

Parenting Styles and Practices of East African Newcomer Women in Winnipeg, Manitoba

by

Omolayo Ola

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## **Abstract**

The immigrant and refugee population has been increasing and more rapid growth is expected in Manitoba in the next few years (Statistics Canada, 2012). As this population grows, changes in culture and norms occur, which affect parenting styles and practices. Thus, this study explored the perspectives of East African mothers on their parenting styles and practices in Africa and Winnipeg. Using an Interpretative Phenomenology Approach, five one-on-one in-depth interviews were conducted to understand the parenting experiences of the participants. Eight main themes emerged, and each theme had sub-themes that reflected the parenting experiences of the participants. Mothers adopted both authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles in Africa and only an authoritative parenting style in Canada. The beliefs behind their parenting styles were respect and parental upbringing. Mothers explained the factors influencing their parenting styles to be parents' education and knowledge around parenting, the parents' income and the age of the parents, and they perceived these factors to be of significant influence as they raise their children in Canada. Furthermore, mothers described parenting challenges such as fear of children calling 911 on their parents, apprehension, children's selfish personality, negative influence from peers, freedom, individual living, language barriers, and living in two different cultures. The participants mentioned different solutions to their parenting challenges in Canada that they developed by talking with their children, being friendly with their children, conducting internet research to sort information from websites, and help from police and family services.

*Keywords:* newcomer mothers, parenting styles, parenting practices, Africa and Canada

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## **Dedication**

This project is dedicated to God Almighty for His support, strength and breakthrough. Also this project is dedicated to my handsome husband and son.

## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Dedication.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
List of Tables.....	x
List of Figures .....	xi
CHAPTER ONE: Introduction.....	1
CHAPTER TWO: Literature Review.....	5
Migration, Culture and Parenting.....	5
Parenting Styles and Practices.....	6
Determinants of Parenting Styles and Practices.....	8
Knowledge about parenting and education.....	8
Socio-economic status.....	10
Age.....	10
Gender of the parents .....	11
Gender of the children .....	12
Culture and parenting.....	12
Challenges faced by Immigrants and Refugees as they Migrate and Raise their Children in Canada.....	15
Parenting among Immigrants and Refugees from East African Countries	18
War and its Impact on East African Refugees.....	20
Resettlement after War.....	21

Conclusion.....	23
CHAPTER THREE: Methodology.....	26
Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis.....	26
Researcher’s Role in IPA.....	29
Participant Selection Criteria.....	31
Participant Recruitment.....	33
Sample Size Determination.....	33
Procedure.....	34
Data Analysis.....	35
Ethical Considerations.....	38
Dissemination of the Research Findings .....	39
Methodological Rigor and Trustworthiness.....	39
Rich rigor.....	39
Sensitivity to context.....	39
Transparency.....	40
Credibility.....	40
Feasibility.....	41
CHAPTER FOUR: Findings.....	42
Introduction.....	42
Styles of Raising Children in Africa.....	43
Talking to children .....	43
Corporal punishment .....	43
Beliefs influencing parenting styles and practices in Africa...	45

Parenting lived experiences at the camps .....	46
Cultural Ways of Parenting in Africa .....	47
Raising children through culture .....	48
Role models and respect .....	49
Children taking care of their parents .....	49
Collective parenting in Africa .....	50
Father is the decision-maker .....	50
Perceived Advantages of Parenting Children in Africa .....	51
Weather .....	51
Community support .....	51
Parents' freedom .....	52
Challenges about Parenting Children in Africa .....	52
Gender preference and opportunity among the children .....	52
Corruption and war .....	53
Poverty .....	53
Child abuse .....	53
Parental control over individual choices .....	54
Styles of Raising Children in Canada .....	54
Children are not punished .....	55
Communication .....	55
Schedules for kids .....	57
Monitoring .....	58
Role model .....	59

General views of raising children in Canada .....	59
Reasons behind the styles used by the parents .....	60
Perceived Advantages of Raising Children in Canada .....	61
Children have freedom .....	61
School system .....	62
Peaceful environment .....	63
Spousal role .....	63
Parenting Challenges Encountered by Parents in Canada .....	64
Parents are afraid of family services .....	64
Apprehended children are not safe .....	65
Children’s lost focus on their careers .....	65
Children have selfish minds .....	66
Freedom to do anything .....	66
Isolation .....	67
Psychological issues .....	68
Living in two different cultures .....	68
Bad influence .....	69
Dealing with the challenges of raising children .....	71
Factors Influencing Parenting.....	73
Knowledge and education.....	73
Income of the parents.....	74
The age of the parents.....	75
CHAPTER FIVE: Discussion.....	77



Styles of Raising Children in Africa .....	79
Cultural Ways of Parenting Children in Africa .....	84
Perceived Advantages of Parenting Children in Africa .....	87
Challenges about Parenting Children in Africa .....	88
Styles of Raising Children in Canada .....	90
Perceived Advantages of Raising Children in Canada .....	92
Parenting Challenges Encountered by Parents in Canada .....	93
Factors Influencing Parenting .....	100
Limitations of the Present Study.....	102
Directions for Future Research.....	104
Conclusion.....	106
<b>References.....</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>Appendix A: Interview Guide Questions .....</b>	<b>126</b>
<b>Appendix B: Consent Form.....</b>	<b>128</b>
<b>Appendix C: Poster.....</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>Appendix D: Request Letter to the Agency.....</b>	<b>133</b>

## List of Tables

Table 1: <i>Demographic profile of the study participants</i> .....	45
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## **List of figures**

Figure 1: *Manitoba Permanent Residents by Source Area from 2012 to 2014* ..... 6

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

To understand the issues around parenting is not easy, and to do so is even more complex in the area of immigration. When families immigrate to another country, they often find that there is a need to adjust to a new way of parenting that is different from that of their home country (Jazen, Ochocka, Sunder, & Fuller, 2001). Newcomer parents face difficulties in their parenting roles as a result of diverse practices in child-rearing in the host country (Baptise, 2005). The term “newcomer” was defined by the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (2009) as an immigrant or refugee who has been living in a country (for example, Canada) for a short period of time. Immigrant has been defined as “a person who has settled permanently in another country” and refugee as “a person who is forced to flee from persecution and who is located outside of their home country” (Canadian Council for Refugees, 2010, pp. 1-2). It is the desire of some newcomer parents to ensure that their children fit comfortably into Canadian society. Equally, these newcomer parents want their children to maintain their cultural heritage so that they are able to fit into the society back home (Jazen et al., 2001). However, it is difficult for newcomers to raise their children in their new country because they are within two cultures and may perceive a clash in the parenting practices of immigrants and the host cultures (Creese, Kambere, & Masinda, 2011).

As newcomer parents arrive in their new country and are exposed to a new culture, they may lose confidence in their parenting orientations because as children begin to understand the new language and cultural system, they may start to question their traditional values, as well as the behaviours and attitudes of their parents (Ochocka & Janzen, 2008; Deng & Pienaar, 2011). Parenting orientation is defined as the beliefs and values guiding parents, as well as their hopes

and aspirations for their children (Ochocka & Janzen, 2008). Newcomer parents from various countries have different parenting orientations, but it appears that these do converge when it comes to preserving cultural beliefs. For instance, this seems to be true in the case of African and South Asian newcomer parents. African parents prefer to pass their traditional wisdom and values to their children because they do not want their culture to fade away, thereby leading to a loss of cultural identity. Instead they want their children to take part in Canadian culture (Stewart et al., 2015). South Asian mothers from India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bangladesh also value their culture and discipline, and they place emphasis on respect for elders. Having respect for elders was mentioned by these South Asian mothers as a way of promoting good behaviour in their children in society (Maiters & George, 2003).

