

INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL INTERNET USE MOTIVATIONS ON EFFECTIVE PARENTING IN CHRISTIAN FAMILIES: A STUDY OF NAKURU-EAST SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

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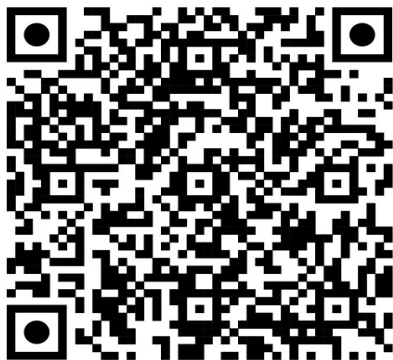
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Abstract

The aim of this study was to find out the influence of parental internet use motivations on effective parenting in Christian families in Nakuru-East Sub-county, Kenya. The study, informed by a mixed-methods research design, comprised quantitative analyses using Pearson correlation and Chi-Square tests, complemented by qualitative insights. The data was drawn from a sample of 297 Christian families, and the results illuminated significant findings. The quantitative analyses revealed a robust and statistically significant connection between parental internet use motivations and effective parenting within Christian families in Nakuru-East Sub-county, Kenya. Both Pearson correlation and Chi-Square tests returned highly significant p-values ($p < 0.001$), affirming the existence of this relationship. However, the study also unveils the complexity of this association, as evidenced by non-significant linear dynamics according to the Linear-by-Linear Association test. The study concludes that parental internet use motivations have a statistically significant influence on effective parenting within Christian families in Nakuru-East Sub-county, Kenya. The study recommends that parents be encouraged to become more aware of their internet use motivations and their potential impact on parenting. Moreover, further research is advocated to explore the nuances of the relationship between internet use motivations and effective parenting. These regulations should aim to strike a balance between technological advancement and the preservation of cultural and religious values.

Key terms: Effective parenting, internet use, Kenya, parental internet use, parent-child interactions.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The dawn of the digital age has witnessed an unprecedented surge in global internet usage. By 2021, a staggering 4.66 billion individuals worldwide were connected to the digital realm, with a substantial 4.32 billion relying on internet access via smartphones and an astonishing 4.2 billion actively engaging with various social media platforms (Meng et al., 2022). This monumental growth in internet usage can be attributed to the forces of globalisation and the rapid advancements in technology, reshaping the way individuals interact, communicate, work, and seek entertainment.

Internet usage, defined as the act of individuals accessing the online world, has evolved into an integral facet of contemporary life. Its utility spans across a spectrum of purposes, including swift information dissemination, cross-cultural exchanges, electronic commerce, entertainment, and emotional support (Dolničar et al., 2018). The proliferation of digital technologies such as tablets, smartphones, and other mobile devices has seamlessly woven the internet into the fabric of families, communities, and societies. While this digital transformation has ushered in countless benefits, it has not been without its share of challenges, particularly concerning family dynamics and effective parenting.

The internet has indeed delivered immense advantages to individuals, affording them the capacity to work or study from the comfort of their homes, facilitating increased social connections, and revolutionising global interactions. However, this technological marvel has also ushered in certain disruptions. As a new social norm, internet use, especially via smartphones, has infiltrated personal spaces, leading to interruptions during face-to-face interactions, such as mealtimes, prayer times, and interpersonal relationships. These interruptions have been associated with adverse psychological correlates, including diminished mindfulness, weakened self-regulation, and a proclivity for constant and unconscious mobile phone checking, culminating in problematic internet use and addictive behaviours (McDaniel & Radesky, 2018).

