjusted behaviours, structured interviews and self-administered questionnaires were used to collect data on mothers' parenting styles that may contribute to such behaviours that may impede the culture of peace and development. From the findings, it has been noted that parenting that lacks mother-infant bonding, separation of new born from mothers, exclusion of fathers from early contact with the baby may lead to nurturing a violent or aggressive individual. Recommendations for future research were also made.

1. Introduction

The efforts to attain peace and development in many African, Asian and some European countries seems an uphill task. Conflict and violence is rampant in most of these continents and everyone attributes it to the other and people seem to be moving in circles. The Humanists, deriving their ideas from the philosophers like Aristotle, believe that each individual has the potential to be good. Thus all people can interact with each other peacefully and appreciate the good that comes out of each other. Ancient writings attributed abnormal (deviant) behaviour in humans to demon possession (Thompson, 1982). Psychology, especially psychoanalysis believes that children's past experiences have an impact on their life in adulthood, whereas the behaviourists take the position that it is an individual's environment that will always determine his/her behaviour. To some extent the two theoretical forces could be in agreement since one's environment can be the people surrounding him/her and their activities that can be observed by the individual and influence behaviour. The African culture also concurs with the psychoanalysts, especially the Shona culture and its adage that says 'gavi rinobva kumasvuuriro', laterally indicating that each situation is a result or replica of its foundation. Thus, when considering personality it means that upbringing of individuals determines who they become when they grow into adulthood. In the Shona culture and possibly in most societies, the nurturing and socialization of infants are the responsibility of mothers and, in their temporary absence (for example, when the mothers are working), a female relative. (Charema and Shizha, 2008)

Therefore this could entail that an individual who has been brought up in a peaceful home can be able to appreciate the next person and can also be a tool for development in the society. It is the aim of this paper to find out if mothers' child rearing styles are contributory to personality development in individuals as well as nurturing peace loving or violent individuals.

2. Child rearing styles

Parenting is a complex activity that includes many specific behaviors that work individually and together to influence child outcomes. In most cultures, it is the mother who spends more time with her children when young, while the father goes out to fend for the family. It would therefore mean that the way the mother brings up the children can determine what kind of an individual one becomes in adulthood.

This paper will look at four parenting styles that can be adopted by mothers. Baumrind, 1991 assumes that normal parenting revolves around issues of control. Although parents may differ in how they try to control or socialize their children and the extent to which they do so, it is assumed that the primary role of all parents is to influence, teach, and control their children. Maccoby and Martin, (1983) assert that parenting style captures two

important elements of parenting: parental responsiveness and parental demandingness. Parental responsiveness which is also referred to as parental warmth or supportiveness, refers to "the extent to which parents intentionally foster individuality, self-regulation, and self-assertion by being attuned, supportive, and acquiescent to children's special needs and demands" (Baumrind, 1991:62). Parental demandingness (also referred to as behavioral control) refers to "the claims parents make on children to become integrated into the family whole, by their maturity demands, supervision, disciplinary efforts and willingness to confront the child who disobeys" (Baumrind, 1991: 61-62).

Parents can be categorized according to whether they are high or low on parental demandingness and responsiveness. Four parenting types have been suggested, thus: indulgent, authoritarian, authoritative, and uninvolved (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Each of these parenting styles reflects different naturally occurring patterns of parental values, practices, and behaviors (Baumrind, 1991) and a distinct balance of responsiveness and demandingness.

2.1 *Indulgent parents* who can be seen as "permissive" or "nondirective" are more responsive than they are demanding. They are nontraditional and lenient, do not require mature behavior, allow considerable self-regulation, and avoid confrontation" (Baumrind, 1991:62). Indulgent parents may be further divided into two types: democratic parents, who, though lenient, are more conscientious, engaged, and committed to the child, and nondirective parents. In some circumstances permissive parents often create children who are demanding and selfish, rather than loving and supportive in their approach to others. Some findings for the permissive parenting style show that it appears to have more negative than positive effects, with children often being impulsive, aggressive, and lacking in independence and in personal responsibility. Few demands are made for mature behaviour, like displaying table manners, or sharing responsibilities around the home. For instance some cannot even train their children to make their own beds at age 10 or boys to wash the car. There are very few rules governing the child such as for bedtimes, homework schedules, mealtimes, or TV watching. Permissive parents have trouble saying 'no' and setting boundaries and guidelines for their children. They tend to be lenient and to avoid asserting authority, or imposing controls or restrictions, or indeed, any confrontation wherever possible. Considering some Zimbabwean parents who are known to let their children, because they have attained an education more than them, do as they like. Such children are known to look down upon their traditional cultural values that give them the identity they are supposed to maintain. Some have come to the extent of engaging in behaviours alien to their environment.