However, newcomer parents may find it hard to raise their children in traditional ways because Canadian methods of parenting are quite different from theirs (Jazen et al., 2001). Jazen and colleagues (2001) cite seven research studies funded by the Ontario Administration of Settlement and Integration Services in which the main focus was to identify the parenting issues that newcomer families face when they arrived in Canada. The studies suggested that the Canadian legal and cultural expectations associated with parenting differed from child upbringing practices of the newcomers' home countries (Jazen et al., 2001). For instance, touching and kissing in public (dating), wearing clothes that expose the body, different hair styles, and relationship of the parents (such as same-sex parenting), just to mention a few, differ and conflict with African immigrants' cultural heritage and may affect the way newcomer parents raise their children (Jazen et al., 2001). In like manner, South Asian mothers mentioned that seeing a boy kissing a girl on the bus is contrary to their values (Maiters & George, 2003).

Apart from the fact that newcomer parents may find it hard to raise their children in their traditional way, African parents specifically have complained about the high cost of raising children in Canada (Stewart et al., 2015). These parents have argued that many of them have low-paying jobs and do not qualify for government subsidies, unlike back home where childcare is affordable and cheap because the extended family is able to provide childcare (Stewart et al., 2015). In like manner, semi-structured interviews with four single mothers and two married fathers were used to investigate parenting issues that South Sudanese parents faced while in New Zealand. It was found that participants had to deal with the issue of separation from community members and friends, as well as the issue of not having family members' and friends' support while raising their children in a foreign land (Deng & Marlowe, 2013). Correspondingly, South Asian mothers said the same thing about losing family support in regards to child-rearing in Canada. Mothers stated that it is difficult to raise children in Canada because they are alone, unlike back home where family members provided support in child-rearing (Maiters & George, 2003).

The issues of raising children properly in a new and different cultural environment and bridging their own culture with the host culture are problems faced by many newcomer parents as they migrate to a new country (Nesteruk & Marks, 2011). The ways in which a family functions in a new country could change due to migration, and these changes can influence how parents care for, nurture and acculturate children into the values of their traditional culture (Wahyuni, 2005). Hence, parenting becomes challenging for newcomer parents, and they struggle with how to raise their children according to their own cultures as they find some Canadian cultural practices conflict with their cultural heritage (Jazen et al., 2001).

In order to understand the parenting experiences of newcomers, as well as the shift that newcomer parents face in their new country of residence, the general purpose of this study is to explore the parenting perspectives and practices of East African newcomers in Winnipeg. The specific objectives of this study are to:

1. Identify the parenting styles and practices of East African parents
2. Understand the beliefs leading to East African newcomer parents' practices and styles of parenting.
3. Understand the challenges that East African parents face in Canada.
4. Understand how East African parents are adapting to Canadian ways of parenting.
5. Identify which factors influence the parenting styles and practices of East African parents.

This study will contribute to the existing literature on African Canadian parenting practices and styles. Furthermore, this study may assist educators, programmers and policy makers to support the parenting efforts of newcomers in Canada.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

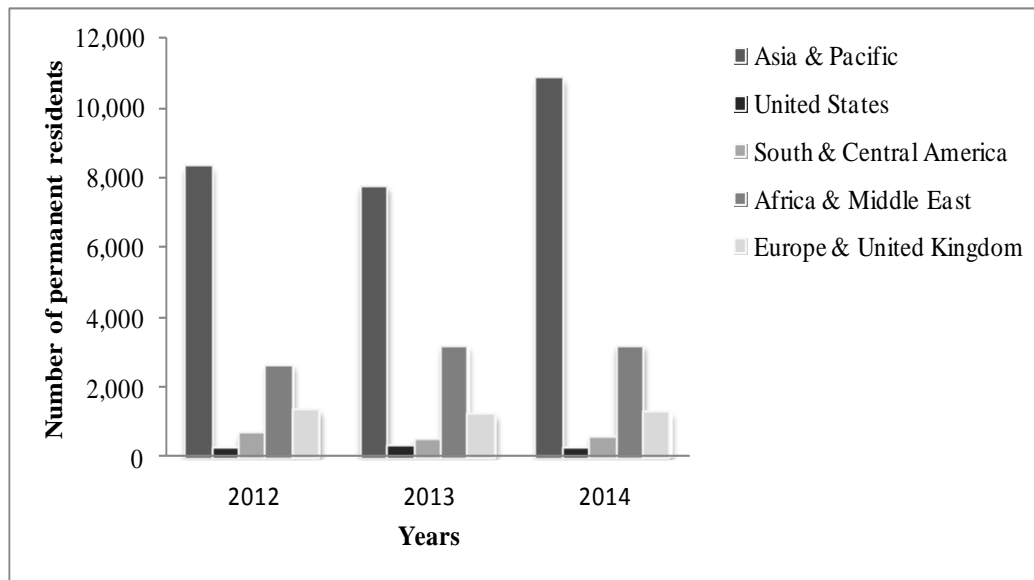
#### **Migration, Culture and Parenting**

Immigration is a process by which a person moves into a country with the purpose of residing there. A migrant is a person, “who moves across an international border or within a state away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of the person’s legal status; whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary; what the causes for the movement are; or what the length of stay is” (International Organization for Migration, 2015). In fact, migration is on the increase worldwide and the current annual growth rate is 2.9% (International Organization for Migration, 2009). The reasons behind migration include looking for better employment opportunities and living conditions, political fear, abuse and exploitation in home countries (Micheal, Engstrom, & John, 2011). In addition, economic and social factors, physical barriers, and the killing and abduction of innocent people are other reasons (Adhikari, 2012). A qualitative analysis of Sri Lankan Tamil refugee experiences among 35 refugees in India and Canada stated that the existence of civil war and political issues have been important causes of migration (George, 2013).

The population of Manitoba increased from 1,250,032 in 2012 to 1,332,629 in the 2017 second quarter (Statistics Canada, 2017). Moreover, in Manitoba the population growth rates from 2001 to 2006 and 2006 to 2011 were 2.6% and 5.2% respectively, while in Winnipeg, the population growth rate was 4.8% from 2006 to 2011 (Statistics Canada, 2012 & 2015). In Manitoba the population growth is expected to be on average 1.2% per year from 2012 to 2035. During the same period, Winnipeg is expected to receive on average more than 9,500 net international migrants each year (Conference Board of Canada, 2012; Statistics Canada, 2016).



In 2014, the number of permanent residents in Manitoba was 16,222, and of these, about 3,187 came from Africa and the Middle East (Manitoba Labour and Immigration, 2015). A permanent resident is someone who can live legally on a permanent basis in Canada as an immigrant or refugee, but such person is not yet a citizen of Canada (Manitoba Labour and Immigration, 2015). African and Middle Eastern populations are the second highest of immigrants among the permanent residents in Manitoba, which points to the importance of studying the parenting issues faced by the East African population (Manitoba Labour and Immigration, 2013, 2014, & 2015). The graph below shows the number of permanent residents from different regions in each year between 2012 and 2014.