Internet usage is intrinsically intertwined with smartphone adoption, and it has witnessed an astounding rise globally, with 1.85 billion smartphone users in 2014, surging to approximately 2.87 billion in 2020 (Cha & Seo, 2018). Notably, certain regions display varying patterns of smartphone utilisation. For instance, South Korea, Australia, and the United States have emerged as leaders in global smartphone usage, with 88 per cent, 77 per cent, and 72 per cent of smartphone users, respectively (Cha & Seo, 2018). Furthermore, the prevalence of smartphone use is particularly pronounced among adolescents, with approximately 92.3 per cent of individuals between 10 and 19 years of age in South Korea having access to smartphones by 2017 and around 30.3 per cent displaying a tendency towards excessive reliance on these devices (Jahng, 2019). This over-reliance on smartphones has been observed among adults as well and has far-reaching consequences, including strained parent-child relationships, emotional detachment, and psychological distress, encompassing anxiety, stress, and depression.

Effectual parenting, as articulated by Cobb-Clark et al. (2019), entails parents engaging with their children and making informed decisions to foster their growth and development. Effective parenting necessitates unwavering attention and consistent mental effort to ensure parents communicate with their children regarding aspects that influence their lives and families. This commitment to positive

reinforcement in psychological and behavioural development is especially crucial during adolescence, as parents need to be emotionally and physically available and responsive to the needs of their growing children (Kuppens & Ceulemans, 2019). However, in an age marked by working parents, adolescents are at an increased risk of smartphone addiction due to a lack of supervision after school. This, in conjunction with greater financial resources in high-income families, has redefined the dynamics of parenting, resulting in insecure parent-child attachments and emotional detachment.

Effective parenting, when anchored in religious beliefs, values, and principles, assumes a unique dimension. Such parenting endeavours to instil morals and values congruent with religious teachings, contributing to the development of a moral and ethical compass in children. The internet, with its myriad avenues for connectivity, presents an opportunity for parents to engage with like-minded individuals and access religious content that reinforces their approach to effective parenting. From incorporating internet use into family activities, such as Bible study and prayer, to sharing religious messages, parents can harness digital platforms to fortify their parenting strategies (Purnama et al., 2022).

However, as McDaniel and Radesky (2018) elucidate, the correlation between parental internet usage and the quality of parent-child interactions is intricate. In the United States, parents who use the internet for work, study, or during family routines, such as mealtimes and prayer times, often find themselves multitasking, leading to distractions from effective parenting. Families where parents exhibit higher degrees of internet use, may experience dysfunction, with parents adopting more passive parenting styles and children manifesting behavioural issues. Evidently, the internet exerts a discernible influence on parenting styles and child psychological outcomes.

The impact of excessive internet use by parents on their children is not confined to the United States. In Germany, Matthes et al. (2021) found that parents who excessively use social media experience difficulties in controlling their children's smartphone usage. This leads to conflicts between parents and children, characterised by inconsistent parental actions and unpredictable regulations. The excessive use of the internet has further blurred the line between what constitutes good or bad parenting, as norms, rules, and communication ethics related to internet usage vary between families. The nuances of these effects on parent-child relationships continue to be a subject of inquiry.

Similarly, concerns have been raised concerning the impact of parental internet use on parent-child relationships, with direct links observed between smartphone uses, social media engagement, and parenting practices. The myriad factors influencing internet use, along with concerns related to past experiences, future implications, and perceived harms, further complicate the relationship between internet usage and child outcomes. What defines good parenting in the context of internet use remains ambiguous, with contrasting opinions regarding the quality of parent-child interactions. Damkjaer (2018) even posits that the immersive use of social media and smartphones can result in parents neglecting their children in favour of connecting with their online social networks.

Notably, the impact of internet use on parenting varies across different regions. In Africa, Meng et al. (2022) reported the highest prevalence of internet use and addiction within the World Health

Organisation's regions. This prevalence is linked to the internet's role in forging connections, alleviating stress, self-medication, and offering an escape from unsatisfying environments. Nevertheless, the digital divide in internet usage across African countries is pronounced, with vast disparities in internet infrastructure and access. At the same time, Morocco and South Africa boast high internet penetration rates, while countries like Togo, Eritrea, and Burundi experience limited internet infrastructure and use (Ghebregiorgis & Mihreteab, 2018).