2.2 *Authoritarian* parents are highly demanding and directive, but not responsive. Baumrind, (1991: 62) says that such parents are obedience- and status-oriented, and expect their orders to be obeyed without explanation. These parents provide well-ordered and structured environments with clearly stated rules. In some instances such parents have pushed their children to the edge as they would try to be ideal or perfect in order to please their parents. A practical example would be of a Roman priest who impregnated a parishioner and could not stand the shame he would cause his father who was a perfectionist and authoritarian parent. Committing suicide was all he could do to evade the shame he had put on his parent.

Authoritative parents are both demanding and responsive. "They monitor and impart clear standards for their children's conduct. They are assertive, but not intrusive and restrictive. Their disciplinary methods are supportive, rather than punitive. They want their children to be assertive as well as socially responsible, and self-regulated as well as cooperative" (Baumrind, 1991:62). On the other hand such parents can be a blessing to their children as they act as guides in their children's life paths.

Both authoritarian and authoritative parents place high demands on their children and expect their children to behave appropriately and obey parental rules. It seems such parenting has always been recommended in the Shona culture, where parental authority is expected. With the philosophy of ubuntu (Gelfand,1970), one is expected to respect parents lest the spirits(vadzimu) would not be pleased with bad personalities. The author further alludes to this respect of parental authority portrayed through respect of the parent when he talks of commandments followed by the Shona which include the importance of keeping the unity of the group and the second being the honoring of one's parents. With such practices one can expect a parent to follow acceptable parenthood that nurtures individuals who work towards development of their clan as well as the nation.

2.3 *Uninvolved parenting* styles rank lowest across all life domains. These children tend to lack self-control, have low self-esteem and are less competent than their peers. This type of parenting could account for adolescents who develop conduct disorders also known as anti-social behaviours. The etiology of these behaviours is believed to be the interplay of both biological and environmental factors. Elements of the family and social environment are also believed to play a role in the development and maintenance of conduct disorder. For example, some researchers associate conduct disorders with single parent status, parental divorce, large family size, and young age of mothers. However, it is difficult to isolate these factors from other demographic variables known to be linked with conduct disorder, which include poverty and low socio-economic status. In some instances, family functioning and parent-child interactions also play a substantial role in childhood

aggression and conduct disorder, with low levels of parental involvement, inadequate supervision, and unpredictable discipline practices reinforcing youth's defiant behaviors. With more Zimbabwean parents moving to the diaspora, leaving children behind, such parenting styles could be rampant. Taking into consideration that some fathers, mothers or other extended family members are left with the responsibility of taking care of the children, some are reluctant to perform the rearing responsibility faithfully. Some are bribed by the children(since parents in the diaspora shower the children with too many resources), in order to take a passive role in parenting.

Peers, if not monitored can adversely influence the behaviour of children. Children can develop antisocial behavior, influenced particularly by peer rejection in childhood and association with deviant peers. When the parent is not alert to assess who associates with their child(ren), this can be a problem considering the uninvolved parenting style. Peer rejection is not only a marker of a number of externalizing disorders, but also a contributing factor for the continuity of the disorders over time. Hinshaw and Lee (2003) also explain that association with deviant peers has been thought to influence the development of conduct disorder in two ways; thus a "selection" process whereby youth with aggressive characteristics choose deviant friends, and a "facilitation" process whereby deviant peer networks bolster patterns of antisocial behavior. In a separate study by Bonin and colleagues, parenting programs were shown to positively affect child behavior and reduce costs to the public sector. Children with conduct disorders not only cost their parents a fortune, but their whole environment. For instance, when one observes a family unit where there is no 'order', accountability for anything in such a family leaves a lot to desire. There are no boundaries within the family structures hence without any rules governing relationships, members behave as they feel even if they infringe each other's rights. One wonders what such members take to the community and its institutions.

A mother can be any of the above explained type of parents and this can contribute either positively or negatively to the temperament and conduct of the child.