*Figure 1: Manitoba Permanent Residents by Source Area from 2012 to 2014*

### **Parenting Styles and Practices**

Parenting is, perhaps first and foremost, “a functional status in the life cycle” (Bornstein, 2001). It is an everyday job and starts during or before pregnancy and goes on throughout the life span (Bornstein, 2001). Parenting can be separated into two parts: parenting styles and parenting

practices. Parenting style could be viewed as the group of parental attitudes toward the child, which when put together, leads to the emotional relationship in which the behaviours of the parents are revealed (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). This means that the parenting style explains the attitudes of the parent towards the child, instead of towards the child's behaviour. The notion of "parenting practices" refers to the real behaviour of parents towards their children, for example, taking an active interest in their children's activities, assisting them with homework, monitoring their movements and so on (Collins, Maccoby, Steinberg, Hetherington, & Bornstein, 2000). Pears and Moses (2003) have stated that parenting style and child-rearing practices are connected to the cognitive and emotional development of the child.

Baumrind (1966) suggested three types of parenting styles. Parents show one of these parenting styles -- authoritarian, permissive, authoritative -- when parenting their children. Authoritarian parents are directive, demanding and show strong control over children. Such parents have fixed rules and standards. For example, such parents ensure that their children obey and execute rules according to the parents' set standards. Authoritarian parents do not explain reasons for their rules and orders; instead, they want obedience from the children. Authoritarian parents use this parenting style in order to protect their own authority and put distance between their children and themselves. They have limited communication with their children and use harsh punitive practices to implement their rules (Turkel & Tezer, 2008). Permissive parents are non-demanding and there is an absence of parental control. This type of parenting style permits child behaviour that is autonomous and independent (Baumrind, 1991). Authoritative parenting style lies between permissive and authoritarian parenting styles. Authoritative parents are consistent, loving and firm and use a warm and nurturing method to raise children. Parents who adopt this style of parenting do not completely restrict their children but enforce limits in various

ways such as by reasoning, verbal give and take, overt power and positive reinforcements (Baumrind, 1966). Dougherty (1993) described an authoritative home as a home that shows a combination of warmth, democracy, responsiveness and open communication among parents and children, in a consistent supportive environment.

The impact of these parenting styles is important for the development of children as parents raise their children. Cherry (2016) recorded that authoritarian parenting styles promote compliance from children, but such children show lower levels of happiness, social competence and self-esteem. In contrast, authoritative parenting styles tend to make children happy, capable and successful (Macoby, 1992). Cherry (2016) also reported that children brought up with permissive parenting styles have problems with authority and rank lower in happiness and self-regulation.

### **Determinants of Parenting Styles and Practices**

Individual parents seem to use different parenting styles and practices to raise their children. In order to understand the parenting styles and practices of the parents, there are some factors that should be reviewed. Parenting styles and practices of parents tend to be determined by factors such as the knowledge and education of the parents as well as parents' socio-economic status, age, gender and the gender of the children and culture.

**Knowledge about parenting and education.** Knowledge about parenting plays a vital role in parenting practices. Knowledge about parenting is defined as an area of adult social cognition, consisting of the understanding of the processes of child development, care giving and child-rearing skills, as well as developmental norms (Dichtelmiller et al., 1992). A study conducted in seven provinces and regions (Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta & British Columbia) in Canada examined parenting knowledge among Canadian couples

and single mothers of children under the age of six. The results showed that parents' knowledge about children and parenting helps the parents to behave positively towards their children (Oldershaw, 2002). Moreover, a study conducted on three discipline strategies (reasoning, verbal power assertion, and acknowledgment of feelings) among 59 children between the ages 6 and 9 and their mothers from European, Asian, West Indian and South American cultural backgrounds reported that mothers with greater knowledge of parenting used authoritative child-rearing practices more often, and used less permissive and authoritarian practices in general than less knowledgeable mothers (Davidov, Grusec, & Wolfe, 2012). Bornstein (2001) stated that if the knowledge, skills, emotional and physical needs of the parents are met, then they can positively and effectively parent their children.

A study using interviews to examine disciplinary practices in fifty-two African-American mothers reported that African-American mothers who have higher education have been shown to be less likely to use authoritarian parenting styles with their children when compared to African-American mothers who have lower levels of education. The reason as stated in the study was that mothers with a higher education have been exposed to different philosophies of child rearing in the course of their education (Kelley, Sanchez-Hucles, & Walker, 1993). In addition, Querido, Warner, and Eyberg (2002) found that families with lower education used authoritarian parenting styles. Another study that examined the parenting of ninety-five immigrant Chinese and fifty-two European-American mothers with children in either the first, second, or third grade in the United States reported that immigrant Chinese mothers used authoritarian and permissive parenting styles more than European-American mothers (Chao, 2000). In summary, one can say that studies looking at how parental knowledge influences parenting style show that knowledge about parenting plays a significant role in how parents rear their children. Parents who have higher

knowledge and education tend to use an authoritative parenting style to raise their children, while less educated and informed parents seem to use authoritarian and permissive parenting styles.

**Socio-economic status.** The socio-economic status of the parents is another factor that determines parenting styles. A study on corporal punishment among 991 European-Americans, African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, Native-Americans, and Asian-Americans through a telephone survey reported that parents who belonged to lower socio-economic groups used more authoritarian parenting practices compared to parents in higher socio-economic groups (Straus & Stewart, 1999). Hoff, Laursen, and Tardif (2002) also found that mothers with low socio-economic status were more controlling, restrictive, and disapproving than mothers with a high socio-economic status. Furthermore, Querido, Warner, and Eyberg (2002) examined the association between parenting styles and child behaviour problems among 108 African-American female caregivers of preschool children aged 3 to 6 years old. Their study found that mothers with higher incomes agreed with the authoritative parenting styles while parents from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and lower education levels preferred permissive and authoritarian parenting styles of parenting.

**Age.** The age of the parents is seen as another determining factor when raising children. Lee and Gutterman (2010) examined mother-father dyads (based on ages, comparing adolescent couples to adult couples) and maternal harsh parenting behaviour among non-Hispanic Black and Hispanic parents in all cities in the United States. Harsh parenting behaviour, according to the study could mean spanking a child. The results of this study showed that adolescent mothers (no matter how old their partners were) were at a higher risk of using harsh parenting behaviour than older adult mothers. Also, they found that the highest use of spanking was recorded among adolescent mothers whose partners were older. In an earlier study, Kelley, Sanchez-Hucles, and

Walker (1993) found that younger mothers used harsh discipline on their children more than older mothers. The reasons for using harsh discipline may be due to mothers' lack of maturity and exposure to different disciplinary practices and experiences (Kelley et.al., 1993).

Using data from the 2000 National Survey of Early Childhood Health, Regalado and colleagues (2004) examined the use and predictors of different discipline practices by Black and Hispanic parents of children between ages 4 and 35 months. They found that parents who are adolescents spanked their children more than older parents did.