In Kenya, the digital revolution has seen a significant upswing in internet use, transforming the way adults and adolescents engage with the online world. With internet access expanding rapidly, families now rely on the internet for studying, working, communicating via smartphones, and participating in social media (Kimuge, 2021). To meet the objectives of Vision 2030, Kenya's ambitious development agenda, the country has taken proactive steps to enhance its internet infrastructure through policies like the ICT policies in 2006 and 2013, which have propelled the use of the internet, which is integrated into everyday lives.

Burihani and Momanyi (2020) explain that internet use motivations are varied and have both positive and negative effects on parenting. For some parents, smartphone use allows them to communicate with their children whenever they are not near them or during emergencies. From this perspective, therefore, smartphones are viewed as important communication tools for families. However, the use of smartphones and social media can be addictive, resulting in a lack of control, which is a precipitate of social and personal problems. The over-reliance and excessive use of the internet can become the way of life for the parents, leading to disrupted activities during family times, which affects their parenting, especially in the quantity and quality of parent-child interactions.

The rapid expansion of internet usage in Nakuru-East Sub-county, Kenya, has raised questions about its impact on effective parenting, particularly within the context of Christian families. As the internet becomes an integral part of modern life, it is crucial to understand how parental internet use motivations influence effective parenting in households where Christian values and beliefs play a central role.

The choice to focus on Christian families is substantiated by several factors. Christianity holds a significant cultural and religious presence in Nakuru-East Sub-county, with a substantial portion of the population identifying as Christian. The values, morals, and ethical guidelines associated with Christianity often shape parenting practices. This study aims to explore how motivations for internet use by parents intersect with these values, beliefs, and ethical principles and how they influence effective parenting within the Christian context.

Christian families often seek to instil a moral and ethical compass in their children based on religious teachings. Investigating the relationship between parental internet use motivations and effective parenting within this context provides an opportunity to understand how technology aligns with or challenges these fundamental aspects of family life. Moreover, Christian families may encounter distinctive challenges when reconciling technological advancements with their religious beliefs. By

concentrating on this specific demographic, this study can uncover how these challenges affect the dynamics of parenting and family life.

Given the prevalence of Christianity in Nakuru-East Sub-county, research tailored to the specific needs and characteristics of Christian families holds great relevance. It is expected that this study will yield insights that can guide both academic discourse and practical solutions for families in the region. Therefore, this research, by focusing on Christian families in Nakuru-East Sub-county, endeavours to unravel the intricate relationship between parental internet use motivations and effective parenting within the context of cultural and religious values, ultimately providing valuable insights for families and policymakers in the region.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Motivations of Internet Use and Effective Parenting

The use of the internet among parents has continued to rise over the years, with parents from various backgrounds having different motivations as to why they use the internet. An empirical review by Lippold et al. (2022) indicated that parental internet use has an effect on parenting where the parents' ability to listen and communicate with their children affected parent-child relationships, leading to positive or negative implications on the extent to which effective parenting is attained. This creates a complex relationship between internet use and effective parenting. However, the study presents clear indications that parents' motivations to use the internet emanate from their need to access parenting information as well as to distract them from their realities, which creates dents in parent-child interactions. The distractions make it difficult for the parents to respond effectively to their children's emotions as they cannot monitor their children. Also, parents can start to make unrealistic judgments and expectations of their children based on the material they view on the internet (Lippold et al., 2022).

Additionally, the use of the internet has been tremendously inculcated in the lives of parents. Wolfers et al. (2020) revealed that the integration of internet use among mothers in their everyday lives affected the emotional and functional aspects of the parents, where the mothers indicated that they used the internet to help take care of their children. The motivation to use the internet was to communicate with their family and friends, take photos, most of which were uploaded on social media platforms, and organise their everyday lives. Communication with friends and family was viewed as an emotional outlet that helped mothers to establish effective parenting. However, the mothers were not motivated by factors such as work, playing games, and gaining information about current events. The perspectives of fathers were not captured in this study, which makes it difficult to wholesomely understand the motivations of parents in using the internet and how it affects parenting.