3. Mother's involvement and influence on the child's behaviour

In most cultures of both developed and developing countries, mothers seem to be the main figure of attachment to the child. Probably this could be as a result of the mother's bonding with the child from conception to weaning. Bowlby (1988) asserts in his attachment theory that Infants become attached to individuals who are sensitive and responsive in social interactions with them, and who remain as consistent caregivers for some months during the period from about six months to two years of age. This he calls sensitive responsiveness. The caregiver's responses are believed to lead to the development of patterns of attachment. These, in turn, lead to internal working models which will guide the individual's perceptions, emotions, thoughts and expectations in later relationships. Thus, any behaviours promoted and responded to by the caregiver, in this case being the mother, may help the child develop whether positive or negative behaviours that could benefit or cost the family as well as the community. Ainsworth (1967), enhancing Bowlby's theory, says that between a child and a caregiver affectional bonds are based on the child's need for safety, security and protection, paramount in infancy and childhood. This can mean that the child may comply to whatever behaviours are reinforced by the caregiver in order to be protected from the world that is full of uncertainty. If the mother shows arrogant, cruel, uncaring and destructive behaviour, the child may follow suit believing that all that the attachment individual does is the best behaviour. The researcher remembers very well her niece who began living with her since the age of 2. The girl was so attached to the researcher that she would eat whatever food the latter took or ask the researcher to approve anything said by other members of the family including her own mother.

4. The Aspect of Attachment

Attachment entails the dynamics of long term relationships that humans develop with each other. The attachment theory assumes that an infant needs to develop a relationship with at least one primary caregiver for social and emotional development to occur normally. Thus, the theory explains how much the parents' relationship with the child influences development. In the case of this study, the mother or any female caregiver taking care of the infant. The theory is interdisciplinary, encompassing the fields of psychology, evolution and theology. Bowlby (1958), Ainsworth (1967) both alluded that humans tend to develop what can be called a 'secure base' in their relationships. Thus, the authors assert that infants become attached to individuals who are sensitive and responsive in social interactions with them, and who remain as consistent caregivers for some months during the period from about six months to two years of age. This they call sensitive responsiveness.

When the infant begins to crawl and walk they begin to use attachment figures (familiar people) as a secure base to explore from and return to. Caregivers' responses lead to the development of patterns of attachment; these, in turn, lead to internal working models which will guide the individual's perceptions, emotions, thoughts and expectations in later relationships. In real life, the writer witnessed such attachment in her own nieces who seemed to have developed some form of sensitive attachment with their grandmother. When the writer had to

take the grandmother to the doctor for a check-up, the two, 2 year old nieces stood at the door watching the old woman get into the car. As the writer rode off, the two infants cried themselves to sleep. On return, their aunt reported that they complained about their grandmother being taken away. When the writer passed through in the evening to check on the old lady, the two infants could not even greet or wave at her, thinking that the grandmother would be taken away again. Such behaviour proved some form of sensitive attach which the infants had developed with the grandmother since they would spend most of their time with her. It is believed that in infants, physical separation can cause anxiety and anger, followed by sadness and despair. By age three or four, physical separation is no longer such a threat to the child's bond with the attachment figure. Threats to security in older children and adults arise from prolonged absence, breakdowns in communication, emotional unavailability, or signs of rejection or abandonment.

Bowlby purports that early experiences with caregivers gradually give rise to a system of thoughts, memories, beliefs, expectations, emotions, and behaviours about the self and others, called the 'internal working model of social relationships'. This continues to develop with time and experience. These systems (internal models) regulate, interpret, and predict attachment-related behaviour in the self and the attachment figure. As they develop in line with environmental and developmental changes, they incorporate the capacity to reflect and communicate about past and future attachment relationships. Such could be true about parenting styles that mothers adopt, which in turn could promote peace and development or vice versa. They enable the child to handle new types of social interactions; knowing, for example, that an infant should be treated differently from an older child, or that interactions with teachers and parents share characteristics. This internal working model continues to develop through adulthood, helping cope with friendships, marriage, and parenthood, all of which involve different behaviours and feelings.