**Gender of the parents.** The gender of the parents can be seen as another factor that determines the parenting styles of the parents. Studies have shown the styles that parents use to bring up their children. A study that examined the relationship between demographic characteristics, parenting styles and academic achievement among 220 parents of students in fifth and sixth grades reported that mothers practiced authoritative parenting styles while fathers practiced authoritarian parenting styles (Kashahu, Osmanaga, & Bushati, 2014). Similarly, a study that assessed 200 parents who belonged to African-American, Asian and white backgrounds and 110 adolescents in sixth, eighth and tenth grades in the United States reported how adolescents and their parents viewed parenting styles. Smetana (1995) reported that adolescents viewed their parents as permissive and authoritarian while their parents viewed themselves as authoritative. Fathers viewed themselves as authoritarian and mothers viewed themselves as authoritative. Another study concerning 56 mothers and fathers of preschool children in the Southeastern United States revealed perceived spousal differences and similarities in parenting styles. It was reported that husbands perceived their wives to be more authoritative and permissive, and less authoritarian than themselves. Wives reported that they engaged in

authoritative parenting styles in contrast to their husbands (Winsler, Madigan, & Aquilino, 2005).

**Gender of the children.** The gender of the children is another factor to consider when trying to understand the kind of parenting styles that parents use to raise their children. A study of 274 adolescents in Cape Town in South Africa examined gender and age differences in parenting practices. The results showed that girls have a greater relationship with their parents than boys do. Furthermore, the rates of harsh verbal and physical discipline by the parents showed that girls received less harsh verbal and physical discipline than boys (Mboya, 1995; McKee et al., 2007). In a study looking at the relationship between perceived parenting styles and gender role identity among 230 undergraduate students at a university in the Midwestern United States, the findings were that male students rated the authoritarian parenting style used by their parents higher than female students (Lin & Billingham, 2014). A study using home interview among 218 adolescents (European-American non-Hispanic, African-American, Asian and Hispanic) in fifth, sixth and seventh grades in the United States reported that parents tended to use a more authoritarian style on their sons than daughters (Kuhn & Laird, 2011). In brief, one can say that depending on the gender of the child, the behaviour of parents toward their children differs.

**Culture and parenting.** Culture is seen as the set of unique patterns of beliefs and behaviours shared by groups of people to regulate daily living and determine how parents care for their offspring (Bornstein, 2012). Unique patterns of care-giving that individuals have experienced are the main reasons why individuals in different cultures are different from one another (Bornstein, 2012). Culture upholds what is passed on by having an effect on parental

cognition that turns out to shape parenting practices (Harkness et al., 2007). The type of parenting style used by the parents seems to be influenced by parents' cultural heritage.

Studies in Canada explain that Canadian mothers show high rates of authoritative parenting style on their children. Both mothers and fathers expressed more permissive disciplinary actions, tolerance of friend-related activities and less behavioural control towards their adolescent children. In addition, the children viewed their parents as affectionate, warm and communicative (Ochocka & Janzen, 2008; Liu & Guo, 2010; Cleas et al., 2011). However, studies suggest that parenting styles among African parents tend to be quite different. Hall (1977) and Levine (1980) of the Baumrind school of thought have argued that, generally prior to immigrants move to North America, their parenting styles fall into authoritarian parenting styles (cited in Ochocka & Janzen, 2008, p. 87). In specific terms, African parents tend to have authoritarian parenting styles. Jackson-Newsom, Buchanan, and McDonald (2008) reported that authoritarian parenting styles were more common among African-American than European-American families.

The literature also suggests that some immigrant and refugee groups tend to have cultural parenting style. African immigrants and refugees, for instance, believe in cultural ways of parenting. In one study among thirty-nine African migrant and refugee parents (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Congo and Burundi) living in Melbourne, Australia, Renzaho and Vignjevi (2011) found that African parents supported cultural methods of parenting that children should submit to parental authority. Parents from other backgrounds also believed in cultural parenting practices. Results from a grounded theory study on living in a blended world looked at five families from Sri Lanka, Mexico, Colombia, Guatemala and Rwanda, and showed that the parents wished to maintain their cultural values, beliefs and heritage when parenting their children in Canada



(Lencucha, Davis, & Polatajko, 2013). Thus, it seems that immigrant parents place a lot of value on transferring traditional family values through parenting to their children.

Culture is learned by children through exposure, observation, adoption of behaviour, participation in community activities and through verbal and non-verbal communication (Maynard & Powell, 2013). Children are trained on family norms, values and standards because family is seen as the agent of socialization. During the process of socialization, children learn cultural values of their society, and these cultural values include child-rearing practices, which may differ from one society to another (Emmanuel, Akinyemi, & Nimotalai, 2012).

In summary, the demographic characteristics of parents, such as knowledge, socio-economic status, age, gender and culture, are important factors that can influence parenting styles and practices. The parenting style is an important issue when discussing parenting among immigrants and refugees. Parents perform an important role in the lives of their children and they are in the position to teach their children when they misbehave, as this is the basic component of child-rearing and parenting (Thomas & Dettlaff, 2011). It is possible that newcomer parents may perceive their parenting styles and practices differently when coming to a new country. Parenting practices are the specific behaviours of the parents toward their children, and parenting styles are the methods used by the parents to bring up their children (Spera, 2005). The kind of behaviours that parents have toward their children will impact the relationship that parents build with their children. Both parenting practices and styles may be influenced by the parents' knowledge and education, socio-economic status, age, gender and culture, in turn, influence the development of their children's personalities (Spera, 2005). For instance, at infancy, parents try to build an attachment relationship with their babies for proper development. The kind of relationship parents build with their children impacts their children's personalities and well-being in life.

Hence, parents should come up with positive methods to raise their children and build good relationships with them for proper development.

### **Challenges faced by Immigrants and Refugees as they Migrate and Raise their Children in Canada**

In the process of looking for better opportunities and new experiences, most immigrants and refugees have left their homes, family members and cultures. Events leading to immigration, such as potential economic and educational advancement, social and political reasons, as well as living in a refugee camp for years, may make many migrant families happy (Bhugra, 2004; Deng & Pienaar, 2011). However, immigrants and refugees can find it difficult when they have to compromise the cultures, values and norms with which they have been raised within their new found settings and cultures (Eugene, 2011). It is not easy for immigrants to be told how to live their lives, and it may affect how immigrants and refugees raise their children in their new country of residence (Eugene, 2011). As parents recognise that their children should fit into Canadian society, parents worry about how to bring up children according to their own culture, which is different from the culture they currently live in (Creese, Kambere, & Masinda, 2011). Furthermore, as immigrant and refugee parents seek a better life in a foreign country, they face uncertainty, cultural shocks and adjustment problems (Oyeyemi & Sedenu, 2007; Souto-Manning, 2007). Moreover, these parents face particular difficulties in their parenting roles as a result of diversity in child-rearing practices in the host country (Baptise, 2005). The way the family functions in the new country could change due to migration, and these changes can influence how parents care for, nurture and acculturate children into the values of their traditional culture (Wahyuni, 2005).

Despite these challenges, immigrants take great joy and consolation from knowing that their children are being given a great start in life in Canada (“Canada’s online magazine for immigrant professionals,” 2012). As immigrants and refugees arrive in their new country, they have many plans for their children. The hope of every immigrant and refugee parent is to ensure that their children have long-term economic security and a financially stable future through education (Jazen et al, 2001). Immigrant and refugee parents may want their children to become professionals such as engineers, lawyers, doctors, nurses and pharmacists. However, these dreams gradually disappear as their children start behaving contrary to their parents’ wishes, such as wanting to learn art work (“Canada’s online magazine for immigrant professionals”, 2012).