A qualitative study by Moon et al. (2019) on mothers' perceptions of their internet use revealed that for mothers, the internet helped to gain information, especially for new mothers who were new to the mothering process. The mothers viewed the internet as a medium for crowdsourcing to help gather viewpoints when making decisions regarding their children. The anonymity of using the internet made the mothers feel at ease when asking questions, especially when they did not want to ask their family and friends. The mothers generally perceived the internet information as more trustworthy than information

from friends and family. However, they also acknowledge the importance of caution when applying the information, as some sources were not reputable. Moon et al. (2019) further found that there was also a wealth of information on the internet, which brought about confusion as everyone had differing expert advice. Therefore, the mothers gained information on parenting aspects that were not urgent. For urgent matters, the mothers preferred contacting health care providers.

A mixed-methods study by Lukoff et al. (2018) studied how adults in the United States of America were motivated to use the internet. The findings showed that there are two main reasons why individuals use the internet, and they include habitual and instrumental motivation. Instrumental motivation is intentional and for a specific purpose, while habitual is just for passing time. Most of the participants indicated that they used the internet for instrumental purposes, such as for work and to interact and form close ties with their families. There were also indications that the internet was used as an escapism mechanism to distract the participants from their environments and relieve stressful situations. While the study provides an adequate analysis of the motivations of internet use, it does not explicitly focus on the parenting aspect, and this is a gap that this current study aims to explore by focusing on motivations of internet use and effective parenting.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a mixed-methods research design to investigate the impact of parental internet use motivations on effective parenting in Christian families within Nakuru-East Sub-county, Kenya. This design combined both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the research question. The target population was 157,167 residents in Nakuru East Sub-county. The inclusion criteria for participation in the study were Christian parents who have access to the internet from the Nakuru East Sub-county. The focus on Christian parents was due to the dominance and prevalence of Christianity in the study location, making it a practical choice for the study. By starting with a focused study on Christianity, the research is deemed to build a foundation for future comparative studies across different religious contexts. As such, religious nuances on internet use in families will be studied. On the other hand, the exclusion criteria were parents who were not Christians and Christian parents without access to the internet.

Table 1 Target Population of the Study

Ward	Population
Biashara	35,916
Nakuru East	35,395
Kivumbini	20,574
Flamingo	32,356
Menengai	32,926

Total	157,167
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Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2019)

The participants were sampled using simple random and stratified sampling methods. The participants were organised according to their wards, which indicated stratification into homogenous groups. The strata were the Kivumbini, Nakuru East, Flamingo, Menengai, and Biashara wards in Nakuru East Sub-county, Kenya. To calculate the sample size, Cochran's 1963 formula was used. The formula was chosen due to its applicability and suitability with large populations, as is the case for this current study.

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

Where;

- e is the desired level of precision (that is, the margin of error),
- p is the (estimated) population proportion that has the attribute in question,
- q is 1 – p.
- z value=1.96

Therefore, the participants for this study were 385, as indicated below;

$$((1.96)^2 (0.5) (0.5)) / (0.05)^2 = 385.$$

Table 2 Proportionate Sample per Ward

Ward	Population	Sample Size (s=n/N*S)
Biashara	35,916	90
Nakuru East	35,395	89
Kivumbini	20,574	42
Flamingo	32,356	81
Menengai	32,926	83
Total	152,167	385

To collect quantitative data, a questionnaire with closed-ended questions was administered to a sample of Christian families in Nakuru-East Sub-county. A Cronbach's Alpha test was performed on the questionnaire, and the coefficient value was 0.77. According to Kumar (2017), a coefficient of 0.7 and above indicated that the questionnaire was reliable. The questionnaire was also subjected to face and content validities, where validity was judged on the extent to which the questions represented issues of motivations of internet use and effective parenting in Christian families. Ensuring the validity of the

instrument helped the researcher identify any question modifications or alterations that may be needed to further logically link the study's objectives.

Quantitative data collected focused on parental internet use motivations and measures of effective parenting. Statistical analysis, particularly Pearson correlation and Chi-square tests, were employed to examine the relationships between these variables and to identify any significant associations. This phase offered numerical evidence of the connections between parental internet use motivations and effective parenting.