UNICEF(October 2000-Febbruary 2001) give a narrative of an Indonesian child soldier recruited at an early age of 8 years. The narrative beefs up Bowlby's 'internal working models of social relationships' when the child is quoted saying:

> The militia threatened to kill me if I didn't join them- that's why I became involved with
> them----. Since I became involved in the militia I didn't learn anything valuable. I only
> learned about cruelty- the way to kill, destroy and burn everything in Timor-Leste.

This narrative supports the assertion that when a child stays in a violent environment, s/he would imitate the bad behaviour and not appreciate peace and development in later life. May this could explain the situation in most under developed and developing nations where armed conflict is the daily songs. They have all raw resources that can make the governments improve the people's standards of living but due to the way the children are raised and the environments they are brought up, looting of resources, destruction of infrastructure become their centre of activities.

It is believed that the internal working models on which attachment behaviour is based show a degree of continuity and stability. Children are likely to fall into the same categories as their primary caregivers indicating that the caregivers' internal working models affect the way they relate to their child. This effect has been observed to continue across three generations. Bowlby believed that the earliest models formed were the most likely to persist because they existed in the subconscious, although these systems cannot always be impervious to change given further relationship experiences. It is believed that a minority of children have different attachment classifications with different caregivers. Thus, some children raised by mothers or caregivers who have undesirable behaviours despise such behaviours and adopt acceptable ones, hence promoting peace and development. This maybe, could be likened to war veterans who participated in world wars and received counselling to rehabilitate them back into society. Such behaviour could be also equated to children who divert from caregiver's undesirable behaviour, maybe through imitating good models at school, church or any other form of media.

The quality of caregiving from at least the primary carer is believed to be key to attachment security or insecurity. Temperament and attachment constitute separate developmental domains, but aspects of both contribute to a range of interpersonal and intrapersonal developmental outcomes. Where the children are separated from the care giver, some types of temperament may make some individuals susceptible to the stress of unpredictable or hostile relationships with caregivers in the early years. In the absence of available and responsive caregivers it appears that some children are particularly vulnerable to developing attachment disorders. Such outcomes may occur when a mother's parenting style is faulty, hence nurturing a child who would not appreciate peaceful resolving of issues or contribute to the development of a healthy and productive nation.

4.1 Attachment and the enhancement of identity

Considering Erikson's identity theory, despite changing family roles during adolescence, the home environment and parents are still important for the behaviors and choices of adolescents. Those who have a good relationship with their parents are less likely to engage in various risk behaviors, such as smoking, drinking, fighting, and/or

unprotected sexual intercourse. Scruitnising such an assertion one would wonder how a child who has been denied his/her father's care would react/behave in later life. For instance, considering the African tradition of totems where one can be identified by the father's last name. In the researcher's experience of primary school teaching, a Shona lesson would even compel a child to be associated with his/her totem. This would in turn make a child who does not know his/her totem embarrassed hence negatively affecting their self-esteem. Mwamwenda (1996:73) asserts that "The search for identity becomes a preoccupation. The adolescent wants to know who he is-----." Considering the Shona culture which emphasizes the child's paternity, this could indicate the child's need to know and get acquainted with his/her own father.

In Zimbabwe, the most common type of family control is the patriarchy. Hunt and Colander(1984:286) describe patriarchy as a culture where "----the father is not only the head of the family, but he also considers that the children belong to him and he has authority over their lives, even, in some cases, giving and selling them in marriage". In the case of male children, it is the father's clan that helps pay for the bride price in form of cattle. Authenticity is not determined when a marriage process occurs without kins from either the mother's or the father's side. The Shona, especially value the marriage when the father's side blesses the union. One would wonder how the child would feel when the father is denied the chance to participate in their life. Bitterness would develop hence promoting undesirable bhaviour which despise peace and development.

The main goal of this study was to determine if the mother's nurturing/rearing style can result in a child being peaceful or violent in adult life. It is against this background that this study sought to answer the following research questions:

- What parenting styles of the mother contribute to the development of desirable and undesirable personalities in later life?
- To what extent does parent-child bonding influence the child's future personality?
- How does childhood deprivation of either parent's care influence an individual's future personality?
- To what extent does pre-mature or late weaning from breast milk influence one's behaviour in later life?

5. Methodology

The research adopted the case study design which meant focusing on one phenomenon that is, the influence of the mother's rearing styles that promote peace and development. This design enabled the researcher to use the questioning, interviewing and also qualitative techniques to bring out respondents' opinions on both positive and negative parenting outcomes.

