

OUTCOME OF PARENTAL SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE ON THE FAMILY BOND: A CASE OF  
FAMILIES AT MAVUNO CHURCHES IN NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA

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## DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college or university for academic credit.

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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to God Almighty my creator, my strong pillar, my source of inspiration, wisdom, knowledge and understanding. He has been the source of my strength throughout this program and on His feet, I put my all. I also dedicate this work to my friend and husband; Dr Kigen Bartilol who has encouraged me all the way and whose encouragement has made sure that I give it all it takes to finish that which I have started. To my children Ashley my pillar, Amy my strength and Ariel my joy who have been affected in every way possible by this quest as we all read together and encouraged each other.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

IT	Information Technology
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
RWI	Research World International
SM	social media
SNS	Social Network Site
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to examine the outcome of parental social media usage on the family bond, perspectives of families at Mavuno churches in Nairobi County, Kenya. It specifically sought to identify the social media sites that families in Mavuno churches used, establish the amount of time spent on social media and establish the bonding factors affected by social media usage. Attachment theory guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive research design and the target population was 1401 Christian parents attending Mavuno churches in Nairobi. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select a sample size of 102 respondents. Questionnaires were used in data collection, which were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) and inferential statistics (Correlation) statistics. The study established that all the respondents used WhatsApp, 96.7% used Facebook, 93.3% used YouTube, and 66.7% used Twitter. The findings further indicated that 80(88.9%) of the respondents accessed SM sites more than five times a day and in every single SM visit, 43(47.8%) of the respondents spent twenty minutes, 23(25.6%) spent at least one hour, 19(21.1%) spent less than ten minutes, while 5(5.6%) spent at least two hours. Similarly, 54(60%) of the parents stated that social networking sites took away their face-to-face socialization time with their family, 30(33.3%) acknowledged that use of social media affects communication with family members, and 41(55.5%) stated that use of social media denied them time to bond with their family members, while 46(51%) posited that use of social media affected personal relationships with family members. The study concluded that social media use among parents of Mavuno churches was very high and this may lead to addictive effects which may seriously affect family unity. Given that excessive social media use may weaken the family bond, family members need to join forces to address this by committing to set and respect boundaries regarding social media use in the family, creating fun family time and having a written down gadget use policy in the house that every family member is familiar with.



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## DEFINITION OF TERMS

This section outlines the definitions of key terms used in the study to ensure uniformity and understanding.

*Family:* This is a group of people that live together in a permanent arrangement separated from the rest of the world by the walls of the family dwelling (Cheal, 2017). In this study, family refers to Mavuno church parents and their children or their nuclear family.

*Family Bonding:* This describes the process of developing a close, interpersonal relationship between family members (Pinneau, 2011). For the purpose of this study, family bonding refers to a situation where parents and their children spare time to share together in order to improve their relationship.

*Family Bonding Factors:* These are elements that facilitate close, interpersonal relationship between family members (Pinneau, 2011). In this study, family bonding factors are those that help strengthen the nuclear family bond.

*Social Media usage:* Refers to the means of interaction among people in which they create, share, and/or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks (Minkel, 2017). In this study, social media usage refers to the use of time on the phone checking on the various social media sites.

*Social media:* This is a platform that is usually online that allows for people to create account profiles and connect with other people. It works by allowing a new user to create an account and hence connects and interacts with people who are in the same platform (Minkel, 2017). In this study, social media sites refer to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and WhatsApp.

*Parent:* This is a person's father or mother. In this study, the term refers to the fathers or mothers attending Mavuno Churches in Nairobi.

*Outcome:* This refers to the result or consequences of an action or situation. In this study, outcome refers to the effect of social media usage on the family bond.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

#### Introduction

This study examines the outcome of social media usage on family bonding among parents of Mavuno Churches in Nairobi County, Kenya. According to Radesky (2016): Bianchi and Philips (2015), social media usage has increased exponentially in modern years among parents and children to the extent that very little or no time is spent on face-to-face conversations necessary for family bonding. In focusing on the outcome of this increased attachment with social media on the family bond, the study seeks establish on how the many hours parents spend on social media influences or affects bonding among family members in terms of their face-to-face socialization and communication time, family problem solving, and personal relationships among family members.

Chapter one presents the study's background by defining what social media is, the existing social media platforms and the prevalence of social media among the people, from the global, regional and national perspectives. The chapter also presents the statement of the problem, the purpose and objectives of the study, the significance of carrying out the study, the assumptions made in the process of conducting the study, limitations and delimitations of the study and the scope of the study.

## Background to the Study

In the United States of America and indeed world over, social media usage by parents has become common, as either a form of entertainment or communication with other individuals. However, its excessive use has also shown to have effects on parenting, causing parental distraction, and decreasing the level of everyday parental bonding engagement with children (Denise, 2016). This undermines the important one on one contact and undivided attention which are necessary in building a secure bond between a parent and child (Knauf, 2016).

. According to Boniel-Nissim (2015), there is high diffusion and use of social media technology among parents in the USA. This is consistent with findings of a study by Purcell (2017) which found that in the USA, social media usage has changed the culture of face-to-face interactions since it occupies most parents' time, raising the question whether and how the use of social media affects parents' bonding time with their children.

In Bangladesh, Ahmed (2020) noted that with the ever-increasing usage of these social networking sites, parents are becoming more dependent of the virtual relationships sacrificing their family time and social values. Ahmed further stated that parents used social media for long hours daily and this had an effect on parent-child bonding, and also married couple's relationships.

In South Africa, Van de Merwe (2017) found that parents spend more than one hour every day on social media devices and more than five hours every week. This means that parents could be sparing little time if any for face-to-face interaction. It can also be inferred from this trend that the pervasiveness of social media use among parents that is reported in

the western world is also catching up in Africa, with potential ramifications on parent-child interactions.

According to Research World International (RWI) (2016), social network sites were an important channel for daily interactions by parents in Uganda. Moreover, a household survey done by RWI (2016) established that parents in the Uganda capital Kampala and surrounding areas used excessive amount of time on social media neglecting their children, and at times leaving them unattended as they remained immersed in the information shared through the SNS (RWI, 2016). The study concluded that social media usage impacted how much attention parents gave their children and subsequently the extent of attachment and bonding with them.

Kenya leads the countries in East Africa in terms of social media use (Ozad & Uygurer, 2016). This has been facilitated by heightened internet availability in the last ten years, particularly in town centers and as a consequence, social media presence has been on the increase in the country (Kamwaria et al., 2015). According to the Communication Authority of Kenya (2018), social media subscribers were 3.3 billion as at July 2018. What this means is that in the contemporary family life, social media usage is a key characteristic feature (Lewis et al., 2015).

Gichovi (2012) noted that many parents in Kenya own smart phones and hence have social media capabilities (Gichovi, 2012). A survey among parents in Kenya found that parents “cannot imagine a world without social networking sites since they have become part of their everyday activity” (Waigumo, 2011). They spend a lot of time daily on social media and most of them possess or have access to smart phones, the internet and many other forms of modern technology (Moawad & Ebrahim, 2016). Just like their counterparts in

South Africa and other parts of the world, this increased social media usage among Kenyan parents potentially affects their bonding time with their children.

Giddens (2017) observed that the social media popularity among parents presents a major issue in regard to its use as they spend many hours interacting online and carrying out their daily activities in the cyberspace. It reduces the amount of time the parents spend interacting with their children in the physical realm. Fear has been expressed by sociologists that the rampant use of Internet technology (IT) causes heightened social separation. This is because of the nature of IT enabling users to share similar interests, pictures and connecting up friendships rendering users to spend many hours on them. Bargh (2015) noted that a key impact of parental social media usage is that less and less time is spent by parents with their children. It is because of this long hour spent on social media that an interest has a risen of its outcome in regard to parent-children bonding.

Khalid (2017) contended that social media in a significant way influences the level of socialization that is key in developing and keeping bonding among family members. This is true since the interactions on social media technologies by parents facilitates them to connect with each other by sharing of posts, photos, information and keeping each updated on the goings on, leading to improved family bonding (Unal, 2018). Expressions of feelings, emotions including love, acquaintanceship and family attachments are afforded a number of opportunities for expression via the social media (Aishwarya & Vinod, 2017). Dyer (2018) similarly indicated that if social media gadgets are widely used, they can contribute to strengthening bond among family members by facilitating communication with household members living distantly and conversing about issues affecting their family.



Leung and Lee (2015) on the other hand observed that parental activities on social media are reducing personal and family leisure time since the parents remain glued on social media consequently reducing the very important face-to-face interactions. This essentially leads to reduced happiness and also reduced physical associations parents and their children. This is consistent with Minkel (2016) who noted that extreme utilization of social media has created issues premised on its potential of inhibiting normal people interactions replacing them with exchanges over social media.

Hence, on one hand, social media is viewed to provide a positive influence on household members in terms of strengthening their relationships, while on the other hand, social media has been seen to be responsible for the many relationship issues like arguments about the amount of time spent on social media, loneliness and less social intimacy due to the reduced quality time that couples share between them, and inappropriate post by the spouse that led to lack of trust (Tartari, 2015). Equally, Grover and Kaur (2016) observed that social media on one extreme brings together household members who live long distances a part, and on the other extreme it impedes family bonding and hence their level of interactions.

The study intended to look at the outcome of social media use on family bonding, perspectives of parents attending the Mavuno churches in Nairobi County. This is premised on the fact that Kenya is one of the leading countries in Africa having the highest levels of social media users (Ozad & Uygurer, 2016). This assertion is consistent with the United States International University Kenya (2019) study findings which indicated that most Kenyans parents are social media subscribers and active users as well, with 88.6% and 88.5% of the respondents indicating that WhatsApp and Facebook respectively to be the most

preferred, with YouTube following closely with 51.2% subscribers. The implication here is that social media usage is part and parcel of Kenyan parents' social life, with likely outcome on the level of bonding among parents and their children.

The concern arising over social media usage phenomena is that parents spend more and more time communicating online and handling their daily tasks in cyberspace that they spend less time interacting with their children, a fact that may weaken the family bond. This study was hence set to the outcome of parental social media usage on the family bond.

#### Statement of the Problem

Positive involvement of parents with their children as reflected in shared activities, supportive behavior, and affection nurtures a strong family bond and healthy relationship (Giddens, 2016). The bond can play a very important role in personal wellbeing and the ability to form other kinds of relationships outside of the family unit such as friendships (Ailin, 2018). Also, with this strong parent-child bond, children learn to put all their trust and security on their parents (Ralston, 2017). Therefore, activities that undermine this bonding pose a serious threat to the relationship.

With the emergence of social media (SM), social media users spend many hours of their lives glued to their digital gadgets with the aim of interacting with others, updating each other on their daily lives, and gaining new ideas (Giddens, 2017). Similarly, social media has the ability to become very addictive. It becomes a compulsion for the social media users to check their phones every few minutes to see if they have any new notifications. In fact, the addiction is so real and so strong that it has been found that people experience the same kind of withdrawal symptoms as a drug addict if they are unable to check their social media

(Wang, Vswanath, Wan, Lam, Chan, 2016). This causes parental distraction, decreasing the level of everyday parental engagement.

What this implies is that the face-to-face conversations among individual family members gets to a minimum as the parents and their children are engrossed in their own virtual world and a circle of online friends. When this is repeated for a long time, family relations get affected since the time parents and children spend together in common activities is drastically reduced and hence facilitating social isolation of children from their parents. Further, obsession with virtual engagement poses a threat to the family unit in general and causes the physical and social bond to weaken and even break eventually and also undermines effective parenting.

Currently, there is limited literature (Kimeto, 2016; Waigumo, 2013; Mpepo, 2017) on the outcome of social media usage on the family bond among Christians in Kenya. This means that parents in Mavuno churches cannot appreciate that the many hours they spend on social media would ultimately affect their family bond. The intention of this study was therefore to bridge this gap and also avail literature and empirical evidence premised on the church context.

### Purpose of the Study

This study intended to examine the outcome of parental social media usage on the family bond, focusing on parents at Mavuno churches in Nairobi County in Kenya.

### Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to;

1. Identify the social media sites used by parents in Mavuno churches.

2. Establish the amount of time spent on social media by parents in Mavuno Churches
3. Assess bonding factors affected by social media usage among parents in Mavuno churches.
4. Establish measures that could be applied to enhance family bonding regarding SM use among parents in Mavuno Churches

#### Research Questions

1. What social media sites were used by parents in Mavuno Churches?
2. How much time was spent on social media by parents in Mavuno Churches?
3. What bonding factors were affected by social media usage among parents in Mavuno churches?
4. What measures could be applied to enhance family bonding regarding SM use among parents in Mavuno Churches?

#### Assumptions of the Study

The study made the following assumptions;

- i. That parent attending Mavuno Church used social media.
- ii. Use of social media affected bonding among Mavuno Church families
- iii. Study participants honestly volunteered information for the study and so the study findings truly reflected the influence of social media usage on family bonding.
- iv. Respondents were able to understand the study questions and therefore provided responses without undue external influence.

### Justification of the Study

In the contemporary world, technology enabled devices are impacting social interactions in an unprecedented version. The emergence and increased use of social media for communication has led to a proliferation of various types of social media sites and the heightened rise in subscribers is impacting the manner in which individuals relate (Fox & Warber, 2013). While on one hand SM may be important in facilitating its users to maintain closeness with other people, research indicates that its utilization can be at the expense of the marital bonds (Clayton, 2014).

Given that social media is increasingly playing a critical role in reorganizing communication and molding marriage relationships, it is fundamental to study this phenomenon from the perspective of realizing stability and success in marriage. The utilization of marital and family therapy theory to studies on social media interactions *visa viz* the family institution offers new dimensions in the search for strategies that families can employ to realize success in marriage in the wake of social media popularity.

### Significance of the Study

This study is important in the following ways;

Through this research, parents will realize that the many hours they spend on social media replace the hours they could be spending to bond with their children. The parents will therefore make deliberate effort to cut down the social media time and spend it to share and play with their children.

The study will create awareness that spending time to interact with family members is important, especially for growing children, a fact they tend to neglect due to social media use. The current study is also significant in the sense that it offers insight on how SM affects

parents' bonding time with their children. Hence, counselors on marriage and family will find this study's findings crucial in their counseling activities and effectiveness. The counseling practitioners would also use this study as an evidence resource on which to base their family counseling procedures. Equally, scholars who intend to pursue skills in the domain of family counseling could utilize this study as a knowledge and reference source.

Besides other responsibilities, it is the duty of the church to prepare individuals for stable marriages and family. Hence, pastors and bishops would gain from this research in terms of equipping them with understanding, knowledge and skills in regard to making them better prepared for marriage responsibilities. Additionally, the study can be beneficial to parents and their families in strengthening their bond. Therefore, counseling methodologies could most likely be improved through this study.

#### Scope of the Study

This research was based in Nairobi County, limiting itself to Mavuno church branches across the County. The study was primarily to examine the outcome of social media usage on the level of bonding among the parents attending Mavuno churches. The target population comprised 1401 parents worshipping at Mavuno church branches across Nairobi. The study period was three months, beginning March 2021 to May 2021.

#### Limitations of the Study

1. The study encountered bias in the data collected as study participants provided information based on what they thought the researcher wanted to hear and not the true positions on the ground. To counter information bias, effort was spent in explaining the academic basis of the research and why the respondents should objectively answer the research questions.