Some of the issues that arise as immigrants and refugees arrive in their new country include how to negotiate their cultures and languages between their new country of residence and countries of origin (Glick, 2010). Specifically, African immigrants and refugees face challenges in the area of spoken English. Local reaction to African immigrants in the area of African-English accents is an issue even in Commonwealth countries where English is the official language (Creese, 2010). The language barrier that African immigrants face is not because they cannot communicate in English but due to their African-English accent. For instance, Canadians may say an African-English accent is very heavy, and because African immigrants and refugees do not speak “Canadian” English, they may be denied access to certain professions like receptionist, English teacher, and customer service (Creese & Kambere, 2003).

Furthermore, in Africa, it is the responsibility of not only parents to raise and nurture children but also extended families and friends to provide care and support to families regarding child rearing (Deng & Marlowe, 2013; Stewart, et al., 2015). Similarly, South Asian mothers

also receive support from families and friends in regards to child rearing in Canada (Maiters & George, 2003).

It is important to know the values guiding immigrant and refugee parents as they live in another country. These values include respect for elders, authority figures, family importance and the passing of traditional values rooted in culture to children (Ochocka & Janzen, 2008). In Africa, respect is given to elders by addressing them as aunt, uncle, madam, master, brother, sister, professor, director, etc. (Lewis, 1996; Sung & Kim, 2010), while in Canada, children call elders by their first name (Jazen et al., 2001). Also, in Canadian culture, it is expected that children look directly into the eyes of their teachers or other adults, which shows that the child is following and concentrating (Guo, 2012), while in some cultures such as African cultures, it is inappropriate for a child to directly look in an adult's eyes since it is a sign of disrespect (Best Start Resource Centre, 2010). Dating among young people was identified by Scott (2011) as another challenge that parents face in the new country. For instance, dating among Eritrean and Somali young people seems to be a taboo because sexual relationships are only allowed during marriage (Scott, 2001).

Lastly, the fear of drug and alcohol use among male children and pregnancy among female children could be seen as other challenges that immigrants and refugees face in their parenting experience (Creese et al., 2011). Teens may seek jobs to contribute to low family income but these jobs may cause distraction in their studies, leading to dropping out of school and low academic achievement. Teens are lured into making money easily, leading to involvement in criminal activities, and these problems emanate from negative peer influences (Creese et al., 2011). Some of these challenges are overcome by transitional support, in which

family members connect with other immigrants from the same country of origin to get emotional support (Dominguez & Lubitow, 2008).

The issues mentioned by studies above can be identified as some of the challenges that newcomer parents experience as they parent their children in the foreign land. These issues make it difficult for African newcomer children to live up to parental expectations and know what it means to be Africans, thus making parents lament that they have lost their children in Canada (Creese et al., 2011).

### **Parenting among Immigrants and Refugees from East African Countries**

Changes in parenting practices become stressful for East African parents as they live abroad. The majority of immigrants and refugees go through a lot of challenges when they arrive in a new country (Guerin & Guerin, 2002). As they arrive in their new country they have various hopes for their children. Parents hope that their children become successful by attending school, but the children begin to act contrary to their parents' hopes (Atwell et. al., 2009). After migration, East African parents are faced with difficulties in their parenting practices and child rearing due to the transition to a new social-cultural environment. Specifically, a paper that focused on 21 married Somalis in the cities of Helsinki and Turku described the experiences of Somali migrants raising children in Finland. The study reported that parenting comes with challenges for Somali refugees as they arrived in their new country because the environment promoted an individual type of parenting, whereas these refugees' culturally recognized a collective type of parenting, and thus resettlement became difficult for them (Degni, Pontinen, & Melissa, 2006).

Furthermore, the effects of East African refugees' experiences on parenting have been documented by various researchers. A study among Somali refugee parents in Finland explained

that back home, extended family members provided child care and older children did look after younger ones, which made raising of children less cumbersome on parents, but in Finland, individualistic approaches to parenting are the norms and many Somali parents did not find it easy to break away from traditional parenting practices (Degni, Pontinen, & Melissa, 2006).

Likewise, in one-on-one interviews with seventeen Sudanese refugee women in Australia using a thematic analysis technique to understand the experiences of Sudanese refugees in the post-migration context, Levi (2014) reported that parenting among Sudanese while back home was supported by a network of relations and community, but in Australia parenting had not been easy and presented challenges to the family. Four challenges identified by this study included single parenting among Sudanese mothers in Australia because partners were not available and extended family members' support was not available. Secondly, teenagers left home early to live with friends and mothers became worried about their well-being and losing them to drugs or bad friends. A third challenge was the inability to discipline children in their traditional way, which led to adaptation to the new parenting style in Australia as their old parenting style was not accepted and no longer effective in their new country. For instance, Sudanese mothers substituted a reasoning method instead of physical forms of discipline (Levi, 2014). Equally, Somali refugees in Sweden complained about the lack of a social network for their parenting practices, but coming to a new country was more challenging because they perceived themselves to be strangers (Osman et al., 2016).

In conclusion, one can say that parenting among refugees from East African countries is not easy. Parents are having difficulties in raising children in two different cultures. Parents want to maintain their traditions and cultural ways of parenting, which may be different from those of the host culture. At the same time, they want their children to understand the host culture so that

they can fit in well into the host system. Parenting is not easy because of current conditions and issues related to living in war-torn areas and refugee camps, as will be discussed in the next section.

### **War and its Impact on East African Refugees**

Many refugees have experienced trauma because leaving their country was against their wish. Wars, political issues, religious, ethnic issues and the violation of human rights have made millions of refugees flee their countries (Schmitz, Jacobus, Stakeman, Valenzuela, & Sprankel, 2003; Atwell, Gifford, & McDonald-Wilmsen, 2009). These refugees may have lived several years in refugee camps where they have been exposed to poor living conditions that contribute to isolation, depression, mental illnesses, and poor emotional status. All these factors affect parenting ability (Lustig et al., 2004; Murthy, 2007; Kanu, 2008).

Wars create terrifying situations for parents and children, exposing families to hunger, fatigue, and homelessness. These factors can cause poor attachment between mothers and children, affecting care-giving from mothers to children (Almqvist & Broberg, 2003). The effects of war lead to long-term physical and psychological harm to children and adults and interfere with their day-to-day functioning (Murthy & Lakshminarayana, 2006; Lacroix & Sabbah, 2011). Atwell and colleagues (2009) reported that psychological trauma caused by wars, as well as living several years in refugee camps have effects on the refugees' ability to cope as families and have good family relationships. Moreover, Lustig et Al. (2004) mentioned that stress related to resettlement and war trauma has an influence on the ability of refugee parents to support and care for their children.

Studies have shown the effects of wars on children and adults. A study done among 14,400 Rwandese and Somali refugee residents in a Ugandan refugee settlement found that 32%

of the Rwandese and 48.1% of the Somalis refugees had suffered from post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as well as depression and anxiety, which made them more vulnerable to mental health problems (Onyut et al., 2009). Likewise, a national, multistage cluster, population-based mental health survey among 799 adult household members aged 15 years and older in Afghanistan reported that 62.0% of respondents had experienced on average four trauma events during the previous ten years. Symptoms of depression were reported in 67.7% of respondents, symptoms of anxiety in 72.2%, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in 42.0%. This same study reported poor mental health in women more than men (Cardozo et al., 2004). Equally, Stewart and colleagues (2015) reported that refugee parents from Sudan and Zimbabwe had been exposed to traumatic experiences due to war in their countries, which had caused mass killing and the deaths of relatives, as well as separation from family members. Refugees' exposure to traumatic events and multiple chronic adversities made them suffer from PTSD, depression, emotional issues, psychological disorders and mental health problems. Thus, the effects of wars on people have been substantial, and these have made resettlement difficult for people from war-zone areas (Reedy, 2007; Fazel, Doll, & Stein, 2009).