5.1 Sample

The sample used for the study was comprised of 90 male and female subjects drawn from both urban and rural settings of Mashonaland West districts of Makonde, Hurungwe and Chegutu. From each district 30 subjects were conveniently selected so as to get an almost true reflection of parents' opinions on parenting. This enabled the researcher to get a sample that could be independent of a particular culture. The questionnaires were administered on groups at shopping centers, clinics, schools and even at social clubs where individuals from different backgrounds converge.

The sample comprised of 42 male and 48 female subjects ranging from ages 30 to 65 years. The majority of respondents (53%) were female. The 30-40 years age group covered 48% of the respondents, while the 41-50 age group was 37% , the 51-60 years covered 3% and the 61-65 years were 2%. The urban respondents dominated with 59 % while the rural respondents took only 41% . The age groups that responded to the questionnaires indicate that most of them are still rearing children of their own. Considering the age range of most respondents; 30-40 years who still have infants and young children, followed by the 41-50 year age group that might be having adult children at colleges and universities or who have joined the work environment.

5.2 Instruments

Two questionnaires, bearing same questions one in English and the other one in Shona for respondents who are not proficient in English language were used to solicit information from respondents. These were given to 42 male subjects and 48 female subjects using the "give and return" method. Thus 100% return rate was realised. It was relatively quick and easy to administer as well as to analyse information collected. An interview guide bearing the same questions was also used to solicit information from the subjects who could not read or write.

5.3 Research procedure

The researcher targeted parents and grandparents who have children either of their own or who take care of their relatives' children. (from ages 30 -65). These subjects would be met at the shopping centre, at the borehole or at the university, depending on the area of residence(rural or urban). The convenience sampling method was used in order to capture subjects easily at places where they gather in numbers so as to save time and travelling costs. Validity and reliability of the instruments were established and enhanced through a pilot test which was conducted with a sample of 10 people obtained through convenience sampling based on availability. A test-

retest method of improving reliability of the instruments was carried on the aforementioned sample, and in both instances, yielding similar results. Collected data were coded to facilitate easier interpretation and analysis. Data were grouped in themes and described using frequencies and percentages. The coding of collected data and presenting them in tables allowed the researcher to analyze the data in order to come up with meaningful conclusions from the data.

5.4 Ethical Considerations

 Permission from the Department of Social Services and the participants to carry out research and take part in the study, respectively, was obtained. Participation was voluntary and participants were free to withdraw from the study at any point. All participants in this study were assured anonymity and confidentiality in the study. Participants were assured that data collected in this study would be used for purposes of this study only.

6. Presentation and Discussion of Findings

The following discussion is based on the results which were obtained through data solicited through the use of questionnaires and interviews. All the 90 (100%) respondents returned the questionnaires and the 3% who could not read and write were successfully interviewed.

The respondents had three choices to make, thus agree, disagree or being neutral about the assertion. The questions were put into themes, thus: the effect of weaning from breast milk influencing personality, status of the family unit having an impact on individual's character, the mother being the pivotal figure in nurturing of personality of an individual, the use of language(negative or positive) when communicating with a child as an influence on personality, a peaceful home being fundamental to peace appreciation and development, improper child rearing resulting in ill-nurtured adult, outside influence as contributory to individual's personality.

On the effects of weaning from breast milk, 79(88%) of the respondents agreed that individuals who were fully breast fed develop positive and desirable personalities that appreciate peace and development, while 73(81%) indicated that forceful and premature weaning from breast milk results in an individual developing maladaptive behaviours such as being aggressive and being anti-social. It was indicated that because breast milk makes the child grow, strengthens his/her development holistically, the child's intelligence and reasoning also develops hence making the child build a healthy personality. Breast feeding provides Janov's in-arms stimulation which brings out positive characters in individuals. The respondents indicated that although in-arms stimulation is acceptable, it needs to be guided by moderations to avoid overprotected individuals who may not be able to make decisions in life on their own. It is also believed that the closeness of the mother and the child during breast feeding as a form of in-arms stimulation has effective impact on character building. According to James W. Prescott, PhD, of the Institute of Humanistic Science, and former research scientist at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, sensory deprivation results in behavioral abnormalities such as depression, impulse dyscontrol, violence, substance abuse, and in impaired immunological functioning in mother deprived infants. Where family unit is concerned, 70(77%) and 72(80%)of the respondents agreed that when a child is deserted by the mother   as well as being denied or separated from the father at an early age respectively, s/he develops destructive or violent behaviour due to bitterness resulting from the separation anxiety and identity crisis associated with the African patriarchal system of respecting those whose totems are known. Although it was indicated that mothers are the pivotal individuals in child rearing, respondents added that the former are sometimes lacking that firmness to make children obey instructions, hence impacting on their personality negatively.