2. Some respondents were not willing to volunteer information that is considered sensitive in the fear that the confidentiality of the information was not guaranteed. To counter this limitation, the respondents were assured that the information they provide would be handled confidentially and that it was not to be used for any other purpose other than the academic purpose for which it was sought.
3. By the very fact that the study covers all the Mavuno branches spread across the County, the researcher was limited to collect data from all the branches personally. To manage this limitation, trained research assistants were recruited to assist in data collection.

#### Delimitation of the Study

This study sought to understand the outcome of social media use by parents worshipping in Mavuno Churches in Nairobi County and how this affects bonding among family members. As such, the respondents were parents who had social media accounts. The study sought to identify the social media accounts that Mavuno church parents use and the frequency, time and duration they spend on the social media accounts. The study also sought to establish the bonding factors affected by social media usage among the parent respondents. The study period was three months, beginning March 2021 to May 2021.

#### Summary

This chapter presented the background on which the study is based, the research problem, the general and specific objectives of the study, and has also provided the rationale of the study. Additionally, the chapter has indicated how significant the study is to various

stakeholders, the assumptions on which the study was based, its scope, limitations and delimitations. The next chapter discusses pertinent literature in regard to the study variables, the theories on which the study was anchored and also illustrates the key concepts of the study in a conceptual framework.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature regarding social media and bonding among family members. Specifically, the review borders on bonding, the prevalence of SM among parents, the influence of social media use on the family bond and how the family bond can be enhanced in relation to social media use. This essentially is a critical review of empirical studies already done to provide an illumination into the subject. Similarly, the chapter presents the theories that inform the study. It also presents the theories that inform the study and the conceptual framework of the study depicting the relationship between the study variables.

#### Social Media Sites

A number of developments have occurred in the telecommunication industry which have introduced various social media channels of communication including the web-based communication and mobile phones that used both the features of written and spoken language in social networking sites like Twitter, YouTube, blogs, Skype, Telegram, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Myspace, and Facebook amongst others platforms (Tilley, 2015; Crystal, 2016).

Kimeto (2016) carried out a study to determine the effect of social media use on family bonding in Langata Constituency, Nairobi, Kenya. In terms of the social media networks used, the top three (3) leading social media sites were Facebook (95%), Twitter (78%) and Instagram (70%). However, the most frequently visited social networking sites (SNS) were Facebook (39%) and Instagram (32%).

A study by the Pew Research Center (2016) examined the uses and user compositions of different social media sites among the United States of America parents. From the study findings, 71% of the participants indicated that Facebook was the most dominant social media site parents used by parents. In regards to the frequency of social media usage, Facebook users were the most engaged with the platform, and 70% of Facebook users used the site on a daily basis. The percentages of daily active users of other social media platforms were as follows: Instagram (49%), Twitter (36%), Pinterest (17%) and LinkedIn (13%). The study revealed the tendency of USA online adults to use multiple social media platforms. According to Smith and Anderson (2018), majority of US parents use Facebook and YouTube dominantly. They noted that younger Americans between the ages of 18 and 35 embrace a variety of platforms and use them frequently. In this age group, 78% use Snapchat and close to 71% of this number visit this site numerous times in a day. The same age group also use Instagram and are at 71% and 45% are Twitter users. Further, two thirds of parents in America (roughly 68%) use Facebook and three quarter of them access the site on a daily basis. This is attributed to readily available access to internet and mobile handsets that can be used to access the sites (Smith and Anderson, 2018).

Facebook Group (2015) noted that 50 percent of its active users log onto Facebook in any given day and each user averages 130 friends. Loving and Ochoa (2011) asserted that individuals spend over 700 billion minutes per month on Facebook. Loving and Ochoa further contended that on any given day, 70 million users log on to Facebook to view profiles and post information about themselves and others. This is an indication that Facebook is one of the most used social media sites.

According to Nations (2011), Twitter is a social messaging, with the ability to follow people and have followers. Additionally, Carson (2011) defined Twitter as small bursts of information called tweets, and each tweet is 140 characters in length. Carson is categorical that Twitter is used by everyone from magazines to movie stars as a quick way to connect with an audience. Thus, Twitter has become many different things to many different people; it can be used by a family to keep in touch, a company to coordinate business, media house to keep people informed or a writer to build up a fan base (Nations, 2011). By 2011, twitter users were about 200 million worldwide and that about 460, 000 accounts are opened daily and more than 140 million tweets are sent daily (Carson, 2011).

Rierner and Richter (2010) argued that 80% of Twitter users can be classified as ‘me-former’, who mainly make themselves the object of their communication, while 20% are seen to be true ‘informer’ who post content that is targeted at other users’ interests. This means twitter is mostly used for personal interactions instead of corporate interactions, indicating that many organizations were not using twitter for official communication.

YouTube was founded in 2005 by Chad Hurley, Steve Chen and Jawed Karim. It was acquired by Google in 2006 for \$1.65 billion. Since its creation in 2005, YouTube has gained remarkable popularity as an online video-sharing website. At the end of its first five years of service, YouTube was receiving more than two (2) billion viewers per day (YouTube, 2010), and users were uploading more than 35 hours of video per minute (Walk, 2010 as cited in Snelson, 2011).

YouTube is a video-sharing website created by three former PayPal employees in February 2005, on which users can upload, view and share videos. It uses Adobe Flash Video and HTML5 technology to display a wide variety of user-generated video content, including

movie clips, TV clips, and music videos, as well as amateur content such as video blogging and short original videos. Most of the content on YouTube has been uploaded by individuals, although media corporations including CBS, the BBC, and other organizations offer some of their material via the site, as part of the YouTube partnership program.

Unregistered users can watch videos, while registered users can upload unlimited number of videos (Snelson, 2011). According to Boyd (2014), Myspace was launched in 2003. Initially it was home to about 20 people interested in indie music in Los Angeles. Today, almost every American teenager knows about the site, regardless of whether or not they participate. Over 50 million accounts have been created and the majority of participants are youth aged between 14 and 24. Boyd (2014) further states that Myspace has more page views per day than any site on the web except Yahoo. Originally, the site was accessible to people 18 years and above and all data was public. Over time, the age limit dropped to 16 and later to 14. The youngest users are given the option to make their profiles visible to friends-only and they do not appear in searches (Boyd, 2014).

According to Wright and Hinson (2010), social media can be classified into different categories that include internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, wikis, podcasts, pictures and video. Since social media represents a young and emerging set of technologies, there are many different thoughts and opinions when it comes to categorization. With the availability of so many social media sites, some receive much more web traffic than others. Popular social networking sites such as Facebook and Myspace and popular video sharing site YouTube are ranked among the list of the world's most accessed websites (Alexa, 2009, cited by Wright & Hinson, 2010).

## Amount of Time Spent on Social Media

In Canada, 6.2 hours per week is spent on Facebook by adults (Martinez Aleman & Wartman, 2015). In 2014, taking all U.S. audience into account, each person spent the total time of 10.25 hours on their mobile phone and 11 hours on their computers to visit social media sites (Nielson, 2016).

A study by Knight-McCord (2016) found that 76% of parents spend 1-3 hours on social media daily and 80% spent more than 5 hours on the weekend. From these statistics, it can be inferred that parents spend a significant part of their waking hours on social media and only leave out the little time remaining to other aspects of their lives including interacting with their children. The findings revealed that social media networks are predominantly used for social purposes, mostly related to the maintenance of established offline networks. Negative correlates of social media networks usage included the diminished real life social participation and relationship problems. This means that parent-children interaction with each other face to face is potentially negatively affected. Shokeen and Jain (2014) study aimed to gauge the attitude of parents and their children of the age of 16 years towards social network sites. Findings showed that parents had a negative perception of children's use of social media and recommended limiting their use of social network sites. The parents in the study reported decrease in face-to-face interactions with their children.

Kimeto (2016) carried out a study to determine the effect of social media on family bonding in Langata Constituency, Nairobi, Kenya. In terms of time spent parents spent on social media, 64% of the respondents indicated they spent more than 30 minutes on SNS per visit. Further, 75% of the parents indicated that they mostly visited SNS while at home.

These statistics indicate that SM usage was prevalent among the parents and that they frequently visited various social media platforms, which may imply that more quality time was spent on the SM networks to the detriment of family time, hence negatively impacting on the family bond.

According to Ojino (2018), 89.6% of the parents own a smart phone and 27.5% spend an average of 4-7 hours per week using social media (Langat, 2017), 73.4% of the parents in Kenya prefer social media and other online social networking sites as a medium of communication (Jepngetich, 2016), 92.1% are active social media users (Jepngetich, 2016) and 59.6% spent 2-5 hours a day on social media (Langat, 2017).

Karanja (2019) carried out a study on the effect of social media usage among parents in Nairobi. The study revealed that 97.5% of the parents used WhatsApp and Facebook. It was also found that there was a statistically significant moderate correlation ( $r = 0.492$ ,  $p = 0.019$ ) between the frequency of accessing SNS and family bonding with a statistically significant moderate correlation ( $r = 0.627$ ,  $p = 0.007$ ). There was a statistically significant high correlation ( $r = 0.818$ ,  $p = 0.009$ ) between social media usage and social isolation.

The contemporary communication systems enable individuals to interact with each other in platforms that don't allow the physical face-to-face presence (LaSalle, 2014). Usage of digital devices like phones and computers facilitate social media interactions. Before the emergence of this technology, developing relationships required physical presence. This physical presence or face-to-face interaction enable individuals to respond in a dialogue by using verbal and non-verbal stimuli they receive during the physical exchange. Papp, Danielewicz, and Cayemberg (2015) arrived at a conclusion that social media usage has changed the manner in which people interact and grow relationships. Social media sites have

hooked millions of subscribers who naturally belong to a family, majority of whom have made these sites to be part of their daily communication engagements (Marshall, 2017). The researcher agrees with this conclusion because social media enables individuals to be in touch with each other and share information at the expense of physical interactions. This is the opposite of pre-social media days where individuals develop face to face relationships. The implication of this is that individuals can be in the same house without ever speaking to each other but are engaging and connecting on the different social media networking sites. This has in turn killed the art of observing and interpreting body composure and nonverbal cues.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (2012) indicated that 79 % of parents engage on social media daily, implying that a higher percentage of parents access social media sites, a fact that may occupy much of their time, leading to limited time that can be spent bonding with their children. Parents constitute a significantly large group of mobile phones users, where they use social media through various digital devices like smart toys, smartphones, tablets and laptops (Ofcom, 2012).

A number of researches have revealed that 60% of parents utilize social media as a platform for checking up on their family members (Marshall, 2017; Tokunaga, 2011; Bowe, 2010). According to Utz and Beukeboom (2011), monitoring a spouse via Facebook is “almost” the socially acceptable means for checking up on their partner. Application of social media as a surveillance instrument in terms of monitoring marriage partners can have negative impact on the marital relationship, particularly when it is done as a daily ritual (Elphinston & Noller, 2011; Tokunaga, 2011). These findings imply that when social media is applied as a surveillance tool for spying on marriage partners, it threatens communication

processes within the family. That too much social media use might decrease family communication processes vital for developing and nurturing strong bonds among family members (Tokunaga, 2011). Besides, the many hours applied accessing social media on mobile phones means that family members can be physically available in the same space but be emotionally afar, rendering the more important family needs such as family time to be ignored (Tokunaga, 2011).

## Effects of Social Media Usage on Bonding

### The Concept of Bonding

Bonding refers to the activity of growing a close, interpersonal attachment between two or more individuals (Latter, 2017). It largely occurs between members of a family or friends. However, it may equally develop among groups like sporting teams and wherever people spend their time together (Pinneau, 2011). Bonding is a mutual and interactive activity. It refers to a process of growing social attachment. Basically, bonding is a process of attachment that grows in relationship between parents and their children. This attachment is indicated by emotions that include love and trust. When two individuals spend time together, they develop a bond (Latter, 2010). This is true because by spending time together, family members are able to share how they feel, may share their needs and desires and by so doing, their understanding of each other is enhanced and therefore stay attached.

Digital gadgets like smartphones and computers facilitated by the internet have made social media to be a key feature in people's lives as it is used as a platform for creating and maintaining relationships (Bergdall et al., 2012). The technology has been growing and flourishing to the extent that it mediates and develops a sense of relatedness in relationships beyond the expressive verbal communication (Hassenzahl et al., 2014). For example, Bargh



and McKenna (2013) indicated that more than a billion texts are exchanged through smartphones across the globe daily. The implication of this is that the prevalent social media communication among the people preoccupies much of their time to the detriment of family time and hence the family bond.

In a study conducted by Nyaga (2019) on the influence of social media on communication preferences by parents in St. Peters Paris Church, found that, parents were active social media users. The studied parents indicated that they did not have a preference between interacting with their children and spending time on social media. There was no statistically significant correlation between social media preference and parent-children bonding. Results also showed a weak negative but statistically insignificant correlation between respondents' time spent on social media and parent-children bonding time. Similarly, there was a statistically insignificant positive correlation between respondents' attitude towards social media and parent-children bonding time. A total of 30.2% and 34.9% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed, respectively, that they enjoyed spending time with their children.

The parents made average use of social media, with the highest time use manifesting during relaxation and free periods and for various motives. Social media was a way of occupying idle time when children were away, but it neither complemented nor displaced face-to-face interactions. Basically, on the influence of social media on parent-children's interactions, the finding was that social media is amoral and its use does not affect the parent-children interaction. It merely serves as a tool for facilitating social connection and entertainment during parents' relaxation time and to fill in their free time.

According to Fitzpatrick and Ritchie (2015), there is a correlation between the amount of time spent on social media and the quality of family bonding. Although the interaction between parents and their children continue to diminish as parents gravitate towards social media usage, parents continue to play a prominent role in their children's attachment and development (Collins & Laursen, 2014).

Duque, San Antonio, & Brazil (2017), social media use is taking a toll on parent-children bonding and face to face interaction. In their study, Duque et al. (2017) found that the time that parents consume on SNSs directly affects the quality of parent-children interaction. Open, face-to-face communication with children has been found to diminish the more time parents spend on social media.

Blake and Wrothen's (2015) study established that parents do not hold a lot of face-to-face communication courtesy of social media. They rather send text messages, including when they are in very short distances from each other or within the same space. Similarly, people apply social media as an avenue for venting out disappointments or frustrations and interact with others in similar situations world over. On this basis, digital devices like smartphones and tablets are a common phenomenon and are increasingly used for socialization among children (Giddens, 2017). This may mean that most parents expose their children at an early age to mobile phones and other digital devices for communication.

Too much social media may greatly hamper communication activities that are vital for developing strong attachments between parents and their children. Beside the many hours used on the digital device connecting, parents can be physically there but emotionally afar, thus occasioning failure in attending to the more fundamental needs of their children (Blake & Wrothen, 2015). Golden (2015) also stated that "while parents generally report that they

are only on their mobile devices for a few seconds at a time, video evidence showed that they can be absorbed for upwards of 3 minutes at a stretch” (p. 102). This implies that parents are neglectful in using social media, when necessary, but spending excessive amount of time on social media distracts the parents and renders them less in tune with their children. Ralston (2016) even indicated that parental distraction directly threatens the welfare of children since the parents are constantly glued on their devices as compared to checking on their children closely. The researcher agrees with the cited authors given the many hours that people spend in online interactions when they are supposed to be caring for their children may make to begin ignoring the very important interactions vital for a healthy attachment.