### **Resettlement after War**

Resettlement is defined as the relocation of refugees from an asylum country to another state that has accepted to admit them (International Organization for Migration, 2015). Being that refugee migration was forced, the impact of this is significant on parenting. Parenting becomes challenging because it involves a process of transition for parents and children (Osman, Klingberg-Allvin, Flacking, & Schon, 2016). An extensive review of published journal articles from research done in countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, the Netherlands, and Canada, showed that when refugees leave the refugee camps, they migrate to a



foreign country where they have to go through everyday struggles of living in a new country, mourning the loss of loved ones, and coming to terms with their cultural identity (Crowley, 2009).

As refugees begin to adapt to living conditions in the host country, refugee parenting styles and practices may be influenced by poverty and wars that refugees have experienced both in their countries and refugee camps (Guerin & Guerin, 2002). Osman et al. (2016) reported that wars had caused long separations between parents and children, thus making parenting difficult. For instance, parents and children who had lived separately may be reunited by chance as they arrive in their new country. Upon arrival in their new country, both parents and children have different expectations. As a result of lack of communication among parents and children, conflict begins to set in.

Resettlement in the new country comes with challenges as the new beliefs, systems and values differ from those of the refugee cultural heritage (Lustig et al., 2004). Osman and colleagues (2016) reported that many refugees who perceived themselves as healthy in their home country saw themselves as unhealthy in their new country because of war experiences. Levi (2014) found that during resettlement among Sudanese refugees, a cultural shift in parenting has an impact on parenting among refugees in a new country and many women talked about loneliness and isolation. Osman et al. (2016) reported that the inability to understand the system and the culture of the host country, lack of social network support, lack of communication, and poor understanding between parents and children have been some of the problems that can affect the refugee parenting style. A Canadian study that interviewed 36 new refugee parents from Zimbabwe and Sudan about the challenges of coping with migration and new parenthood reported that refugee parents experienced isolation, loneliness due to reduced

social network and stress linked to migration and new parenthood (Stewart et al., 2015).

Almqvist and Broberg (2003) mentioned that wars cause post-traumatic symptoms in mothers of children who were exposed to brutal violence, leading to a withdrawal of mothers from close relationships, husbands, and children. Refugees' experiences influence their ability to parent their children as they arrive in their new country, making parenting more difficult for refugee families.

### **Conclusion**

In African culture, child rearing is of utmost importance because it supports the personal development and social well-being of children (African Child Policy Forum, 2014). In Canada parenting involves the task of raising and giving children the emotional care that helps them develop physically, emotionally, cognitively and socially (Nieman & Shea, 2004). Overall, immigrant and refugee families account for an increasing proportion of Canadian families. In the 1990s, immigration to Canada was less than 2.0%, while in 2014 it was 8.2%. Many of these immigrants and refugees have the impression that their parenting approach is undermined when they are asked to follow Canadian norms (Manitoba Labour and Immigration, 2015; Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2010).

As people seek a better life in foreign countries, there is conflict between cultures, such as languages, beliefs and values that were traditionally separated by geographic and infrastructure borders (Jensen, 2007). As we know, parenting is not an easy task, and it is even more difficult as newcomer parents arrive in a new country because there are lots of challenges that newcomer parents face as they settle with their children in a new environment. Despite all these challenges, newcomer parents still want to provide a stable environment for their children (Ockocha & Jazen, 2008).

African immigrants and refugees face a shift in their cultures, norms and parenting practices when they immigrate (Creese et al., 2011). These shifts in African cultures, norms and parenting create concerns for parents when they immigrate to Canada, and they are faced with the dilemma of how to raise their children properly in a new cultural environment that is different from that of their previous environment, as well as how to bridge their own culture with the host culture (Nesteruk & Marks, 2011). Difficulties may be faced by immigrant and refugee parents in their parenting roles as a result of diversity in child-rearing practices in the host country (Baptise, 2005). It can be quite challenging for parents to achieve cultural continuity in their parenting practices and expectations, as cultural adaptation is necessary for both newcomer children and parents in order to operate in the host country (Baptise, 2005).

Consequently, this study sought to understand the parenting experience of newcomer parents from East Africa. Specifically it addressed the following questions: (1) What kind of experience did East African parents have as they raised their children in Africa? (2) What are the beliefs and values guiding East African parents as they raise their children? (3) What type of parenting styles and practices are they using to raise their children in Manitoba? (4) Are newcomer parents having challenges in their parenting styles and practices, as well as in their relationships with their children? (5) What are the factors influencing parenting styles and practices of East African parents?

These research questions were asked based on the research objectives and the responses from the participants provided answers to the questions. For this study, in order to answer the research questions, research objectives identified the styles used by the East African newcomer mothers as they raise their children, the beliefs and values behind the parenting styles and practices they have chosen to raise their children, the challenges they encounter and factors

influencing their parenting styles. Series of questions about the parenting styles and practices of the participants were asked through one on one interview. Answers to these questions were analysed and they met research objectives. Data analysis generated new knowledge which was relevant, applicable, unbiased, and could be used to provide intervention programme for the immigrants, particularly African immigrants.

In conclusion, it is the joy of the parents to see their children behaving well and doing fine. African parents believe that a child is good when the child has good behaviour and listens to his or her parents, teachers and elders (Jazen et al., 2001). When children fail to listen to their parents' instructions, parents feel badly and may think that they have failed in their parental responsibilities. Generally, parents including African parents, hope that their children will become good citizens and contribute to the development and progress of Canadian society. At the same time immigrant and refugee parents wish that their children would go back to their country of origin and improve their community (Jazen et al., 2001). Therefore, studying newcomer parenting styles and practices may provide information for the agencies working with newcomers on how to assist African parents, especially East African parents to properly raise their children in Canada.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Methodology**

#### **Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis**

This study used a qualitative data collection method. The reason is that qualitative research allows participants to tell their story and provides an understanding of the phenomenon under study (Lyons & Coyle, 2007). Qualitative research methods have numerous paradigms. Paradigm was defined by Guba as “basic sets of beliefs that guide action” (as cited in Cresswell, 2013, p. 18). Qualitative paradigms include post-positivism, social constructivism, transformative, postmodern, and pragmatism. For this study, social constructivism seemed to be the most appropriate because meanings about parenting styles and practices are formed through lived experiences and social interaction with other people. The main goal of research in social constructivism is to understand and interpret the meanings that the participants have about the world (Cresswell, 2013). For this research, I interviewed East African newcomer women, and I explored how these participants constructed and interpreted their meaning about parenting practices and styles.