Additionally, the questionnaires also had open-ended questions which explored the underlying reasons and contextual factors that influenced parental internet use motivations and their effects on parenting within this specific cultural and religious context. The qualitative data provided rich insights, explanations, and narratives that complemented and enhanced the quantitative findings.

The two sets of data, quantitative and qualitative, were analysed separately but then integrated to provide a holistic understanding of the research question. Triangulation was used to verify and validate the findings. The qualitative data helped to contextualise the statistical relationships observed in the quantitative analysis, offering a deeper comprehension of the dynamics at play.

This mixed-methods research design enabled a comprehensive examination of the complex relationships between parental internet use motivations and effective parenting within Christian families in Nakuru-East Sub-county. It allowed for the verification of statistical associations and the exploration of the underlying reasons and contextual factors that shape these relationships. The study aimed to provide a robust and culturally informed analysis of the research question by combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study provided 385 questionnaires, and only 297 questionnaires were duly filled and used for this study. This provided a response rate of 77.1 per cent, which was deemed adequate for the study's results to be generalised.

Thereafter, data on parental internet use motivations in Christian families in Nakuru-East Sub-county, Kenya, were analysed, and the findings are recorded in Table 3.

Table 3: Motivations of Internet Use

No.	Statements	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Total (%)
1.	In my family, I use the internet frequently	1.7	1.0	0.0	91.9	5.4	100

2.	I mainly use the internet because it is a habit that I have formed	0.0	8.8	0.0	90.2	1.0	100
3.	The internet has useful information that parents can use in their parenting processes	0.0	0.0	0.0	79.1	20.9	100
4.	Parents use the internet as a means to escape from stressful situations in their lives	5.7	4.7	0.0	86.5	3.0	100

Source: Research Data (2023)

The findings show that 91.9 per cent of the respondents agreed that they used the internet frequently, while 90.2 per cent agreed that they mainly use the internet because it is a habit that they have formed. Among the respondents, 79.1 per cent agreed that the internet has useful information that parents can use in their parenting processes. Of the respondents, 86.5 per cent agreed that parents use the internet as a means to escape from stressful situations in their lives. This study also sought to understand the motivation for internet use among parents. Most of the respondents indicated that the internet was used for entertainment, religious purposes such as preaching and daily prayer guidance, and access to diverse information. In the formation of ties within the family, most respondents also indicated that they formed ties with other family members. One of the respondents stated:

"The internet helps me to communicate daily with my two daughters, who are studying in Canada. We exchange videos and photos on WhatsApp, and it feels like we are still in the know of what is happening in the lives of each other." (Research Data, Respondent 35, 2023).

These findings support the findings of Lukoff et al. (2018), who found that there were different motivations for the use of the internet. For some users, the internet can be instrumental, where individuals use it for specific functions such as work and forming close ties with their families, or it can be habitual, such as using the internet just to pass their time. In habitual use of the internet, there was an aspect of escapism where individuals used the internet to distract themselves from environments and situations that were deemed to be stressful.

Moreover, data on effective parenting were analysed, and the findings are recorded in Table 4.

Table 4 Effective Parenting

No.	Statements	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Total (%)
1.	I use the internet to help me make decisions on parenting	0.0	75.8	0.0	24.2	0.0	100
2.	The internet plays a role in the way that I parent my children	0.0	42.1	0.0	57.9	0.0	100
3.	The internet negatively affects the way that I communicate with my children	8.1	86.5	0.0	5.4	0.0	100

4.	The internet positively affects the way that I communicate with my children	0.0	6.7	0.0	89.6	3.7	100
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Source: Research Data (2023)

The findings show that 75.8 per cent of the respondents disagreed that they use the internet to help them make decisions on parenting. Also, 57.9 per cent of the respondents agreed that the internet plays a role in the way that they parent their children. There was also 86.5 per cent disagreement that the internet negatively affects the way that the respondents communicate with their children, while 89.6 per cent agreed that the internet positively affects the way that they communicate with their children.