As in any other culture, the mother is usually the one that spends most time with children. On the aspect that the mother remains the pivotal figure in child nurturing, 65(72%) agreed with this assertion while 69(77%) agreed that the mother's main role is to nurture peaceful children who would build a healthy clan, 66(73%) of the respondents agreed that mothers as they spend most time with children are responsible for nurturing peace appreciation in their children and 45(50%) asserted that conduct disorders are a result of the mothers' rearing style which would be undesirable. The respondents added that the mother is the pillar in child rearing though she requires support from the father and extended family. The mother's bond to the child was said to be valuable due to the closeness created by breast feeding. The issue of concern was also on the use of language when rearing children. This was indicated by 83(92%) of the respondents that when harsh language is used when communicating with children, they usually prefer violence as an alternative to resolve issues in adulthood. Negotiation would not be an option and they would bully those they view as lower in status than them.

A peaceful home environment was indicated by 77(86%) as a means of nurturing peaceful characters in individuals' adulthood. In one of the interview sessions with the 60-65 age group, one of the respondents supported the assertion indicating that back in the rural home, those known to be always fighting, arguing and nagging each other in the presence of the children would always nurture such characters in them and everyone in the village would not advise their sons or daughters to marry into such homes in order to avoid bringing dysfunction into their clans. This view is supported by Small's (2000) assertion that human young are dependent

on their carers to help them navigate through their crucial early years. So to get the emotional and physical help they need, they must be highly sensitive to the behaviour of their carers---and that makes them particularly vulnerable to family strife.

It was also indicated by 65(72%) of the respondents that individuals who have conduct disorders usually hinder peace and development since they were not nurtured into good citizenship in their homes. Although most respondents agreed on the mother's role in nurturing an individual's personality, 77(86%) agreed that individuals also learn behaviours whether good or bad from the society in which they grow. Some 68(75%) also indicated the media as contributing to individuals' maladaptive behaviours. The Social learning theory of Bandura indicates that individuals learn through modeling, so it was asserted by the respondents that due to the fact that children learn by imitation, they can easily copy what society does or what is shown through various media. Thus if a society is marred by violence, then the individual follows suit. This to some extent, also would zero in on the nurturing process done in the home. The parenting style of the mother who has been indicated as a pivot in childrearing would determine if the child would view anything that is detrimental to his/her personality. On the separation of the child from any of the parents, more respondents who participated in the face to face interviews expressed that love is terminated and this can teach the individual resentment, hostility and uncaring attitude.

Conclusions and Implications for the future

The effects of parenting styles on child personality outcomes have been examined in the literature (Baumrind 1991, Maccoby & Martin 1983). It is known, for instance, that parental influence extends into adolescence (Newcomb 1996). However, research concerning the long-term psychosocial impact of parenting styles on adolescents is less abundant, but is theoretically predicted by Erikson's theory. This study sought to find out if mothers' parenting style have a bearing on their children's appreciation of peace and development. It is therefore concluded that mothers are the main child rearers who can either build or destroy their children's personalities although fathers can also contribute to some extent. Their rearing styles can promote characters that appreciate peace and development or nurture destructive personality that hinder development in the home, community and nation as a whole. It is also concluded that children, in their early years spend most of their time in the company of mothers or female carers whose behaviours they can imitate. Adolescents who are least prone to conduct disorders may have had parents who were accountable and warm while the indulgent parents(mothers) who raised their children with low accountability and high on warmth more than double the likeliness of promoting conduct disorders that result in resentment of peace and development. Observing how much time is usually spent by women engaging in political campaigns that sometimes involve violent interactions with opponent parties, one would wonder what their own children learn. The writer has observed that most politicians use women to campaign for them, sometimes exhibiting some undesirable behaviours, uttering obscene language or treating their neighbours who belong to 'opposition' parties negatively while their children watch or join in the activities. Such incidents have promoted the nurturing of conduct disorder in the children, which overlap into adulthood hence perpetuating a generation that is anti-development and anti-peace. Mostly the writer has concluded that some of the women are forced by their low socio-economic disposition to fall into the hands of politicians who promise them material or monetary rewards at the expense of the long term negative effects the events have on the generations whose life they unknowingly distort.