The ontological belief underpinning social constructivism is that multiple realities are formed through lived experiences of individuals and their interactions with one another (Cresswell, 2013). Hence, in order to understand how East African newcomer parents raise their children, I looked into different parenting experiences shared by the mothers and the opinions formed, as well as the factors that influenced their parenting styles and practices, the challenges encountered and how the challenges were dealt with. The epistemological belief of social constructivism as explained by Cresswell (2013) is that reality is co-constructed between the researcher and participants and the understanding of the meaning of the experiences. My

background as an African woman and parent played an important role in the interpretation of the participants' parenting experiences. I positioned myself in the research to understand how participants' interpretations flowed from personal to cultural practices. It is important to know that social constructivism benefits from the use of open-ended questions during interviews because the researcher focuses on what people say or do in their life setting (Cresswell, 2013). Thus open ended questions with probes were used to explore the participants' parenting experiences.

One of the types of qualitative research methods is Phenomenology. Byrne (2001) stated that researchers using the phenomenological approach wish to understand important truths of the lived experience. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) expressed that one key value to phenomenological philosophy is that it gives detailed information on how to examine and understand the lived experiences of people. The most important belief underpinning phenomenology is that human truths are understood through inner subjectivity. The environment is crucial to human behaviour in phenomenology because it affects, or causes, the conditions upon which we act, and upon which we perceive or interpret the conditions wherein we must logically act (Flood, 2010; Thorne, 1991). Using a phenomenological approach, I investigated the perspective(s) of the participants as they participated in the phenomenon that is the parenting practices of East African newcomer mothers in Winnipeg.

Furthermore, Phenomenology was explained by Van der Zalm and Bergum (2000) as having descriptive and interpretive elements. Descriptive phenomenology was introduced by Husserl and interpretive phenomenology was introduced by Heidegger (Fochtman, 2008). Descriptive phenomenology describes the experiences of the people as they engage in the phenomenon that is being studied and the researcher brackets biases and pre-conceived ideas

(Idczak, 2007; Wojnar & Swanson, 2007). Bracketing is a methodological device used in phenomenological research that demands deliberate setting aside one's prior experiences, assumptions, preconceptions about the phenomenon under investigation (Smith et al., 2009). Husserl appreciates the experience of a phenomenon as seen by human consciousness (Lavery, 2003; Lopez & Willis, 2004). Husserl considers that bracketing assists researchers to understand the highlights of any lived experiences, which could be seen to show the nature of the phenomenon that is being investigated (Lopez & Willis, 2004; Wojnar & Swanson, 2007). Interpretive phenomenology is more than describing human experiences; instead it looks into the meaning embedded in everyday occurrences in human experiences (Lopez & Willis, 2004). The interpretive element is necessary to make sense of the other's personal world, and hence adds an interpretative component to Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith, 2004). Interpretive phenomenology makes inquiry into the meaning of experiences by understanding the perspective of the participants on the experiences, which requires understanding the individual parts of that meaning (Fochtman, 2008). Interpretive phenomenology is used when the researcher tries to understand the phenomena in context and the researcher does not bracket his biases and prior engagement with the phenomenon that is being studied (Idczak, 2007; Wojnar & Swanson, 2007).

Smith et al. (2009) explained that the phenomenological method considers reflexivity. Reflexivity in this study included the process of examining myself, my assumptions and my preconceptions, as well as the influence of these on the research decisions (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003). I reflected upon my experiences and how my parents had raised me when I was growing up. This enabled me to be aware of my personal attitudes that may have influenced the research process. Reflexivity also involves remembering, thinking, wishing and drawing back on one's

past experiences (Smith et al., 2009). Furthermore, it was stated by Smith et al. (2009) that people are physical and psychological beings because as they live in the world, they reflect on what they do and the meanings and consequences of their actions. Participants were allowed to think about their parental attitudes and behaviours, as well as the methods used in bringing up their children and the challenges they face as they parent their children in Winnipeg. This process of reflexivity is important because it allows researchers to recognise their social location and emotional responses to participants and the data, which can shape their interpretations (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003).

For this, an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach was used to structure research questions, collect, analyse and interpret the data. Using the phenomenological approach with its core on interpretative phenomenological analysis gave participants the opportunity to share their own experiences and provide me with an understanding of their thoughts, as well as their feelings, through telling their own stories, in their own words. Furthermore, using IPA helped me to interpret the meanings that the participants constructed in connection to their parenting practices and styles in Africa and Winnipeg. This approach was associated with the purpose of this study, which was to find out in detail the parenting practices of East African newcomer parents in Africa and Winnipeg and how the participants were able to make sense of their parenting experiences.

### **Researcher's role in IPA**

Smith and Osborn (2007) explained that the IPA approach highlights that the research exercise is a dynamic process, with the researcher having an active role in the process. The researcher tries to get close to the participants' personal world (i.e. having an insider's perspective), but this cannot be done directly. Access to participants' personal world depends on



and is complicated by the researcher's own preconceived ideas (Smith, 2004). Fleming, Gaidys, and Robb (2003) stated that the aim of bracketing is to put aside the preconceptions of the researchers on the phenomena under study so that they do not interfere with the study. As IPA recognises the position of interpretation, the issue of bracketing may be controversial because the researcher brings his or her pre-conceived experiences into the phenomena under study as the analysis progresses (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith et al., 2009). Also Smith et al. (2009) explained that "priority should be given to a new object, rather than to one's preconceptions" (p. 25). Thus I tried to keep a reflexive diary that recorded any arising interpretation. As bracketing is not easy with IPA, I looked at the new experiences shared by the participants in light of my own prior experiences, but preference was given to the new experiences shared by the participants instead of my own preconceptions. In order to make sense of the participants' personal world, a process of interpretative activity, involving a two-stage interpretation process (double hermeneutic), is required. This meant that while the participants were trying to make sense of their parenting practices, I also tried to make sense of the participants trying to make sense of their personal practices.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis is concerned with individuals' perception of a situation, which as in the case of this study included participants' responses to parenting practices, as well as the interpretations that participants have toward their parenting styles and practices in Africa and Winnipeg. In connection with the current study, my focus was on drawing out the cultural values and experiences of East African newcomer mothers with a refugee background about their parenting practices using one-on-one interviews. I asked participants open-ended questions with probes to explore the perspectives of East African newcomer mothers on their parenting styles and practices. Smith et al. (2009) said that the aim of

having one-on-one interviews is to bring about comfortable interactions and to allow participants to give a detailed description of their experiences. During the interviews, my verbal input was minimised; instead, participants were permitted to take the lead and talk at length about their parenting experiences. How they had made sense of this experience and the meaning they ascribed to it was explored. The experiences of the participants were described exactly the way they had discussed them with me in terms of conditions, situations or context. The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. Patterns were located, interpreted and organised into themes in order to make sense of the participants' perceptions of their experiences. Quotes were used to illustrate themes.

### **Participant Selection Criteria**

The study population was comprised of mothers from East Africa with a refugee background. A refugee has been defined as “a person who is forced to flee from persecution and who is located outside of their home country” (Canadian Council for Refugees, 2010, pp. 1-2). Study participants included mothers with a refugee background and who had been in Winnipeg between two and ten years. The reason for choosing these periods was to understand the parenting experiences of mothers during their initial years in Canada. I believe that using these time periods, the East African mothers with refugee background would be speaking English because they must have attended English class. Furthermore, the mothers were selected from the Hospitality House Refugee Ministry. Hospitality House Refugee Ministry is a non-profit organization in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Hospitality House, marketing, is owned, supplied and the financially supported by St. John's Anglican Cathedral. The organization works with privately sponsored newcomer refugees at the request of their Winnipeg family members. Most of their cases are and must be “family-linked” which means that there is a guarantor or guarantors in

Winnipeg willing to look after the refugees after they arrive, providing the necessary financial support until they are resettled. Hospitality House Refugee Ministry, however, sponsors a few refugees each year (when government restrictions are not in place) who do not have family supports here, but this is entirely at its expense. Hospitality House Refugee Ministry maintains contact with these refugees as they arrive in Winnipeg. The agency strongly believes that its responsibility is to make sure that all refugees arriving in Canada have adequate living conditions and equal opportunities to flourish. This agency relies heavily on the contributions and generous donations of fellow Canadians to allow it to operate and grow according to the needs of newcomers.