Further, it is true that technology occasions the likelihood of misinterpreting messages in the process of exchanging and this may erect barriers in solving problems and intimacy flourishing (Henline & Harris, 2016). For instance, online betting or gambling in relationships can interfere with intimacy activities and bring about feelings of being ignored or excluded from one aspect of their spouse’s life, with a potential to cause a sense of perceived neglect and jealousy (Hawkins & Hertlein, 2013). The researcher holds the view that the authors’ argument is true since online interactions do not offer the advantages of face-to-face communication where conflicts can be solved through seeking clarifications and seeking help of the third person. Similarly, social media platforms have led to a likelihood for misinterpreting messages and enabled social media subscribers to post messages on other people’s accounts and make comments on other peoples’ photographs, exchange messages and chats. Also, the fact that social media brings about the likelihood for misinterpreting messages can erect barriers in regard to solving arising conflicts, poor communication and

hence family time will not find a place in such environment leading to weakened family bond.

Duggan (2015) conducted a study to assess how parents turned to social media as a generally useful source of information and as a parenting tool. Their study also took a broad look at the parents' social media habits. The study revealed that, among the parents who went online, three in four used Facebook.

The increased daily use of SM by parents has impacted family members' communication processes. Love, Sanders, Metzler, Prinz, and Kast (2013). conducted a survey on the link between the time spent by parents in social media and their bonding time with their children. The survey findings showed that excessive social media usage lowered the communication activities necessary for creating strong bonds between parents and their children. The many hours taken on the social media emotionally distances the parent, undermining the parent's ability to attend to the fundamental needs of their children. In other words, excessive social media access becomes a distraction to parents as less and less is spent bonding with their children. With the many hours parents spend on social media, they might begin to lose some of the fundamental interactions vital for a healthy bonding (Ante-Contreras, 2016). The implication of this argument is that very little or no time is dedicated for family bonding. This implies eventually, the close relationship among family gets weaker to poor relationship and misunderstanding among family members.

Also, Stepanikova, Nie, & He (2017) did a study on whether parental loss of desire for physical or face-to-face bonding time with their children had any relationship with social media surfing. Findings indicated that parents used SM excessively, which led them use less and less time with their children. Also, the desire for physical interactions with their children

slimmed. The study concluded that parents who spend long hours on social media have very little time at their disposal for other kinds of engagements like having family time bonding with their children. It is the researcher contention that the lack of communication occasioned by social media use leads to a deterioration of the relationship as opposed to maintaining a solid family bonds or attachments.

Lee (2012) also reported that the use of SM for entertainment and instant messaging among parents deprived them of family time for bonding with their family members. Lee thus concluded that there is a negative relation between the duration used on SM and the outcome in regard to parents and family bonding since family time is significant in building a healthy family (Lee, 2012). This implies that instead of family members spending time together, enjoying each other's company, they spend their free time being entertained from online content. The general implication is that there will be reduced communication activities vital for developing stable parent- child bonds. Besides the long periods used on the digital gadgets, the parent can be there physically but emotionally away, undermining their ability to attend to the more critical needs of their children.

Leung and Lee (2016) posited that social media engagement diminish household and personal leisure time by keeping them excessively glued on social media platforms and hence reducing face-to-face meetings. Essentially, this manifests in diminished joy, happiness, and less empowered individuals and consequently, this negatively impacts other associations in their lives and the quality of time interactions with their children. Leung and Lee further found that the use of social media was negatively related to quality of life.

Wallis (2016) stated that excessive use of social media has resulted to a situation where people are “elsewhere” all the time, often distracted from the social and physical presence of the moment to a more interesting engagement. This further supports the assertion that use of social media in the presence of children results to distracted parenthood and change in parenting approaches and styles (Wallis, 2016). Scott (2014) explained that there is a likelihood that family members with children engage in social media more than those without children. The resulting lack of attention by the parents towards their children may result to heightened instances of tantrums, anxiety, and resistance to discipline. The key reason as to why there is inattention to parenting in the digital era originates from the sudden peak in its usage.

In a study done by Kaspersky Research team (2017), 20% of parents admitted that interactions and the quality of relationships with their minors had been adversely affected. The study further established that most of the parents agreed that their relationship with their children deteriorated upon becoming addictively obsessive to social media use since they found themselves having to spend more time interacting with the virtual community on the SMSs. This reduced the amount of time they put aside for face to face meetings with their children. The damage occasioned long term issues in the relationship as the love shared among the family members reduced. The implication here is that the children cannot receive adequate parental attention and hence will lack the love to grow up happily.

McKenna and Bargh (2014) contended that social media yields negative results like the feeling of being lonely and depressed by its users. Hafner (2003) on the other hand felt that SM does not have expressions, voice or postures and this depletes the quality of communication because of the absence of these non-verbal languages that aid in clarifying

a verbal expression. From the presented literatures, one can therefore find that the family members as part of the community cannot run away from using social media as it is used for many purposes as different scholars have suggested.

Punamaki et al. (2015) examined the link between the type of SM used in regard to engaging digital games, online information exchange and the quality of attachments between parents and their children. The findings showed that use of SM for entertainment was related with poor child and parental relations. Further, intensive SM surfing was found to be related with poor maternal relation seen most in daughter-mother communication. This means that in the 24 hours available in a day, the time spent on the social media reduces the time spent on other activities (Nie & Hillygus, 2012). Hence, the relationship between parents and their children is affected by social media usage leading to poor parent and child communication (Punamaki et al., 2015). From the findings, it is imperative that families need to adopt counselling programs where the negative outcomes of too much social media are emphasized to improve parent and child relationships.

Nadiya (2019) assessed the influence of SM usage on parent-child relationships. It was found that SM use was widespread among children and parents of pre-primary school children with more on two thirds in this case. Clearly, Facebook and WhatsApp media were prominent among them. SM was found to be positively perceived as important for information on child care and upbringing despite the paradox of it consuming a significant amount of time that would be otherwise spent on child bonding which is fundamental in the early years of the child's development.

A study by Nitzburg and Farber (2013) examined the role of bonding in influencing feelings in regard to social media and their information provision on social media outlets.

The study found that disorganized and anxious bonding was a predictor of subscribers' application of social media outlets to avoid more physical communication, indicating that people with these tendencies apply social media to maintain relationships at a psychological distance. Anxious attachment was also a predictor of feelings of intimacy when applying social media outlets, may be manifesting the online need for consolation from others.

Hina, Sardar Zafar, Saeed, Alassaf, and Kamaleldin (2019) investigated the influence of high social media usage on family bonding i.e., how excessive usage of social media was effecting the family bond. The study showed that social media addiction as well as increased use of social media negatively influenced the family bond, especially damage to the quality of relationship and face to face communication.

Mwangi (2013) focused on the effects of social media sites on the parent- children bond. The research found that the social media enabled interactivity among family members at 40%, that the parents used Facebook as their most favorite social media network at 70%. Similarly, the study indicated that SM sites were visited daily at 75.1%. WhatsApp closely followed as the most favorite site with 64% using it on a daily basis. In regard to duration spent on sites, still Facebook and WhatsApp topped in terms of being visited for a long duration. Similarly, respondents indicated that they visited Facebook and WhatsApp seven days in every week. That a majority of the study participants checked the social media sites six (6) to 10 times daily.

Mwangi's (2013) study further established that the social media platforms impacted on interpersonal relationships of the adolescents. For example, the participants in overall admitted that they were emotionally connected to various social media sites. Some admitted that SM media had become part and parcel of their daily operations. The study also indicated



that social media mainly facilitated them in connecting and bonding with their equally digital friends and family members. The researcher concurs with these findings given that social media is so prevalent because of the many needs it satisfies including information and sharing of information.

Although the concept of Mwangi's study mirrors that of the current study, the context is different since the current study is based on the context of church members while the former was based on randomly selected respondents from the society. Secondly, Mwangi's study did not delve into the bonding factors affected by social media usage.

Social media on the other hand may have a positive effect on parent-child relationships. For example, some parents reported that technology was the only uniting experience helping them to have something in common with their children (Horst, 2014). Social media allows parents and children to stay connected, particularly those who are geographically dispersed, and family members report that social media sites support long-distance family relationships (Tee, Brush, & Inkpen, 2012). Social media can also help family members to converse about social concerns affecting the family daily and can also facilitate communication with household members living outside the country.

Many families today are designing family pages on social media platforms, sending family messages on social media, sharing family photos on these platforms, and report the ability to actively sustain relationships with extended family members online (Tee et al., 2012). Exchange of information among household members is always stated to be the key reason why people participate in online communication among older individuals to interact with their children and grandchildren (Karavidas, Lim, & Katsikas, 2015). The implication of this is that social media can still be used to promote family bonding. Therefore, families

need to capitalize on such opportunities to build their families and advance the welfare of the family.

According to Perry and Hawks (2013), in spite of the potential demerits of online technology usage, it equally offers opportunities for household members to connect to meet needs that may be both function or emotional in nature. For example, Pettigrew (2017) established that specific utilization of the texting function offered family members a unique opportunity and ability to remain connected day long. Further, Lenhart and Duggan (2013) indicated that social media offered a fast and accessible means to deal with family issues at any time of the day. This study also sought to identify if social media enhanced family bonding at Mavuno churches.

Mpepo (2017) undertook research on the impact of social media on interpersonal communication relationships amongst family members in Tanzania. The study's findings showed that 90 percent of 117 respondents agreed that social media had a positive influence in facilitated communication and support among family members in their daily lives. These findings imply that if used well, social media can be used to strengthen family bonding as opposed to weakening them.

As much as social media appears to exert a negative influence on the family relationships, there are also positive influences that social media may have on parent-child relationships and even on relationships between spouses (Hina et al., 2017).

## Theoretical Framework

This section presents the attachment theory which informs the study. Attachment theory propounds that children have an innate desire to develop a close relationship with one

key individual, normally the parents (Besser & Neria, 2012). When this fails, it occasions negative effects in the child's development processes, leading to a variety of psychological and social issues including a reduction in intelligence, depression, aggression, delinquency, and affectionless psychopathy (Fearon et al., 2016). The theory contends that attachment in children is largely a process of seeking closeness to a specific attachment figure during times of perceived distress or concern for the sole reason of survival (Besser & Neria, 2012). According to Brenning et al. (2012), children get attached to people they find sensitive and responsive to them during their social interactions processes and who remain sensitive and responsive consistently throughout their lives.

The key objective of the attachment behavioral structure is to keep the attachment figure continually accessible and available (Kobak & Madsen, 2008). The proponents of the theory initially were concerned with the early development of children. However, the theory has now been extended to concern adult relationships too (Johnson, 2019).

The theory describes factors that can lead to depression and anxiety disorders including fear, unfamiliarity, loneliness and stress (Graci & Fivush, 2016). This happens due to the bond between attachment styles and how they cause establishment of internal working models in an individual. At birth, an individual is innately programmed to establish attachment with others for survival (Bowlby, 1973; as cited in Graci & Fivush, 2016). In the initial stages of life, a child forms an attachment with one individual which acts as an example for all future social relationships and also acts as a foundation for exploring the surroundings (McLeod, 2009).

The central idea about this theory is that family members (parents and children) form bonds with each other which are developed and strengthened over time depending on the

experience with attachment figures in the relationship (Ainsworth,2008). The theory conceptualize attachment as a deep emotional bond formed between family members and provides a sense of security that enables family members to explore their environment as well as a source of refuge when distressed (Ayenew, 2016). Attachment bond, which from the standpoint of attachment theory is referred to as ‘proximity’ minimizes anxiety, fear, and associated types of distress, enabling people to participate in other life duties (Symptomson & Rholes, 2017).

The key and most fundamental tenet of attachment theory is that young children desire to build a relationship with one parent at the least for their effective social and emotional development, and in especially for learning how to control their feelings. Either of the parents may be the key attachment figure if they offer most of the support and care to the child and play a greater role in related social engagements (Holmes, 1993). Holmes further stated that the child will use the present sensitive and responsive parent as a safe base from where to learn of the world.

Modern attachment theory is premised on three key principles comprising bonding as an essential human need and control of emotion and fear to improve vitality and promotion of addictiveness and development (Johnson, 2019). According to Ainsworth (2008), seeking proximity to the attachment figure during a threatening situation is the key purpose of the attachment behavioral system. The main purpose of the attachment theory is the attention of the family members and the presence and responsiveness that those family members provide in the absence of the attachment figure or when the attachment figure fails to show love and care. An Attachment figure is also a secure base from which an infant can explore the world.

In addition, she formulated the concept of maternal sensitivity to infant signals and its role in the development of infant-mother attachment.

Attachment theory informs this study because it explains how parents act as the attachment figures to their children and how social media usage strengthens or severs the attachment or bond between parents and their children. Usage of social media may be used to improve or develop a strong bond or attachment between parents and children when they take time to interact and listen to each other for their successful social and emotional development and security, especially when they live distantly. However, by spending long hours on social media, the bond or attachment among family members may weaken due to lack of time to hold conversation or have face to face contact leading to build up of isolation and neglect feelings that may threaten the all-essential family unity and stability. This is because the most important tenet of attachment theory is that children need to develop a relationship with parents for their successful social and emotional development. Therefore, at the principal attachment figures, parents may not be able to understand and meet their children's needs if they spend too much time on social media without taking time away from social media to interact with their children.

### Conceptual Framework

According to Odhiambo and Waiganjo (2014), a conceptual framework describes a diagrammatic illustration based on variables of the study. The comprehension of these variables plays a crucial role in creating a ground for evaluating research inquiries and generalizing the results back to the research population (Scotland, 2012). The independent variable of this study was usage of social media measure by its frequency of use, duration spent on social media sites and types of SM sites used. On the other hand, the dependent

variable was the family bonding that takes place, measured by family communication and relationship, and family unity. Family leadership and family culture are the moderating variables that influences the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Figure 2.1 illustrates the conceptual framework of the study.