These findings corroborate those of Walker (2021), who found that parents used the internet to develop their parenting roles. This is because of the wide range of information that the parents had access to on the internet. Also, the parents used the internet to communicate with their children. This helped to coordinate activities and also remain close to their children.

Further, this study sought to understand whether the internet affected the emotional aspects of the family. The respondents indicated that it did to some extent. One of the respondents stated:

"In my family, the internet affects various aspects, and yes, this includes the emotional aspects. I can search for ways to be emotionally attentive to my children, and this binds us in love because of the open communication we have." (Research Data, Respondent 249, 2023).

Further, this study sought to understand whether the internet affects the functional aspects of families. One of the respondents stated:

"In my own opinion, I do not think that the internet supports the functional aspects of a family. If anything, it disintegrates families as families cannot even sit down and have a meal without someone at the table looking at their phone." (Research Data, Respondent 191, 2023).

This current study also sought to find out how the internet affected the parenting process, and here, there were mixed reactions. However, most of the respondents believed that the internet affected their parenting processes. One of the respondents stated:

"I really do think that the internet affects how I parent because when conducting the parenting processes, it is just me and my child. Therefore, I look to the internet to help me make some, but not all, decisions concerning my life and that of my child." (Research Data, Respondent 2, 2023).

These findings align with those of Wolfers et al. (2020), who found that parental internet usage affected parents emotionally to some extent as they used the internet to search for certain information to help them take care of their children. Communication was viewed as an emotional outlet for the family members. On the contrary, Jahng (2019) found that too much reliance on smartphones led to insecure parent-child attachments. This was a barrier to effective parenting, and it brought about psychological distress due to emotional detachment exhibited by depression, anxiety, and stress. Overall, the quality of communication between the parents and their children was found to be poor. Similarly, McDaniel (2019) found that the internet led to parents using their phones often, which led them to pay little attention to

their children. This led to emotional and psychological effects, which negatively affected the attainment of effective parenting.

Influence of Parental Motivations for Internet Use on Effective Parenting

The close-ended questions on motivation for internet use and effective parenting on the questionnaire were transformed and computed by adding them into new variables called internet use and effective parenting, respectively. This enabled the researcher to conduct inferential tests that included Pearson correlation and Chi-Square tests. First, the correlation test was conducted to identify the strength between motivation for internet use and effective parenting. The results are recorded in Table 5.

Table 5 Correlation Analysis for Motivation of Internet Use and Effective Parenting

		Motivation for Internet Use
Effective Parenting	Pearson Correlation	.643**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	297

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Research Data (2023)

The findings show that the correlation value (r) is 0.643 with a p -value of 0.000. Abu-Bader (2021) explains that the Pearson Correlation test helps to determine the relationship strength between the dependent and independent variables. The index of the value ranges between -1 and +1. A value of + is an indication of a positive correlation that is perfect, while 0 is an indication that there is no correlation between the variables.

In this study, the correlation value falls between -1 and +1, which is indicative of a strong positive relationship between motivation for internet use and effective parenting. The p -value is less than 0.01, and this shows that the relationship is significant. Therefore, there is a statistically significant relationship between parental motivation for internet use and effective parenting.

Thereafter, a Chi-Square test was conducted to establish the effect of factors for motivation of internet use on effective parenting. The results are recorded in Table 6.

Table 6 Chi-Square Test for Motivation of Internet Use and Effective Parenting

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	98.518 ^a	42	.000
Likelihood Ratio	58.787	42	.044
Linear-by-Linear Association	.596	1	.440
N of Valid Cases	297		

Source: Research Data (2023)

The findings indicate that the Pearson Chi-Square value X^2 is 98.518 with 42 degrees of freedom, and the p-value is 0.000. This indicates a robust and noteworthy relationship between parental internet use motivations and effective parenting among the Christian families in the study. In other words, the data strongly suggests that there is a meaningful connection between how parents use the internet and their effectiveness in parenting. Similarly, the Likelihood Ratio Chi-Square test, which also examines the relationship between variables, produced a notable statistic of 58.787 with 42 degrees of freedom. The p-value, while slightly higher than that of the Pearson Chi-Square, remained significant at 0.044. This result reinforces the presence of a significant connection between parental internet use motivations and effective parenting, albeit to a slightly lesser extent. In contrast, the Linear-by-Linear Association test, which evaluates linear relationships between variables, presented a statistic of 0.596 with 1 degree of freedom. The associated p-value, at 0.440, did not reach statistical significance ($p > 0.05$). This implies that there is no substantial linear relationship between the variables in this specific analysis, indicating that the relationship may not be a straightforward linear one.