With more children being born out of wedlock in these areas, absence of the other parent has had an impact on the child's temperament that results in aggressiveness caused by bitterness of missing the love they yearned to receive from one absent parent in their life. It has been observed that some mothers have suffered the reverse effects of denying their children love of the other parent as the children grow up. Most of the children have abandoned the mother who strove to raise and educate them on their own, to find and take care of the uncaring father. Such occurrences being fuelled by the need to belong to a clan, tribe or totem which is important in the Shona culture. Dysfunctional families(divorced parents, single parenting, large family size, young age mothers, poverty stricken homes, low socio-economic status families) where uninvolved parenting is rampant, results in producing children who have unfavourable personalities that resent peace and development. As is evident in the three districts studied poverty and dysfunctional families are common phenomenon and it is easy for the children to learn undesirable behaviours to earn a living or attention from other abusive adults in the community. Like has been alluded before that politicians, unscrupulous business people or criminals usually take advantage of children from such families to perpetuate their agendas which may turn the children into vagrants. Some mothers may not be aware of their children's activities, but because it is generalized by society that mothers are responsible for child rearing, the blame is laid on them. The phrase 'mother tongue' enhances the assertion by most theorists that the mother is the primary caregiver who inculcates language and other facets in the child's intellect.

Where both parents are present and they prefer different parenting styles, children end up being confused who to follow hence conduct disorders come into play. This was indicated in face to face interviews where some parents

would blame each other on pampering the child(ren). This indicated that in some families, each parent would feel his/her child rearing style was the best. Especially the male parents' responses in interviews showed that patriarchy is like a virus in the Shona culture where the mother is a 'stranger' referred to as 'mutorwa' in the Zezuru dialect (Gelfand, 1970, Tirivangana, 2013) who has no mandate in the issues that concern the clan – including issues concerning her own children. Misunderstanding of child rights in their own African context contribute to faulty child rearing styles by mothers especially those who live in the diaspora where permissive parenting is evident. Most have resorted to promoting bonding of the children with objects- thus material gifts they send which alienate children from the extended family that would nurture them into desirable citizens of the nation. Culture, personality of parents, especially the carer, family size(where the mother is overwhelmed by child care), parenting background of the mother, socio-economic status of the family, the education level of the parents and their religion contributes to the type of personality an individual adopts. It is also concluded that most mothers learn parenting practices from their own parents although some accept while others discard. There is a culture whereby one imitates how their own parents raised them. The way one would prefer his/her food prepared, how decorations should be done in the home, the way they would dress and so on would be traced back to the parenting style used on them. Such a culture would not spare how the mothers would raise their own children.

On one hand, mothers could take the blame for any wrong child rearing outcomes, but on the other hand society and the media also take a share. Poverty has also been shown to push mothers to engage in political activities which involve violent act in search of money for the upkeep of the family hence their children imitate in the belief that their mothers would not go wrong in whatever behaviours they engage in. the lack of censorship in programmes viewed by the children in a country also contributes to undesirable behaviours in children hence defeating the effort to rear citizen who appreciate peace and development. Civic education is not being taken as a priority so that the young people understand the needs of a healthy society, thus legislators seem to disappear into thin air when voted into office. They do not budget for such activities in their constituencies so that citizens including mothers get empowered on the way to go.

With these observations at hand, it is recommended that:

- where mothers favour authoritative parenting and the father prefers the indulgent or permissive style, the two need to learn to cooperate as they combine the various elements unique to parenting so that children enter adulthood with desirable personalities that promote peace and development.
- mothers need to adopt to the acceptable parenting styles that are desirable in the environments they are habiting. If they are young mothers there is need for the community to develop programmes that assist them to learn proper parenting styles that would benefit the community and the nation as a whole.
- for the mothers who live in the diaspora, it could be healthy to assign a caring adult to nurture the children into productive and peaceful adults.
- adopting the African child rearing practices would prevent ambiguity that comes with adoption of alien parenting styles which end up confusing the children

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