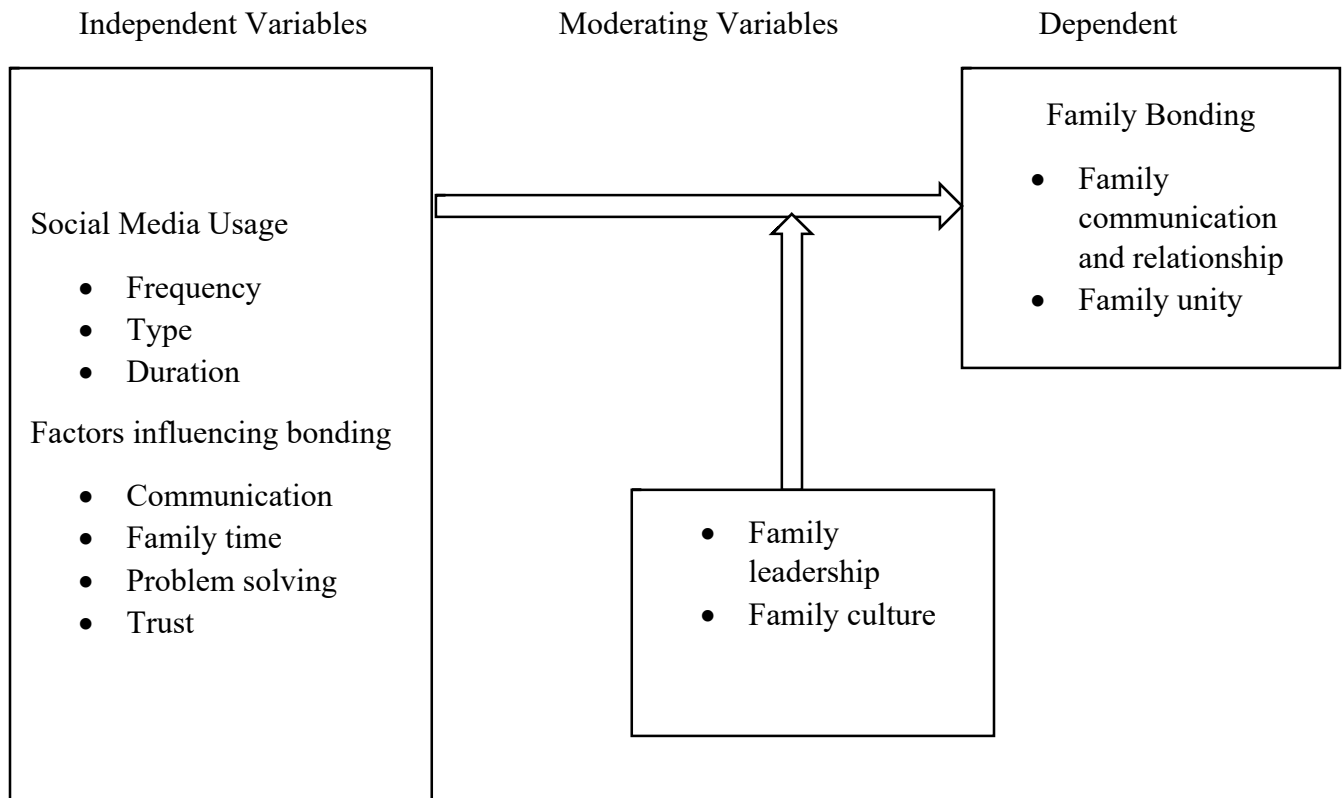


Figure 2. 1: *Conceptual Framework*  
Source: Researcher (2019)

### *Research Gap*

In the reviewed literature, the studies agree that internet-enabled technology is affecting social relationships. Some of the literature observes that social media is significant in facilitating its users to maintain closeness with others, while some other literature indicates that social media use can be at the expense of the family interpersonal relationships. This implies that the potential influence of SM on the bonding of family members is

characterized by inconsistent outcomes. On one hand, some studies indicate that the feeling of being connected facilitated by usage of social media can enhance family bonds (McGuire, Dworking, & McCann, 2016). On the other hand, other studies indicate that social media have diminished face to face communication and as a result there has been a reduction in relationships quality and intimacy among the social media subscribers and this threatens family unity and stability (Newman, 2012).

While the literature has indicated the effect of social media on relationships among household members, there is however limited literature or studies that have delved into the effect that social media use has on bonding among family members, particularly focusing on the church and family members. It is on this premise that the current study intended to bridge this void and equally avail literature and evidence that is premised on the church context.

### Summary

This chapter has presented a literature discussion that is pertinent to the topic of study. This was about the concept of bonding, use of social media and the influence of social media on family bonding. Equally discussed was the attachment theory in which the study is founded and the previous empirical studies related to study's key variables and also the conceptual framework depicting the interconnections between the variables of the study. Research methodology is discussed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology used in the study. It is organized into different sections including the research design, target population, sampling techniques, sample size, data collection instruments, data collection procedures, ethical considerations and data analysis.

#### Research Design

Research design describes the plan that guides the data collection and processing, designed to respond to research questions (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). In order to realize the study's objectives, a descriptive research design was adopted. Descriptive research design is a kind of research that collects information on the existing state of a phenomenon (Rahi, 2017). It enables the collection and analysis of data about people's attitudes, opinions and preferences concerning various social issues (Kothari, 2014). Further, Orodho (2012) noted that descriptive studies are restricted to fact finding and results into formulation of significant concepts of knowledge and answers to important problems. A descriptive design was therefore the most appropriate since the study aimed to describe and define how usage of social media influences bonding among family members.

Both quantitative and qualitative descriptive research methodologies were employed. According to Kothari (2014), the qualitative research approach comprises all methods, techniques and measures that yields non-numerical data, while quantitative research comprises methods and approaches that results in data that is numerical in nature. Use of questionnaires yielded quantitative data, while interviews resulted in qualitative data.



## Target Population

Target population comprises the cumulative combination of study participants who are identified to realize a generalized conclusion. It defines a specific group of individuals or cases, which are being investigated and are homogenous. The target population for this research comprised 1401 parents worshipping at Mavuno churches in Nairobi: Greenpark Mombasa road with 16 parents, Mavuno Downtown Chiromo with 432 parents, Mashariki Eastlands with 330 parents, LifeWay Thika road with 176 parents, Far East Eastlands with 15 parents, Donhome with 35 parents, Crossroad Lavington with 249 parents, Thika road with 26 parents and South B with 122 members. Table 3.1 depicts the target population.

Table 3. 1: *Target Population*

<i>Mavuno Church branch</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Greenpark Mombasa Road	16	1.1
Mavuno Downtown Chiromo	432	30.8
Mashariki Eastlands	330	23.5
Lifeway Thika Road	176	12.6
Far East Eastlands	15	1.1
Donhome	35	2.5
Crossroad Lavington	249	17.8
Thika road	26	1.9
South B	122	8.7
Total	1401	100

## Sampling Technique

Sampling refers to the procedure used in settling on a number of respondents or cases from the population being targeted for data collection, while ensuring that the sample selected is representative enough (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2012). A variety of sampling

designs exist namely probability and non-probability techniques. In this study, the researcher employed a proportionate sampling method.

According to Crossman (2012) proportionate sampling is a sampling method used when the population comprises many sub-groups that are largely different in number. The number of respondents from each sub-groups determined by their number relative to the entire population. In using this method, each element of the population has some chance of being selected to the sample. The sub- groups that were used in this study were based on the various Mavuno church branches in Nairobi County. In applying the proportionate sampling method, the researcher did a random selection of respondents from each sub-group.

Therefore, the study divided the population into nine groups namely Greenpark Mombasa Road, Mavuno DownTown Chiromo, Mashariki Eastlands, LifeWay Thika road, Far East Eastlands, Donhome, Crossroad Lavington, Thika Road and South B Mavuno churches. Respondents were then picked randomly from each sub-group proportionate to its size. The randomly selected respondents from each sub-group were accumulated to constitute the sample size that took part in the study.

### Sample Size

A sample refers to smaller unit selected from the target population for the purpose of participating in the study as respondents that is providing data for the study (Kothari, 2014). Sampling is a selection of research participants from a population (Creswell, 2014). Sample size selection is carefully done to ensure it is representative of the target population with key characteristics.

To arrive at the sample size, the researcher employed Yamane Taro's (1967) formula which states that the required sample size is determined by the target population and the acceptable margin of error which is expressed as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where; n= collected sample size, N = population size, and e = Margin of error (MoE), e = 0.1 based on the research condition.

N= 1401

e= 0.1

$$n = \frac{1401}{1 + 1401 (0.1)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1401}{15.01}$$

n= 93 respondents

Therefore, 93 was the sample was the sample size for the study.

Table 3.2. depicts how the sample size was determined.

*Table 3. 2: Sample Size*

Mavuno branch	Church	Population	Sample Size (6.6%)	Percentage (%)
Greenpark road	Mombasa	16	1	1
Mavuno Chiromo	Downtown	432	29	31
Mashariki Eastlands		330	22	24
Lifeway Thika Road		176	12	13
Far East Eastlands		15	1	1
Donhome		35	2	2
Crossroad Lavington		249	16	17
Thika road		26	2	2
South B		122	8	9
Total		1401	93	100

To strengthen the study, key informant interviews were conducted with nine pastors heading the nine churches that make up Mavuno church in Nairobi, resulting in a sample size of 102 respondents.

#### Types of Data

There are two types of data that a researcher can use namely primary data and secondary data (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Primary data refers to the data freshly collected from the field. Secondary data on the other hand defines the existing data in form of published materials like articles and journals. Both primary data and secondary data were employed in this study. Reviewing academic journals and books containing information on social media use and family bonding was the source of secondary data in this study. Data that was collected through questionnaires and interviews comprised primary data.

## Data Collection Instruments

According to Kothari (2014), data collection instruments are the tools used in collecting data including the questionnaire, interviews, and observation. In this study, questionnaires and key informant interviews were employed in data collection. A questionnaire is an approach of data collection whereby individuals are asked to answer a similar set of questions in specific order. Since the series of questions being answered by respondents are similar, the questionnaire provides an effective means by which data is collected before it can be analyzed (Saunders, 2014). Key informant interviews are verbal questions which are direct and open ended so as enable the interviewer to emphasize on depth and detail (Rubin & Rubin, 2015). Gray (2013) defined key informant interviews as communications occurring between a researcher and an interviewee that generates data in form of words. Individual dialogues contribute to in-depth data collection as it offers insights into respondent's beliefs, understandings, perceptions and experiences of a given occurrence (Frances, Coughlan, & Cronin, 2009).

Questionnaires yielded quantitative data, while key informant interviews yielded qualitative data. The suitability of questionnaire in this study was based on the fact that they facilitate the researcher to obtain quantitative information in standardized manner that enables the data to be consistent and coherent (Roopa & Rani, 2012). Kothari (2014) observed that structured questionnaires are relevant for a descriptive study because they can be administered easily and does not need complicated skills. Additionally, questionnaires are cost effective and are constructed and administered with relatively easy. Further, they tend to provide data that is relatively objective and hence most effective (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2012).

For qualitative data, the study used key informant interviews, which are questions that involve physical interaction. Kothari (2014) noted that interviews are especially relevant for an intensive study. Interviews are suitable in the sense that the researcher is able to obtain in-depth information through the use of probing questions. Interviews also enable clarification of confusing questions or issues, they are flexible and have a high rate of response. The researcher conducted interviews with nine (9) pastors of the nine churches that make up Mavuno church in Nairobi.

#### Data Collection Procedure

Data collection is the specific methodical process of gathering data that is pertinent to the research problem, study objectives, research questions or the hypothesis of the study (Gray, 2013). The primary data of this study was collected after obtaining research permit, pre-testing the research questionnaires, and making adequate copies of the research questionnaires for distribution to the respondents. The researcher obtained the permits from PAC University's ethical review committee, National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) and Mavuno church management before administration of the tools. After obtaining the permissions, research assistants who helped in the administration of the questionnaires were recruited and trained.

Through the church leadership, the parents gathered after worship on Sunday in the church and requested to fill the questionnaires after the purpose and significance of the study had been explained to them. Each of them upon consenting was administered with the questionnaire for filling. The researcher also was present to clarify any question that was not be clear. Upon filling the questionnaires, the researcher collected them for analysis.

## Pretesting

According to Webster and Sell (2014), pretesting is an exercise that consists of examining different elements of the research tool in order to ascertain what is and what is not working as expected. The reason why a researcher should carry out questionnaire pre-testing is to improve the potential response rate, since through the initial test, poorly constructed and complicated questions are identified and eliminated or rectified. Monet and Dejong (2010) noted that pre-testing is done so as to ensure clarity of the questionnaires contents and can be interpreted the same way by all the respondents. During this process, the researcher will be able to note items that are confusing, sensitive or annoying and correct them. The researcher pretested the questionnaire to make sure it meets the objectives of the study.

According to Cooper and Schindler (2014), 10% of the sample size is adequate for a pretest study in ensuring validity of the data questionnaires. Because the sample size is 93, the pre-test was conducted on 9 participants, which is 10% of the sample size. The respondents were picked from Mavuno Church parents. The pre-test helped the researcher to enhance the validity and reliability of the questionnaire in assessing its usefulness and make appropriate adjustments before using them with the respondents for the actual study. The adjustments included deficiencies revealed for example, spelling mistakes, ambiguous questions and insufficient space to write the responses which were corrected. This pre-test data was not part of the actual study.

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient ( $\alpha$ ), formulated in 1951 by Lee Cronbach to measure the internal consistency of a test or scale (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011), was used in this study to measure the test instrument's internal consistency.

The findings indicated that the coefficient for Cronbach’s alpha based on standardized values was 0.861 and those for the bonding factors were above 0.6. A coefficient value of 0.6 and above is considered sufficient for analysis and 0.70 and above is the most appropriate. Therefore, the findings indicated sufficient and most appropriate Cronbach’s alpha values for the analysis and hence appropriate to persist with data collection using the research tool. The values are shown in Table 3.3.

*Table 3.3: Reliability Statistics*

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items		
0.77	0.861	5		
Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Social networking sites take away my face-to-face socializing time with my family.	7.8	13.7	0.506	0.74
The use of social media affects my personal relationships with family members.	7.4	11.3	0.835	0.625
The use of social media denies me time to bond with my family members	8.4	10.3	0.801	0.621
The use of social media affects my communication with family members.	8.8	15.7	0.875	0.73
The use of social media interrupts or hinders our problem-solving sessions	7.6	13.3	0.238	0.882

### Data Analysis

Data analysis is a process that entails procedures like editing, coding, and tabulation of data collected (Kothari, 2014). In data analysis, the researcher cleans and edits the



collected data and enters it into data analysis software for processing and interpretation. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0 was employed in data analysis. The data was first coded whereby all responses were given codes to facilitate data capturing. The codes were then entered into SPSS for analysis. Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) were conducted which provided general descriptions of the study findings.

### Ethical Considerations

In this study, the first ethical requirement followed was to be compliance with the legal requirements for conducting research. Following the approval of the study by the School of Human and Social Sciences, the researcher applied for clearance and approval to carry out field study from the PAC University Ethics Review Committee. The researcher addressed the concerns raised by the review committee before proceeding to apply for a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). After three weeks, the researcher received the permit and proceeded to seek permission for data collection from Mavuno Church leadership. This was done through an introduction letter from PAC University Graduate School which was taken to the leadership of Mavuno Church.

Respondents voluntarily took part in the study and adequate measures were observed to ensure confidentiality of the collected data. The questionnaires were kept anonymous as names of the participants were not required. The anonymity was enhanced by using codes for the respondents. The specific responses to questions were also a well-guarded secret and used for the study purposes only. Participation in the study was through personal consent by the respondents before participating in the study.

Participation was an exercise of one's own choice without manipulation. The

researcher endeavored to inform the respondents about the purpose, nature and significance of this study. Informed consent forms were issued to be signed as an indication of voluntary participation.

This study also upheld the right to confidentiality. The researcher guaranteed the confidentiality of the information which was collected. The collected data was maintained in a secure place and was not used for other purposes other than for this study. Further, the respondents were anonymous, meaning their identity was not disclosed on the questionnaires and also to other parties that were not involved in the research. This was achieved by use of codes on the questionnaires. Upon completion of fieldwork, the raw data was kept under lock and key in a secure cabinet. The researcher also strived to maintain objectivity in reporting the findings of the study and any information cited from studies was acknowledged accordingly through referencing.