Nonetheless, the study's statistical analysis supports the presence of a significant relationship between parental internet use motivations and effective parenting within Christian families in Nakuru-East Sub-county, Kenya. This underscores the importance of understanding how internet use influences parenting practices in this specific cultural and religious context. The varying degrees of statistical significance observed in different tests suggest that the relationship may be complex and multifaceted, deserving further exploration and consideration in the study's findings. The results are based on a dataset comprising 297 valid cases.

These findings are consistent with those of Wolfers et al. (2020), who discovered that there was a positive relationship between the motivation for internet use and effective parenting. New mothers used the internet to gain information that helped them to take care of their children. The parents also took photos with their children and uploaded them on social media platforms as a means of communicating and establishing significant connections with their children and their significant others. Similarly, Moon et al. (2019) found that there was a positive relationship between effective parenting by mothers and motivations for internet use. Mothers used the internet to gain additional information on the parenting processes. This helped them to gain information from other new mothers outside their circles of family and friends. Anonymity in the use of the internet helped them to feel safe and confident in asking parental guidance and questions. Therefore, this motivation was positively related to effective parenting.

Moreover, Lippold et al. (2022) found that the motivations for internet use had a significant effect on parenting processes. The parents' ability to communicate effectively with their children affected their relationships either positively or negatively, depending on how the communication took place. The need for parental information led the parents to use the internet, and this served as a distraction to the development of parent-child interactions. Such distractions made it difficult for the parents to respond to the emotional needs of the children effectively.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion: The findings of this research shed light on the critical link between parental internet use motivations and effective parenting within the unique context of Christian families in Nakuru-East Sub-county, Kenya. Based on the statistical analyses conducted, several key conclusions can be drawn. The study has provided strong evidence of a significant relationship between parental internet use motivations and effective parenting. This connection is underscored by the highly statistically significant results obtained from both the Pearson Chi-Square and Likelihood Ratio tests. The data suggests that the way parents use the internet is closely intertwined with their effectiveness in parenting. However, it is important to note that the relationship between parental internet use motivations and effective parenting is not straightforward. The varying degrees of statistical significance observed in different tests indicate the complexity of this association. It is likely influenced by various factors that merit further exploration. The results from the Linear-by-Linear Association test revealed no significant linear relationship between the variables under scrutiny. This implies that the relationship between internet use motivations and effective parenting is non-linear, multifaceted, and influenced by a multitude of factors, which may not follow a simple linear progression.

Recommendations: Building upon the conclusions drawn from the study, a set of practical recommendations emerges, aimed at assisting Christian families in Nakuru-East Sub-county in navigating the intricate interplay between internet use and effective parenting. Parents are encouraged to become more aware of their internet use motivations and the potential impact of these motivations on their role as parents. Educational programs and resources should be made available to facilitate this understanding, enabling parents to make informed decisions about their online activities and its effects on family life. Additionally, recognising the specific cultural and religious context of Christian families in Nakuru-East Sub-county, recommendations and resources should be tailored to align with their unique values and beliefs. It is important to address this dynamic with cultural and religious sensitivity. Given the complexity of the relationship observed, further research is warranted. Future studies should delve deeper into the specific motivations and behaviours that influence parenting within this context. Such research would provide a more nuanced understanding and potentially uncover additional insights. Finally, Policymakers should take into account the unique needs of Christian families in Nakuru-East Sub-county when formulating policies related to digital technology and internet access. These regulations should aim to strike a balance between technological advancement and the preservation of cultural and religious values.

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