### Summary

This chapter primarily focused on the procedure and approaches that were observed in carrying out the study. The approaches discussed included the research approach that the study adopted, the population that was targeted, the sampling method that was employed to arrive at the study's sample size, tools that were utilized in collecting data, the approaches of data analysis and the ethical principles that were adhered to during the process of answering the research questions.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings of the data collected in examining the outcome of parental social media usage on the family bond, focusing on families at Mavuno churches in Nairobi County in Kenya. This was done in accordance to the study's objectives which were to identify social media sites used by parents at Mavuno churches, to establish the amount of time spent on social media by parents in Mavuno churches, to assess the bonding factors affected by social media usage among parents in Mavuno churches and establish the measures that can be applied to enhance family bonding regarding SM use among parents in Mavuno churches. The response rate, demographic attributes of the respondents and descriptive statistics from the analysis are presented in pie charts, tables, and graphs.

#### Analysis and Interpretation

##### Response Rate

The researcher administered a total of 93 questionnaires out of which 90 were effectively filled and returned resulting in a response rate of 97%. Mugenda and Mugenda (2012) asserted that a 50-60% response rate is sufficient, 61-70% is good, and above 70% is an excellent response rate. Therefore, the response rate of was excellent for data analysis.

## Demographic Information

The research sought to collect data regarding the demographic characteristics of the respondents including gender, age bracket, highest level of education, and occupation. The results were as presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4. 1: *Respondents' Demographic Characteristics*

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	25	27.8
Female	65	72.2
Total	90	100
Age bracket	Frequency	Percent
20-30 years	6	6.7
31-40 years	40	44.4
41-50 years	33	36.7
51-60 years	11	12.2
Total	90	100
Highest Level of Education	Frequency	Percent
Certificate	5	5.6
Diploma	18	20
Bachelor's degree	38	42.2
Master's or PhD	29	32.2
Total	90	100
Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Administrator	9	10
Clerical support worker	2	2.2
Craft and related trade worker	4	4.4
Elementary occupation	2	2.2
Homeschooler	1	1.1
Manager	6	6.7
Professional	34	37.8
Service and sales worker	21	23.3
Spiritual leader	7	7.8
Teacher	4	4.4
Total	90	100

The research findings indicated that 65(72.2%) respondents were female while 25(27.8%) were male as represented in Table 4.1. This demonstrates that both gender were represented in the study. The respondents were also asked to indicate their age bracket and as shown in Table 4.1, 40(44.4%) of the respondents were aged between 31-40 years, 33(36.7%) were 41-50 years, 11(12.2%) were 51-60 years and 6(6.7%) were aged between 20-30 years. This implies the respondents' age ranged between 20 and 60 years meaning that data was collected from both youthful and experienced parents and this was significant in that balanced information and experiences in regard to the outcome of parental social media usage on the family bond.

Regarding the respondents' highest level of education, 38(42.2%) of the respondents were bachelor's degree holders, 29(32.2%) had either Masters or PhD, 18(20%) had Diplomas and 5(5.6%) respondents were certificate holders. This indicates that the respondents were literate enough to understand the questions in the questionnaire to enable them provide reliable responses. The level of education was important since it matters in understanding the positive and negative outcomes associated with the use of social media.

The respondents were further asked to indicate their occupation. It was found that the respondents worked in different fields where 34(37.8%) indicated they did professional work, 21(23.3%) were service and sales workers, 9(10%) were administrators, 7(7.8%) were spiritual leaders, 6(6.7%) were managers, while 4(4.4%) were teachers, another 4(4%) were mechanics and 2(3.3%) did clerical and support work. These research findings imply that with the increasing advancement in technology, parents use social media variedly irrespective of their occupation.

## Social Media Usage

The first objective of this study was to identify the social media sites that parents in Mavuno churches use. The respondents were therefore asked to indicate whether they used social media and if so which social media sites they used. The study findings are as indicated in Table 4.2.

Table 4. 2: *Social Media Use*

Do you use social media?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	90	100
	Responses	
Social media sites used	N	Percent
Facebook	87	97.00%
Twitter	60	67.00%
WhatsApp	90	100.00%
YouTube	84	93.00%
Others (Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, Zoom, Snapchat, Telegram)	67	74.00%

The study findings indicate that all the respondents (100%) used social media. When asked which social media sites they used, all of the respondents (100%) stated that they used WhatsApp, 87(97%) used Facebook, 84(93.3%) used YouTube, 60(67%) used Twitter, while 67(74.4%) used other social network sites such as Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, Zoom, Snapchat and Telegram. It can therefore be deduced that all the social media platforms were popular among the parents. It is noteworthy that WhatsApp and Facebook had more users than the rest which is consistent with Wright and Hinson (2010) who indicated that with the availability of the many social media network sites, some receive much more web traffic than others. Wright and Hinson (2010) also stated that popular social networking sites such as Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube are ranked among the list of the world's most accessed websites.



### Favorite Social Networking Site

The respondents were required to state their favorite social network site and the findings are illustrated in Table 4.3.

Table 4. 3: *Favorite Social Networking Site Used*

Social Network Site	Frequency	Percent
All	2	2.2
Facebook	17	18.9
Instagram	3	3.3
Instagram and Facebook	1	1.1
Instagram and TikTok	3	3.3
Twitter	1	1.1
WhatsApp	60	66.6
YouTube	3	3.3

The study findings show that WhatsApp was the favorite social media platforms among 60(66.6%) of the respondents, followed by Facebook at 17(18.8%). Facebook Group (2011) stated that WhatsApp and Facebook encompass various updated and upgraded features which have a tremendous growth in terms of global popularity. This has enhanced bonding and bridging as it enhances communications in different dimensions.

This finding is consistent with Novelli (2016) who found that 70% of the respondents used Facebook, 65% used WhatsApp and 56% Twitter. Similarly, Kimeto (2016) who studied the effect of social media on marital success established that among married individuals, 95% used Facebook, 78% used Twitter and 70% Instagram.

According to Research World International (RWI) (2016), social network sites are an important channel for people's daily interactions. Users rely on these platforms to connect with their family members and friends, gather information and share what is significant to



them. Moreover, a household survey done by RWI (2016) established that WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Snapchat were the most popular social network platforms, where 72.1% of the parents accessed smartphones and 45% were constantly online.

Cachia (2015) noted that the number of people that access social media for communication has been rising globally among family members with studies showing that social media has been incorporated into daily activities and it is applied by household members in building relationship beyond the family (Braskov, 2011). Kenya leads the countries in East Africa in terms of social media use (Ozad & Uygarer, 2016). This has been facilitated by heightened internet availability in the last ten years, particularly in town centers and as a consequence, social media presence has been on the increase in the country (Kamwaria et al., 2015).

Studies by Golder, Wilkinson and Huberman (2017); Arvantis, Loukis, Coyle and Vaughn (2018), concur that social media and social networks are part and parcel of human beings' characterization or rather human behavior. Their respective studies indicate that human beings need to fulfil the urge to communicate and interact with people they know. This can be in order to share information, knowledge or common interest. For many people, the internet is an effective tool for social networking in order to fulfill various urges such as building relationships, discussion of trending issues, or to find potential soulmates. Such tools are increasingly becoming more popular (Munene & Nyaribo, 2016).

### *The Number of Social Media friends or followers*

The respondents were also asked to indicate the number of social medial friends and or friends they had. Figure 4.1 shows the findings.

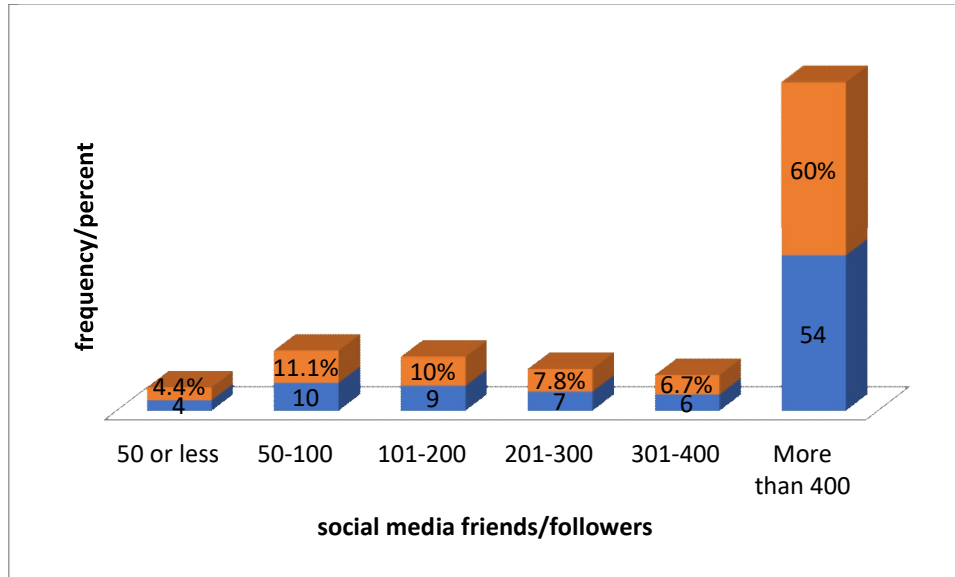


Figure 4. 1: *Social Media Friends or Followers*

Findings in Figure 4.1 show that 54(60%) of the respondents had more than four hundred followers, 10(11.1%) respondents between 50-100 followers, 9(10%) had between 101-200 friends, 7(7.8%) had 201-300 friends, while 6(6.7%) had 301-400 friends and 4(4.4%) had 50 or less friends. The findings demonstrate that more than half of the respondents had more than four hundred followers indicating that they were very active in social media a fact that influenced the many followers.

### *The Main Reason for Using Social Media*

The respondents were requested to state the reasons for which they used social media and Table 4.4 shows the findings.

Table 4. 4: *Main Reason for Using Social Media*

Reasons for using SM sites	N	Responses
		Percent
Keep in touch	73	25.60%
Meet new people	7	2.50%
Find new information	76	26.70%
Advertisement	37	13.00%
Exchanging files	19	6.70%
Share interests	21	7.40%
Commenting on friend's update	25	8.80%
Making plans with friends	22	7.70%
Others (Entertainment, work, ministry)	5	1.80%

The study findings in Table 4.4 show that most of the respondents at 76(84.4%) used social media to find new information, 73(81.1%) used it to keep in touch, 37(41.1%) used social media for advertisement, 25(27.8%) used it commenting on friends' update, while 22(24.4%) of the respondents used social media in making plans with friends. Others used social media in sharing interests as indicated by 21(23.3%) respondents, 19(21.1%) stated they used it in exchanging files, 7(7.8%) used it to meet new people and 5(5.6%) used it for other reasons like entertainment, work and ministry. This implies that in using social media, respondents were motivated by different reasons. Marshall (2017) concluded that social media sites have hooked millions of subscribers who naturally belong to a family, majority of whom have made these sites to be part of their daily communication engagements and has enabled individuals to be in touch with each other and share information at the expense of physical interactions.

#### Social Media Usage

The respondents were asked to state how often they accessed social media sites and to estimate the time they spent while visiting social media sites in a single visit and in a day.

Figure 4.2 presents the findings.

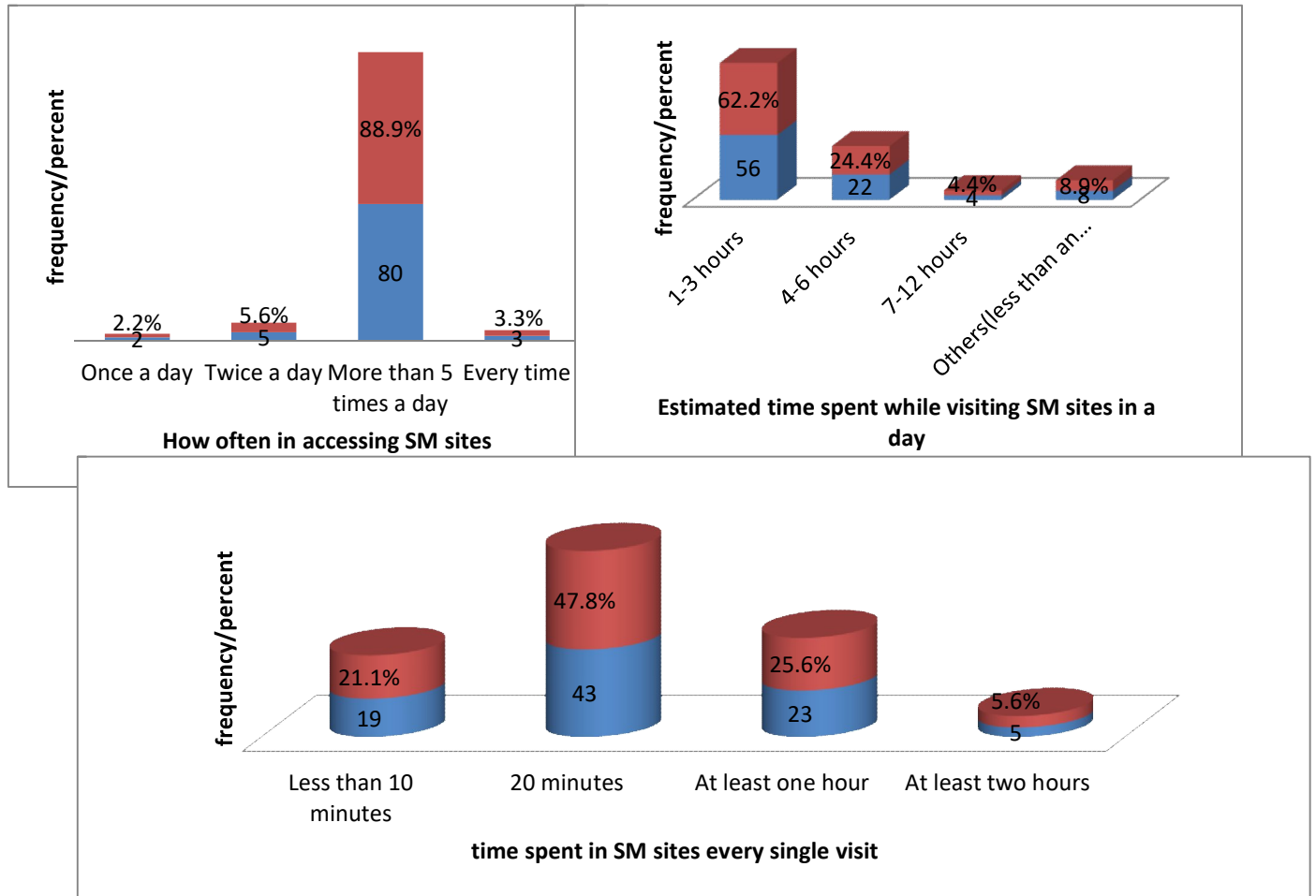


Figure 4. 2 : *Frequency of SM Access and Time Spent in a Single Visit in a day*

The results illustrated in Figure 4.2 indicate that a majority of the respondents at 80(88.9%) accessed SM sites more than five times a day, 5(5.6%) accessed twice a day, 3(3.3%) accessed every time, while 2(2.2%) accessed once a day. In regards to time they spent in SM site every single visit, 43(47.8%) respondents stated that they spent twenty minutes, 23(25.6%) spent at least one hour, 19(21.1%) spent less than ten minutes, while 5(5.6%) spent at least two hours.

In regard to the estimated time spent while visiting SM site in a day, 56(62.2%) of the respondents stated that they spent 1-3 hours, 22(24.6%) spent 4-6 hours, 4(4.4%) spent 7-12 hours and 8(8.9%) spent less than an hour. Marshall (2017) noted that the frequency of

access to social media sites and time spent on a single visit and daily usually depends on the activities and reasons for visiting the SM sites. For instance, respondents who use SM sites for work purposes will spend more time on social media.

These results demonstrates that a majority of the respondents spent more quality time on the SM networks, a fact that implies this habit negatively impacted on the family bond. This concurs with a household survey done by RWI (2016) which revealed that parents used excessive amount of time on social media neglecting their children, and at times leaving them unattended as they remained immersed in the information shared through the SNS. RWI (2016) also noted that spending too much time on social media by parents impacts how much attention parents give their children and subsequently the extent of attachment and bonding.

In his study, Mwangi (2017) found that 70% of respondents visited social media sites four times or more spending more than 30 minutes on social media per visit. Similarly, a study by Kimeto (2016) indicated that 23% of the respondents spent less than 10 minutes on social media per visit, 20% spent 15-20 minutes, 23% spent 30-40 minutes and 34% spent more than 40 minutes on social media. On their part, Ozad and Uygurer 2016) established that 72% of the respondents visited SNS any time, 17% of the respondents did so mostly in the evening and 11% of the respondents did so mostly in the morning. This suggests that SNS use was a spontaneous activity and majority of the respondents did not dedicate a specific time of day to SNS.

Wallis (2016) stated that excessive use of social media has resulted to a situation where people are “elsewhere” all the time, often distracted from the social and physical presence of the moment to a more interesting engagement. This further supports the assertion

that use of social media in the presence of children results to distracted parenthood and change in parenting approaches and styles. Kharana (2015) observed that social media sites are increasingly affecting how the people spend their leisure time and even during times when they are meant to be productive like at work or in school.

Scott (2014) contended that there is a likelihood that family members with children engage in social media more than those without children. The resulting lack of attention by the parents towards their children may result to heightened instances of tantrums, anxiety, and resistance to discipline. The key reason as to why there is inattention to parenting in the digital era originates from the sudden peak in its usage.

#### Form of Internet Connectivity Used

The respondents were asked to state the form of internet connectivity they used. The findings are summarized in Figure 4.3.

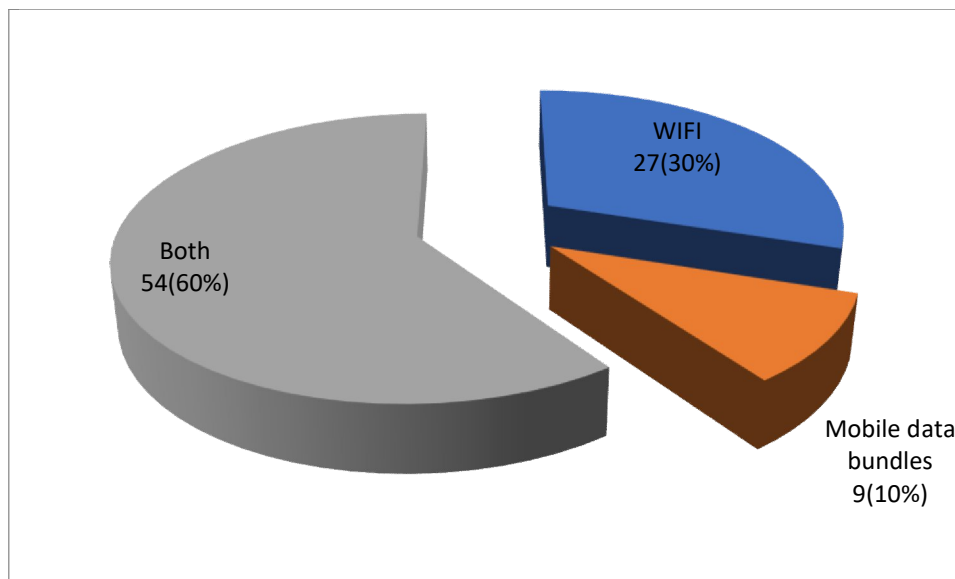


Figure 4. 3: *Form of Internet Connectivity Respondents Used*

As captured in Figure 4.3, 54(60%) of the respondents used both WIFI and mobile data bundles for internet connectivity, 27(30%) used WIFI and 9(10%) used mobile data bundles for internet connectivity. This is explained through the relatively cost of data and WIFI connectivity offered by service providers making social media a very affordable and convenient mode of communication. Other service providers provide free internet bundle to connect to other social medial sites such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube. This also fosters the accessibility of these SN sites.

#### Number of Years Respondents Used Social Media Platforms

The study also sought to find out the number of years the respondents had been using various social media platforms. Figure 4.4 depicts the results.

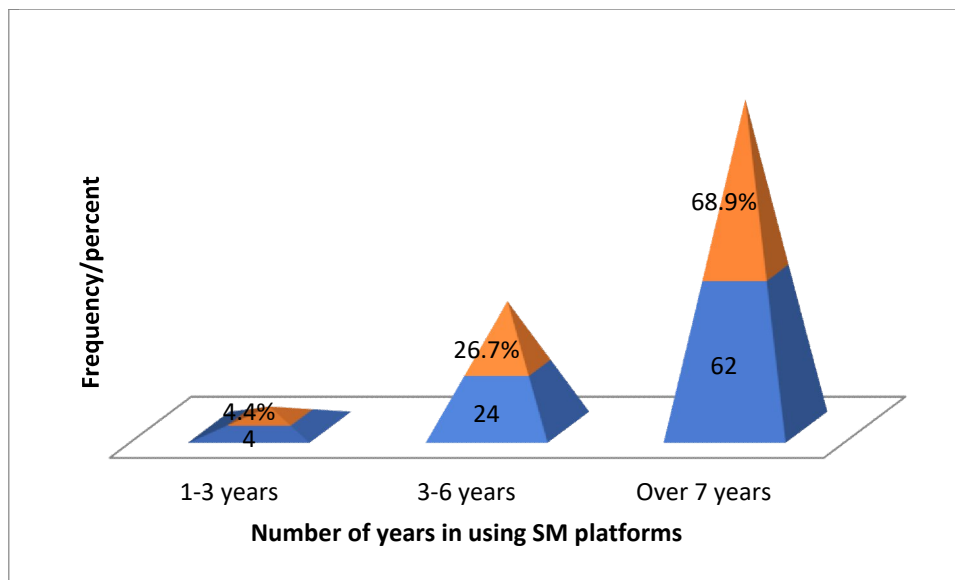


Figure 4. 4: *Number of Years Respondents had Been Using SM Platforms*

Regarding to the number of years the respondents had been using SM platforms (see Figure 4.4), 62(68.9%) of the respondents had been using SM platforms for over seven years, 24(26.7%) indicated that they have been using SM platforms for a period of 3-6 years and 4(4.4%) indicated of 1-3 years. It is vivid from the findings that respondents had been using

SM platforms for a long time and thus could provide reliable information to help in meeting the main objective of the study which is social media usage and its outcome in bonding.

#### Outcome of SM Use on Family Bonding

The respondents were asked to state whether they spent time in a day to bond with their families and to justify their answer. The study findings are summarized in Table 4.5.

Table 4. 5: *Whether Respondents Spent Time to Bond with their Family/Children*

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	77	85.6
No	11	12.2
No response	2	2.2
Total	90	100
Reason for the answer	Frequency	Percent
For bonding	30	33.3
For establishing health relationship	5	5.5
Human conversation is key to growth	1	1.1
I value active presence	3	3.3
It is a responsibility	33	36.7
Long hours for work	4	4.4
They need freedom	2	2.2
To be connected and sharing on life challenges	2	2.2
To prevent wrong imitation	1	1.1

The study findings (see Table 4.5) show that majority of the respondents at 77(85.6%) spent time in a day to bond with their family and children, while 11(12.2%) did not. Among those who spent time during the day with family, 33(36.7%) gave the reason that it is their responsibility to do so, 30(33.3%) used the time for bonding, 4(4.4%) expressed the significance of spending time with family together as it establishes healthy relationship, 3(3.3%) valued active presence, 2(2.2%) indicated that it aided in connecting and sharing on life challenges and those who affirmed that it helped in preventing wrong imitation and that conversations are key to growth had a tie at 1(1.1%). For those who stated



they did not spend time during day with family and children, 4(4.4%) indicated it was because of the long hours they spent at work, 3(3.3%) stated that they needed freedom. This implies that most parents found time to bond with their children as much as they also spent time on social media. However, bonding time was challenged by the long hours' parents spend working in a day.

The key informants (pastors) had the following to say in regard to how important family bonding time is for families.

“Taking time as a family to bond strengthens family unity and relationship, increases love and trust among family members and establishes the habit of doing family activities together and this increases family communication”. Therefore, higher parent-child bonding results in a better parent-child relationship in a family.

Another key informant stated that; “family bonding time affords parents and their children the opportunity to express their concern and issues as well as opportunity for resolving underlying conflicts and contributes to family unity. It also improves family communication and parents become more responsive and sensitive to the needs of their children”.

Similarly, another key informant stated that; “bonding time is critical in enhancing family ties and closeness by placing family members in more regular contact with each other and this fills any existing communication gaps and outstanding misunderstanding among family members

These findings are consistent with Bean (2014) who stated that when parents and their children find time to bond, their emotional connectedness is enhanced and this leads to increased affection, warmth, and trust. As a consequence, the parents and their children have a better relationship as they enjoy carrying out activities together and are most likely to communicate openly. They tend to offer emotional support and show respect to each other as well.

#### Difference in the way Parents Interacted with Family before they Started Using SM

As to whether social media use altered the interaction among the respondents with their family, respondents were asked to state if they saw a difference in the way they played or interacted with family and children before they started using social media. The results are presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4. 6: *Whether there was a Difference in the Way Parents Interacted with family before they started using SM and Now when Using SM*

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	63	70
No	24	26.7
No response	3	3.3
Total	90	100
Reason for the answer	Frequency	Percent
No response	18	20
Affects bonding time	20	22.2
Children are always on YouTube or playing games	6	6.6
Children are young	1	1.1
Communications are easier	3	3.3
Easier to keep in touch and update real time	1	1.1
Enhanced interaction	5	5.5
Increased bonding and bridging	1	1.1
Intentionally setting time to bond	2	2.2
It is addictive	2	2.2
Social isolation	2	2.2
Spending quality time together	1	1.1
Time consuming and distracting	22	24.4

The study findings indicated that 63(70%) of the parents affirmed that they saw a difference in the way they played or interacted with family and children before they started using social media, while 24(26.7%) did not. Those who affirmed however had varied views on the outcome of social media, where 22(24.4%) expressed a concern that social media was time consuming and distracting, 20(22.2%) indicated that it had affected bonding time, 6(6.6%) stated that children were always on YouTube or playing games, 2(2.2%) indicated social isolation and 1(1.1%) indicated that it was addictive. These findings clearly indicate that social media is changing the relationships in the family. For instance, parents prioritize spending time on social media over spending time with family. Spending long hours on social media reduces the time parents and children spend together in common activities facilitating the social isolation of children from adults, effects on parenting causing parental distraction, decreasing the level of everyday parental engagement. There is also decrease in the quality of physical and emotional infidelity, relationship dissatisfaction, romantic disengagement, and a higher risk of divorce. Social media has the ability to become very addictive. Most people are addicted to checking their phones every few minutes to see if they have any new notifications.

In support, the key informants made the following observations in regard to the outcome of social media use.

“Social media has had effect on how much attention parents give to their children and ultimately, this has weakened the degree of parent to child attachment and bonding. Consequently, children end deprived of the very important parent-child play and face to face communication” (Respondent 1).

“Spending many hours in social media decreases the critical face to face communication activities vital in creating strong bond between parents and their children. Equally, the many hours used in social media denies the child the emotional presence making the parent not to attend to the very important needs of a child” (Respondent 2).

Spending too much time on social media deteriorates the parents’ relationship with their children. This is because it makes parents to forfeit and reduce the time they put a side to hold face to face interaction with their children. This causes long term problems in the relationship as the love shared between the family members is reduced, meaning that the children lack enough attention from the parents and therefore they don’t grow up happily (Respondent 3).

“Social media strains the emotional connection in a family and consequently, and anger and hostility may be experienced among the parents and children. They are also most likely to have poor communication and lack of mutual respect for each other. Hence, they may not value each other’s opinions and may also not understand the needs of each other” (Respondent 4).

Another key informant equally stated that;

“The continuous use of social media leads to increased and overreliance on mobile phones and this increases likelihood for parents' social media use to disrupt parent-child communication. This means that verbally and non-verbally, parents become less sensitive and responsive to their children's effort for attention and this lowers the quality of parent-child communication”.

The study findings concur with Ralston (2016) who indicated that parental distraction as a result of SM directly threatens the welfare of children since the parents are constantly glued on their devices as compared to checking on their children closely. In another study, Leung and Lee (2016) posited that social media engagement diminish household and personal leisure time by keeping individuals excessively glued on social media platforms and hence reducing face-to-face meetings. Essentially, this manifests in diminished joy, happiness, and less empowered individuals and consequently, this negatively impacts other associations in their lives and the quality of time interactions with their children.

Among the respondents, 3(3.3%) indicated that social media has eased communications, enhanced interactions and enhanced working at a tie. On the other hand, 2(2.2%) of the respondents indicated social media has facilitated learning items like a play and 1(1.1%) indicated that it has increased bonding and bridging. This indicates that the benefits of social media are undisputable. For instance, nowadays all TV and radio stations are on social media and this has aided in getting latest and updated information thus fostering dissemination of information. Parents can also communicate with children in case of emergencies and families can interact with family members who are far through social media and this facilitates bonding and bridging.

The key informants also indicated that social media has its benefits in family bonding as one of them clearly articulated;

“Social media if used well is critical in improving the family bond by for example creating family pages on social networking sites, sending family messages and pictures on these platforms” (Respondent 1).

Social media use improves interpersonal communication relationships among family members since it enables them to connect and keep in touch with each other. It also provides a quick and accessible way to resolve family issues and concerns at any time such as discussing family members' responsibilities throughout the day'' (Respondent 2).

Family members can also employ social media to express love and feeling for each other. This display of love can be done through depicting themselves in their social media default profile photos that are displayed on their main profile pages (Respondent 3).

“That social media helps in bonding among family members who live afar since they are able to keep in touch with the family members they cannot not see on regular basis. This helped in improving family relationship’’ (Respondent 4).

“Family members use social media as a platform for checking up on their family members’’ (Respondent 5).

The findings show that the use of social media can be useful in expressing relationships among family members. This is true because of the fact that social media are channels of communication which family members can employ to communicate their feelings to each other.

Tee et al. (2012) asserted that social media allows parents and children to stay connected, particularly those who are geographically dispersed and that social media sites support long-distance family relationships. The main reason for engaging online communication among individuals is to interact with children and grandchildren (Karavidas,

et al., 2015) and implying that social media is used to promote family bonding. In a similar study on the impact of social media on interpersonal communication relationships amongst family members in Tanzania, Mpepo (2017) found that 90% of the respondents stated that use of social media had a positive influence since it facilitated communication and support among family and therefore social media can be used to strengthen family bonding.

#### Impact of Social Networking Sites to Family Relationship

The respondents were also asked to indicate what social networking sites had done to their relationship with children and parents. The findings were summarized in Figure 4.5.

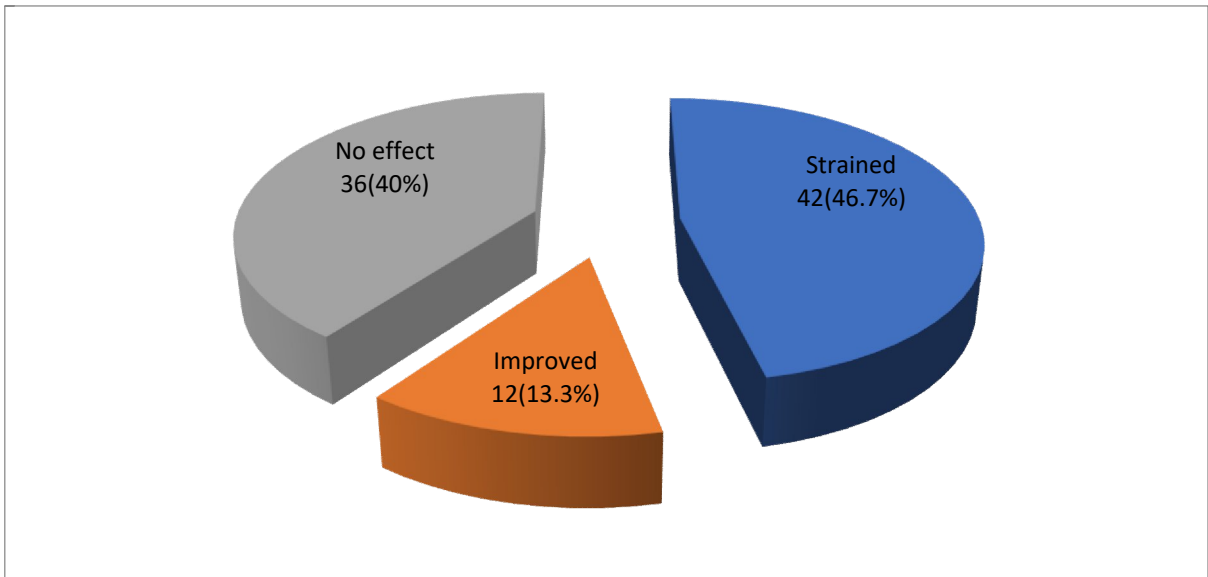


Figure 4. 5: *Impact of SNS to Family Relationship*

Findings presented in Figure 4.5 show that 42(46.7%) of the respondents stated that social networking sites had resulted to a strained relationship with children and parents, 12(13.3%) indicated that social networking sites had improved their relationship with children, while 36(40%) indicated no effect. This is a clear indication that social media usage not only had positive outcomes on family relationship but also has the negative ones.

## Bonding Factors Affected by Social Media Usage

The study sought respondents' views based on the extent of their agreement or disagreement on statements assessing the bonding factors affected by social media usage.

Table 4.7 provides the results.

*Table 4.7: Bonding Factors Affected by Social Media Usage*

Statement	extent of agreement					
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Social networking sites take away my face-to-face socializing time with my family.	Freq	5	16	15	32	22
	Percent	5.6	17.8	16.7	35.6	24.4
The use of social media affects my personal relationships with family members.	Freq	10	12	22	36	10
	Percent	11.1	13.3	24.4	40	11.1
The use of social media denies me time to bond with my family members	Freq	12	12	25	29	12
	Percent	13.3	13.3	27.8	32.2	13.3
The use of social media affects my communication with family members.	Freq	14	19	27	21	9
	Percent	15.6	21.1	30	23.3	10
The use of social media interrupts or hinders our problem-solving sessions	Freq	11	17	23	28	11
	Percent	12.2	18.9	25.6	31.1	12.2

The study findings in Table 4.7 show that 54(60%) of the parents affirmed that social networking sites took away their face-to-face socialization time with their family, 21(23.4%) disagreed, while 15(16.7%) of the respondents were neutral to the statement. On whether the use of social media affects communication with family members, 30(33.3%) of the parents agreed, 33(36.7%) disagreed and 27(30%) parents remained neutral.



Golden (2015) noted that social media use for long hours affects family relations through reduced time parents and children spend together in common activities, effects on parenting causing parental distraction, decreasing the level of everyday parental engagement. Social media usage negatively influences couple's interactions or time spent together, decreases the quality of physical and emotional connectedness and failure to develop normal modes of expression hinders face-to-face interactions and social involvement with the end result being reduced quality of family relationships.

The implication of this is that individuals can be in the same house without ever speaking to each other but are engaging and connecting on the different social media networking sites. This in turn kills the art of observing and interpreting body composure and nonverbal cues. This is the opposite of pre-social media days where individuals developed face to face relationships. In another study, Blake and Wrothen (2015) observed that household members do not hold a lot of face-to-face communication since they are glued on social media. They rather send text messages, including when they are in very short distances from each other or within the same space.

In regard to whether the use of social media negatively affects personal relationships with family members, 10(11.1%) respondents strongly agreed, 36(40%) agreed, 12(13.3%) disagreed, 10(11.1%) strongly disagreed while 22(24.4%) were neutral to the statement. This is usually demonstrated in the presence of high jealousy feelings in online relationships where couples will tend to be more jealous and as a result start stalking each other's profile. This has affected most families even in the church setting and finally the children are affected which further results to stress, depression, anxiety, and unhappy families. This was observed by Clayton (2014) on the study which focused on examining how social media usage

specifically the meditational impact of Twitter-related disagreements on the relationship among Twitter engagements and negative relationship results and established that active usage of Twitter led to increased levels of conflicts among romantic couples and this in turn bred infidelity, separation, and divorce.

Regarding the statement: “The use of social media denies me time to bond with my family members”, 41(55.5%) respondents concurred w the statement, 12(13.3%) disagreed and strongly disagreed, while 25(27.8%) remained neutral. This is demonstrated when family members incorporate social media in their daily life, parents using social media in attending meetings after work and church such as chatroom, zoom ignoring the very essential and vital element of bonding like praying and playing physically together, sharing meals, helping children in academic tasks and spending leisure time together.

Among the respondents, 39(44.3%) concurred with the statement that the use of social media interrupts or hinders problem solving sessions with 17(18.9) respondents disagreeing, 11(12.2%) strongly disagreeing and 23(25.6%) remaining neutral. This may be because social media reduces the interpersonal competence in initiating a discussion and the fact that social media brings about the likelihood for misinterpreting messages can erect barriers in regard to solving arising to conflicts (Golden, 2015).

The key informants also had the following to say in regard to bonding factors affected by social media use;

“Social media makes family members to continually spend more time interacting with the virtual community taking away the time they could have used to have face to face interaction with their children. This damage in the relationship and causes long term

problems in the family as the love shared among family members is reduced'' . (Respondent 1).

''There is a complaint I got where the teen was complaining that the mum is always on phone and does not have time for her and being in a single family, she has no one to turn to but self-harm'' (Respondent 2).

''Yes, social media has made teens spend most of their time on social media and therefore they have no time to spend with their parents'' (Respondent 3).

''Social media introduces the likelihood to misinterpret messages between partners in relationships and marriages. This may create barriers in problem solving and intimacy development. It also causes poor attention to the needs of family members since one may concentrate with the phone at the expense of the other family member. As such, social media ends up disrupting communication among family members'' (Respondent 4).

This finding concurs with Kaspersky Research team (2017) who found that 20% of parents admitted that interactions and the quality of relationships with their children had been adversely affected. Parents agreed that their relationship with their children deteriorated upon becoming addictively obsessive to social media use. The parents further indicated that they found themselves having to spend more time interacting with the virtual community on the SMSs reducing the amount of time they put a side for face-to-face meetings with their children. The damage occasioned long term issues in the relationship as the love shared among the family members reduced. The implication here is that the children cannot receive adequate parental attention and hence will lack the love to grow up happily.

Khan (2011) showed that excessive use of SM leads to a reduction in the communication activities vital for creating stable bonds among the household members. Similarly, the sheer number of hours spent on the SM renders the parent to be physically there but emotionally far, undermining the parent’s ability to attend to the fundamental needs of their children. In other words, excessive social media access becomes a distraction to parents as less and less is spent bonding with their children.

With the many hours parents spend on social media, they might begin to lose some of the fundamental interactions vital for a healthy bonding (Ante-Contreras, 2016). The implication of this argument is that very little or no time is dedicated for family bonding. Hina, et al. (2019) also showed that social media addiction as well as increased use of social media may lead to negative influence on the relationship especially damage to the quality of relationship and face to face communication.

#### The Outcome of Social Media on Family Bonding

The study sought the opinion of the respondents regarding the positive and negative outcomes or effects of social media on family bonding time. The results are shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4. 8: *Outcome of Social Media on Family Bonding*

Opinion	Frequenc y	Percen t
No response	8	8.9
Compromises offline relationship	4	4.3
Decreased interpersonal competency	15	16.6
Enhances interactions	7	7.7
Provides an opportunity to interact with those who are far	1	1.1
It affects family bonding	39	43.3
Reduced commitment	1	1.1
Reduces physical interactions	15	17.0
Reduces quality of relationships	18	20

The study findings revealed that 39(43.3%) respondents were of the opinion that social media affects family bonding, 15(16.6%) respondents asserted that social media has decreased interpersonal competence, 4(4.3%) contended that social media has compromised offline relationship while 15(17%) stated that social media reduces physical interactions and 18(20%) indicated that it reduces the quality of relationships.

The pastors were also asked to state the effects associated with lack of family bonding time. The findings are illustrated in Table 4.10.

*Table 4. 9: Outcome of lack of Family Bonding*

Effect	Frequency	Percent
Poor family relationship	3	33.3
Poor family communication	2	22.2
Disrespectful children	1	11.1
Divided family	3	33.3
Wayward children	2	22.2
Children may feel unloved	1	11.1

Findings as illustrated in Table 4.9 show that lack of family bonding time leads to poor family relationship at 3(33.3%), poor family communication at 22.2%, and disrespectful children at 1(11.1%). Further, 3(33.3%) of the pastors stated that lack of family bonding leads to divided families, 2(22.2%) stated that it led to wayward children while 1(11%)of the parents said it made children to feel unloved.

#### Intervention Measures for Enhancing Family Bonding

The respondents were asked to suggest intervention measures that can be adopted among family members to enhance bonding in regard to social media use. The findings were summarized in Table 4.10.

*Table 4. 10: Intervention Measures for Enhancing Family Bonding*

intervention measure	Frequency	Percent
No response	9	10

Create more family friendly contents	1	1.1
Create structure and boundaries	45	50
Establishing rules and setting limits	26	28.9
Family groups on WhatsApp	1	1.1
Leading as examples	1	1.1
Making time for Family	20	22.2

The study findings indicated that 45(50%) of the respondents proposed that creating structures and boundaries in social media use could enhance family bonding, 26(28.9%) suggested of establishing rules and setting limits and 1(1.1%) suggested of creating more family friendly contents, family groups on WhatsApp. Further, 1(1.1%) of the parents stated that parents need to lead as good examples, 20(22.2%) suggested that time for family should be created. Gibbs (2016) noted that parental online restriction strategies can be deployed to limit excessive social media use including setting gadget use limiting rules and remaining adamant to negotiate for changes to the rules, use of password protection of the digital devices, use of security software and device-free days and holding family level candid discussions on the risks associated with unregulated social media use.

The pastors (key informants) were also asked to suggest the measures that family members can employ to enhance family bonding in respect of social media use. Table 4.11 illustrates the measures.

Table 4. 11: *Intervention Measures that can be used in SM to Enhance Family Bonding*

intervention measure	Frequency	Percent
Establishing boundaries as early as possible	2	22.2
Creating fun family time	3	33.3
Establishing family policy for social media use	1	11.1
Parents leading as role models/good examples	2	22.2
Not giving children phones till they are old enough	3	33.3
Buying for children's alternative gadgets	2	22.2

The study findings indicated that 2(22.2%) of the pastors proposed that establishing boundaries as early as possible in social media use could enhance family bonding, 3(33.3%) suggested of creating family fun time and 1(1.1%) proposed establishing family policy for social media use. Further, 2(22.1%) of the parents stated that parents need to lead as good role models, 3(33.3%) suggested that parents should not buy for children phones till they are mature enough and 2(22.1%) stated that children should be bought alternative gadgets.

These measures are in agreement with Gibbs (2016) who noted that parental online restriction strategies can be used to limit excessive social media use including setting gadget use limiting rules and remaining adamant to negotiate for changes to the rules, use of password protection of the digital devices, use of security software and device-free days and holding family level candid discussions on the risks associated with unregulated social media use.

These measures are further consistent with the attachment theory which asserts that children have an innate desire to develop a close relationship with the parents (Besser & Neria, 2012). When this fails, the family bond is weakened (Fearon et al., 2016). According to Brenning et al. (2012), children get attached to people they find sensitive and responsive to them during their social interactions processes and who remain sensitive and responsive consistently throughout their lives. The attachment behavioral structure is to keep the attachment figure continually accessible and available (Kobak & Madsen, 2008).

The central idea about this theory is that family members (parents and children) form bonds with each other which are developed and strengthened over time depending on the experience with attachment figures in the relationship (Ainsworth, 2008). Attachment is a deep emotional bond formed between family members and provides a sense of security that

enables them to explore their environment as well as a source of refuge when distressed (Ayenew, 2016).

Courtesy of the attachment theory, family members develop a strong, close relationship with each other when the family members take time to interact and listen to each other creating an attachment or bond among themselves for their successful social and emotional development and security. However, by spending long hours on social media, the bond or attachment among family members may weaken due to reduced or absence of face-to-face communication leading to build up of a feeling of isolation and neglect that may threaten the all essential family unity and stability.

#### Summary

In this chapter, the research data, its analysis, and interpretation have been presented. The analyzed data has been presented in the form of figures and tables. Besides, a summary of key findings from the research has been provided. The next chapter delves into the summary of findings, conclusions, the study recommendations, and finalizes with suggestions for further research.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

#### Introduction

This chapter provides the summary of findings and their implications based on the study 's objectives and relevant literature provided in chapter two. The chapter also discusses the findings, provides the recommendations from the study, suggestions for future studies, and conclusion based on this study 's findings. The purpose of the study was to examine the outcome of parental social media usage on the family bond, focusing on parents at Mavuno churches in Nairobi County in Kenya. Its objectives were to identify social media sites used by parents at Mavuno churches, to establish the amount of time spent on social media by parents in Mavuno churches, to assess the bonding factors affected by social media usage among parents in Mavuno churches and establish the measures that can be applied to enhance family bonding regarding SM use among parents in Mavuno churches.

#### Summary of Findings

The study made the following key findings;

The first objective was to identify the social media sites that parents used. In this regard, the study found that all the respondents used WhatsApp, 96.7% used Facebook, 93.3% used YouTube, and 66.7% used Twitter while 74.4% used other social network sites such as Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, Zoom, Snapchat and Telegram.

The second objective sought to establish the amount of time spent on social media. Findings indicated that 80(88.9%) of the respondents accessed SM sites more than five times a day and in regards to time, in every single SM visit, 43(47.8%) of the respondents spent

twenty minutes, 23(25.6%) spent at least one hour, 19(21.1%) spent less than ten minutes, while 5(5.6%) spent at least two hours. In regard to the estimated time spent while visiting SM site in a day, 56(62.2%) of the respondents stated that they spent 1-3 hours, 22(24.6%) spent 4-6 hours, 4(4.4%) spent 7-12 hours and 8(8.9%) spent less than an hour.

Objective three sought to assess the bonding factors affected by social media usage. In this regard, 54(60%) of the parents stated that social networking sites took away their face-to-face socialization time with their family, 21(23.4%) disagreed, while 15(16.7%) of the respondents were neutral. Also, 30(33.3%) of the respondents stated that use of social media affects communication with family members, 33(36.7%) disagreed and 27(30%) remained neutral. Further, 41(55.5%) of the parents stated that use of social media denied them time to bond with their family members, while 24(26.6%) disagreed. Similarly, 39(44.3%) of the respondents stated that use of social media interrupts or hinders problem solving sessions, while 28(31%) disagreed. Also, 46(51%) of the respondents stated that use of social media affects personal relationships with family members, while 22(24.4%) disagreed.

The study also found that social media if used well had positive effects on the family bond including improving interpersonal communications, express love and feeling for each other, and enhancing interactions. Parents can also communicate through social media with children in case of emergencies and families can interact with family members who are far through social media and this facilitates bonding and bridging.

Objective four sought to recommend measures that can be applied to enhance family bonding regarding SM use among families. Respondents proposed that the creation of boundaries in social media use could enhance family bonding, establishing rules and setting limits in social media use, creating more family friendly contents, creating family groups on WhatsApp. Further, parents should lead as good role models in regard to social media use, and also setting compulsory time for family.

### Implications of the Findings

#### The Social Media Sites that families Use

In reference to the first objective, which was to identify the social media sites that families used, the study found that all the respondents used WhatsApp, 96.7% used Facebook, 93.3% used YouTube, and 66.7% used Twitter while 74.4% used other social network sites such as Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, Zoom, Snapchat and Telegram. This finding is consistent with Novelli (2016) who found that 70% of the respondents used Facebook, 65% used WhatsApp and 56% Twitter. Similarly, Kimeto (2016) who studied the effect of social media on marital success found that among married individuals, 95% used Facebook, 78% used Twitter and 70% Instagram.

The implication here is that all the social media platforms are popular among family members, meaning that social media are part and parcel of families where they daily use them for communication and to know what is going on. This also implies that some of the time the parents would spend with their family members is committed to social media usage and therefore without striking a proper balance between the two, bonding among family members will be poor and hence family relations will deteriorate and possibly family failure.

### The amount of time spent on social media

. The second objective sought to establish the amount of time spent on social media. Findings indicated that 80(88.9%) of the respondents accessed SM sites more than five times a day and in regards to time, in every single SM visit, 43(47.8%) of the respondents spent twenty minutes, 23(25.6%) spent at least one hour, 19(21.1%) spent less than ten minutes, while 5(5.6%) spent at least two hours. In regard to the estimated time spent while visiting SM site in a day, 56(62.2%) of the respondents stated that they spent 1-3 hours, 22(24.6%) spent 4-6 hours, 4(4.4%) spent 7-12 hours and 8(8.9%) spent less than an hour.

The implication of these results is that parents spent a significant amount of time on social media, which is indicative of an obsession with social media. This implies that parents were left with limited time to spend together with their children in in the spirit of bonding. Without proper control, the social media obsession may facilitate social isolation of children from their parents and compromise the effectiveness of parenting.

### The bonding factors affected by social media usage

Objective three sought to assess the bonding factors affected by social media usage. In this regard, 54(60%) of the parents stated that social networking sites took away their face-to-face socialization time with their family, 21(23.4%) disagreed, while 15(16.7%) of the respondents were neutral. Also, 30(33.3%) of the respondents stated that use of social media affects communication with family members, 33(36.7%) disagreed and 27(30%) remained neutral. Further, 41(55.5%) of the parents stated that use of social media denied them time to bond with their family members, while 24(26.6%) disagreed. Similarly, 39(44.3%) of the respondents stated that use of social media interrupts or hinders problem solving sessions, while 28(31%) disagreed. In addition, 46(51%) of the respondents stated

that use of social media affects personal relationships with family members, while 22(24.4%) disagreed.

The implication of these findings is that excessive social media use is exerting its toll on family relations through reduced time parents and children spend together in common activities, affects parenting effectiveness due to parental distraction and decreasing the level of everyday parental engagement with family. The findings also imply that by hindering face-to-face interactions and social involvement, excessive social media use results reduced quality of family relationships.

#### Measures that can be applied to enhance family bonding

Objective four sought to recommend measures that can be applied to enhance family bonding regarding SM use among families. Respondents proposed that the creation of structures and boundaries in social media use could enhance family bonding, establishing rules and setting limits in social media use, creating more family friendly contents, creating family groups on WhatsApp. Further, parents should lead as good examples in regard to social media use, and also setting compulsory time for family. These findings imply that parental online restriction strategies can be used to limit excessive social media by setting gadget use limiting rules and remaining adamant to negotiate for changes to the rules and holding family level candid discussions on the risks associated with unregulated social media use.

#### Conclusion

The study made the following conclusions;

The study found that parents frequently used various social sites including WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. Other social network sites were used such as

Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, Zoom, Snapchat and Telegram. It was also established that parents spent a lot of time there ranging from 20 minutes to three (3) hours in every visit of the day. This means that all the social media platforms were popular among family members and that some of the time the parents would spend with their family members was committed to social media usage. The study therefore concludes that there is a conflict between the amount of time families need to spend bonding and the amount of time they need to devote to their own social, emotional, and entertainment needs on social media.

It is further concluded that in order to give quality time and attention to family for bonding purposes, family members must be ready to sacrifice their interest of spending too much time on social media. In the absence of this sacrifice, the bond or attachment among family members may weaken to the detriment of the family unity.

Finding indicated that social media use took away parents' face to face socialization time with their family, affected communication with family members, denied parents adequate time to physically interact with their family members, interrupted or hindered problem-solving sessions, and affected personal relationships with family members.

The study therefore concludes that excessive use of social media is detrimental to the family unit as it negatively impacts on the family bonding factors vital for family stability.

It was also found that as much as social media appears to exert a negative influence on the family bond, it also has positive influences on the family bond including being able to improve interpersonal communications, being used to express love and feeling for each other, and enhancing interactions. Social media can also be used to communicate during emergencies and families can interact with family members who are far through social media and this facilitates bonding.

The study therefore concludes that if social media use is properly regulated, the negative effects of its use can be forestalled. This can be achieved by for example every family setting structures and boundaries for social media and creating family groups on WhatsApp.

### Recommendations

The study found that all the parents frequently used various social media sites, where all the parents used WhatsApp, 96.7% used Facebook, 93.3% used YouTube, and 66.7% used Twitter. Also, the study established that the parents spent a lot of time in social media sites ranging from 20 minutes to three (3) hours in every visit. Given the popularity of social media among parents of Mavuno churches and the excessive amount of time they spend in social media, the study recommends that family members should join forces to address this by committing to set and respect boundaries regarding social media use in the family, creating fun family time and having a written down gadget rule policy in the house that everyone is familiar with to avoid weakening the family bond. This is in concurrence with Gibbs (2016) who noted that parental online restriction strategies can be deployed to limit excessive social media use including setting gadget use limiting rules and remaining adamant to negotiate for changes to the rules, use of password protection of the digital devices, use of security software and device-free days and holding family level candid discussions on the risks associated with unregulated social media use.

The study found that social media negatively affected family bonding by taking away their face-to-face socialization time with their family, reducing face to face communication with family members and hindering or interrupting problem-solving sessions. This is supported by Blake and Wrothen (2015) who established that household members do not

hold a lot of face-to-face communication courtesy of social media preferring to send text messages, including when they are in very short distances from each other or within the same space.

Therefore, this study recommends that even as they use social media, families need to acknowledge these negative effects of social media on the family bond and therefore undertake to hold discussions and create awareness among family members of the negative effects and limit the number of times they visit social media sites and the length of time they spend there.

The study revealed that social media took a way face to face socialization time for families and reduced face to face communication with family members. Therefore, the study recommends that parents should make a deliberate effort of creating family time and setting limits on social media use, and even create family groups on WhatsApp for bonding purposes, where they interact with their family members and get to listen to their concerns and experiences. This will strike a balance between social media use and family face to face interactions so as not to miss out on the benefits of face-to-face interactions such as a strong family bond and hence family stability. This is because, spending excessive amount of time on social media reduces the face-to-face communication activities vital for creating stable bonds among the household members (Khan, 2011).

The sheer number of hours spent on the SM renders the parent to be physically there but emotionally a far, undermining the parent's ability to attend to the fundamental needs of their children, meaning that excessive social media access becomes a distraction to parents as less and less is spent bonding with their children.



In carrying out this study, it was found that Mavuno Church parents frequently used various social sites and that they spent a lot of time in every visit. With the many hours parents spend on social media, they might begin to lose some of the fundamental interactions vital for a healthy bonding among family members. The implication of this is that very little or no time is dedicated for family bonding and hence weaken the family bond. Kaspersky Research team (2017) similarly observed that parents indicated that their interactions and the quality of relationships with their children had been adversely affected due to their addictive obsession with social media use. The parents further indicated that they found themselves having to spend more time interacting with the virtual community on the SMSs reducing the amount of time they put a side for face-to-face meetings with their children.

In the face of this negative social media influences on the family and since the church has a duty to prepare individuals for stable marriages and families, the researcher recommends that pastors and bishops and other church need to put in place counseling programs for church members on the importance of family relationships and how this can be strengthened for stable families.

To enhance availability of family members for bonding sessions, the researcher recommends that parents should create more family friendly contents, and create family groups on WhatsApp for family interactions. Further, parents should lead as good role models in regard to social media use, and also setting time for family. This is consistent with the attachment theory which states that family members develop a strong, close relationship with each other when the family members take time to interact and listen to each other creating an attachment or bond among themselves for their successful social and emotional development and security (Ayenew, 2016).

## Recommendations for Further Studies

The researcher recommended the following for future studies.

This study focused on the effects of social media use on the family bond. A different study can be conducted to investigate the psychosocial effects of social networking sites on mental health of family members.

Another area that further research needs to focus is the influence of social media on the success of marriages relationships. This would shed more light on the key success factors for managing marital relationships since this area was outside the scope of this study.

The researcher also proposes a study that will focus on how too much time spent on social media may result to addictive behaviors being created and how this relates to marital stability.

Further research needs to examine in greater detail the conflicting outcomes of social media on the well-being of families as well as the degree of internal conflicts families may have between what they do with social media and what is socially acceptable.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Study Questionnaire

#### Introduction

Dear Respondent,

My name is Roselyn Kigen. I am a master's student at PAC University pursuing a Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy. I am conducting a study on the outcome of social media usage on family bonding, perspectives of parents and children at Mavuno churches in Nairobi. Your cooperation and assistance are required to enable me complete the exercise. I will be grateful if you could spend 20-30 minutes of your time to respond to questions on the study. It is hoped that you will provide factual, honest and reliable answers to help me gather information for this study. You will enjoy absolute anonymity and confidentiality as your name is not needed. Your responses to the questions will be used purely for research and academic purposes.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for accepting to participate in this study.

Sincerely,

Roselyn Kigen (Researcher).

## Instructions

Please tick () the box that matches your answer. For questions which ask for an explanation, please answer in the space provided.

### PART A: Demographic Information

Qn1. What is your gender? (tick one)

Male [  ] Female [  ]

Qn2. What is your age bracket? (tick one)

a) 20 -25 [  ] b) 26 -30 [  ] c) 31- 35 [  ]

Qn3. State your highest level of education?

Certificate [  ] Diploma [  ] First degree [  ] Master's or PhD [  ]

Primary Education [  ] Secondary Education [  ]

Q4. What is your occupation?

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### Part B: Social Media Usage

Qn5. Do you use social media/social networking sites?

a. Yes [  ] b. No [  ]

b. If your answer is Yes, Which of the following social networking sites do you use?

i. Facebook [  ] ii. Twitter [  ] iii. WhatsApp [  ] iv. You tube [  ]

Others (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

c. Which of the ones stated above is your favorite social networking sites \_\_\_\_\_

Qn6. About how many social media friends or followers do you have?

50 or less [ ] 50-100 [ ] 101-200 [ ] 201-300 [ ] 301-400 [ ] vi) More than 400 [ ]

Qn7. How often do you access the social media sites?

Daily [ ] Several times a day [ ] Weekly [ ] Twice a week [ ]

Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Q8. What is the main reason for using social media?

Keep in touch [ ] Meet new people [ ] Find information [ ]

Advertisement [ ] Exchanging files [ ] Share interests [ ]

Commenting on friends update [ ] Making plans with friends [ ]

Others (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Q9. How long would you estimate as the time you spend while visiting the sites in a day?

Less than an hour [ ] 1-3 hours [ ] 4-6 hours [ ] 7-12 hours [ ]

(Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Q10. How much time do you spend each time you visit the sites?

Less than 10 minutes [ ] 20 minutes [ ] 30 [ ] At least one hour [ ] At least two hours [ ]

]

Qn11. What form of internet connectivity do you use?

WIFI [ ] Mobile data bundles [ ] Both [ ]

Qn12. How many years have you been using various social media platforms?

Less than a year [ ] 1-3 years [ ] 3-6 years [ ] Over 7 years [ ]

**Part C: Outcome of SM Use on Family Bonding**

Qn13. Do you spend time in a day to bond with you family/children?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

Qn13b. Give a reason for your answer in question 12a above.

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Qn14. Do you see any difference in the way you played or interacted with your family

before you started using social media? Yes [ ] No [ ]

Qn14b. Give a reason for your answer in question 13a above.

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Qn15. What have Social networking sites done to your relationship with the following? (Tick where appropriate)

	<b>Strained</b>	<b>Improved</b>	<b>No effect</b>
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<b>Children</b>			
<b>Parents</b>			

Qn16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement in regard to the bonding factors affected by social media? (Tick where appropriate) Use a response scale in which **5=strongly Agree 4=Agree 3=neither Agree nor Disagree 2=Disagree 1=strongly Disagree**

	5	4	3	2	1
Social networking sites take away my face to face socializing time with my family.					
The use of social media affects my personal relationships with family members.					
The use of social media denies me time to bond with my family members					
The use of social media affects my communication with family members.					
The use of social media interrupts or hinders our problem solving sessions					

Qn17. What is your opinion on the outcome of social media on family bonding?

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Qn18. Kindly suggest any intervention measures that can be adopted among family members to enhance family bonding in regard to SM use.

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**Thank you for your time and cooperation.**

## Appendix B: Interview Schedules

1. How important is family bonding time for families? Explain broadly.
2. What outcomes can you associate with lack of bonding time among family members?
3. In your opinion, do you think your church members spend a significant amount of time on social media? If yes, explain the impact that this has to families?
4. Do families in your church face relationship issues or challenges occasioned by lack of bonding time or spending time together as a family? If yes, what role did social media play in this?
5. In your opinion as a pastor/family counselor, how does social media impact on family relationships or unity? Explain broadly.
6. Do you think social media usage has any positive impact on relationships or bonding among family members? Explain.
7. What intervention measures can you advise families to put in place to enhance family bonding in respect to social media use?





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