Smith and Osborn (2004) stated that Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis sampling is likely to be purposive and homogenous (as cited in Brocki & Wearden, 2006, p. 95). It was further mentioned by Smith and Osborn (2007) that Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis researchers look for a homogenous sample. Participants were selected for this study because of their experiences in parenting. A homogeneous sample according to this study meant that the participants were selected based on some characteristics that are similar in terms of:

1. Background of the mothers: Women from East Africa with a refugee background.
2. Age of the children: East African women with a refugee background who have children from 0-18 years.
3. Parenting experience: East African women with a refugee background and those who have experienced parenting in their home country as well as Winnipeg.
4. Years of residence: East African women who have lived in Winnipeg between two and ten years (the reason for these periods is because it takes time for refugee people to be fully

initiated and this group will have a lot of experiences to share thinking about their situation).

5. Connection to Hospitality House: East African women with a refugee background were recruited from Hospitality House Refugee Ministry.
6. Ability to communicate in English: East African women with a refugee background who could communicate in English (the reason is that language of interview and communication throughout the period of contact with the participants will be English).

### **Participant Recruitment**

To recruit the participants into the study, I contacted the Hospitality House Refugee Ministry to receive a letter of support and permission to post information about the study with the agency to assist in the recruitment of study participants. A poster was given to the staff to post on their bulletin board for publication. Those who met the participant selection criteria written above and showed interest (by calling me at the phone number provided on the poster) were given further explanation about the study (such as the purpose of the study) and recruited into the study. Participants were asked for a suitable venue, date and time for the interview to be conducted. Each participant was given a \$50 gift card for sharing their stories and experiences.

### **Sample Size Determination**

Five mothers were interviewed individually in one of the rooms at the Health Sciences library, University of Manitoba. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis is devoted to the detailed interpretation of the cases and researchers acknowledge that for this interpretation to be realistic, it should be done on a small sample (Smith, 2004). It is recommended for researchers using IPA for the first time that the sample should not be too large in order to give room for detailed engagement with each case as well as examination for convergence and divergence. If

the sample is too large, the researcher becomes overwhelmed by the amount of data generated and is not able to produce a satisfactory analysis (Smith & Osborn, 2007). There was an interview guide, which was pre-tested with one mother from Africa. Data from this pre-test was used to strengthen the interview questions.

### **Procedure**

A semi-structured interview method, with open-ended questions, was used to collect data. In this semi-structured interview guide, the ordering of the questions was not important and probes were encouraged. The participants were allowed to say everything about their experience(s) with no interruption, meaning that the interviewer followed participants' interests by allowing the participants to take the lead. Smith et al. (2009) explains that open-ended interview questions between six and ten questions, with possible prompts, will take between 45 and 90 minutes. The interviews ranged from 70 or 90 minutes in length.

Once the participants agreed on the date, time and venue, then the interview was conducted. The interview was done on a one-to-one basis (e.g., one mother at a time), to establish good rapport for the participants to think, speak and be heard, and to avoid any sense of intimidation, and confidentiality was maintained. Reid, Flowers, and Larkin (2005) stated that a one-to-one interview is easily managed, it allows the establishment of rapport, it makes participants think, speak and be heard, and it is well suited to in-depth and personal discussion.

Table 1

*Demographic Profile of the Study Participants*

Pseudonyms	Country of origin	Number of children	Years lived in Canada	Marital status	Education Background
Rahel	Eritrea	1	2 years	Married	College
Aisha	Somalia	9	10 years	Married	College
Clara	Rwanda	6	8 years	Married	Grade 12
Mom	Ethiopia	6	6 years	Divorced	No education
Princess	Burundi	4	9 years	Separated	College

The interview questions consisted of two sections, sections A and B. Section A consisted of information on socio-demographic characteristics of the participants such as age, gender, and status of the parents in Canada. Section B included questions such as their parenting styles and practices in Africa and Canada, the beliefs behind their parenting styles, factors influencing their parenting styles and practices, challenges they faced since they came to Canada and how they dealt with them. (See Appendix A).

**Data Analysis**

Smith (2004) stated that the three characteristics underpinning IPA are phenomenology, idiographic and hermeneutic. IPA is phenomenological in that “it is concerned with exploring experience in its own terms” (Smith et al., 2009, p.1). IPA is idiographic when comprehensive examination of a case is done, wanting to know the experience of the person and the sense he or she is making of his or her experience (Smith et al., 2009). I did a detailed examination of the first participant’s transcript until some degree of saturation (i.e. until no new insight(s) or

relevant information emerge(s) from data during analysis) was attained, trying to find out what the participant was saying about parenting styles and practices, before the second case was analysed. This process continued until all participants' transcripts were examined. When the transcripts had been examined, then I conducted a cross analysis on the themes of each participant for convergence and divergence. This analysis allows the reader to see clearly the themes which have emerged from the research findings, as well as to learn something about the life world of the participants who have told their experiences. The data from the study was compared with the existing body of literature. Even though IPA involves in-depth analysis of small sample sizes, the result can be compared and contrasted, and discussed in relation to the broader psychological literature (Reid et al., 2005).

IPA is hermeneutic because it is the theory of interpretation and it looks at human beings as sense-making people. Thus, the description of the experience that participants give will show their attempts to make sense of their experiences (Smith et al., 2009). Access to the participants' experiences depends on what participants say to the researcher about their experiences, then the researcher needs to interpret participants' experiences from the participants' points of view in order to understand the experiences shared by the participants (Smith et al., 2009). I looked into the experiences shared with me by the participants and tried to interpret participants' experiences.

I used the IPA guidelines by Smith and Osborn (2007) and Biggerstaff and Thompson (2008). This approach was used in this study to analyse the data generated from the study. These analytical steps to data analysis have been summarized below.

The first stage in data analysis was that I immersed myself in the original data through reading and re-reading the interview transcripts several times to become acquainted with the

data. Thereafter, the observations and reflections about the interview experience were highlighted. Also, the interviews were audio recorded and this recording was listened to several times in order to have an overall understanding of the data and then it was transcribed. Textual analysis started by writing notes and comments on the transcript, as well as focusing on content, use of language, and interpretative comments from the transcript.

The next stage required me to go back to the transcript to identify the emerging themes. The aim at this stage was to transform notes to emerging themes. The major task was to formulate concise phrases that have a sufficient generalised concept to offer a definite understanding of the data.

The next stage required a list of emerging themes identified in stage two. I thought about the connection between them, grouped them according to similarities and then provided each cluster with a descriptive label which expressed the conceptual nature of the themes in each cluster.

The next stage was to come up with a summary table that was comprised of structured themes and sub-themes, as well as the quotations that illustrated each theme, followed by the line number in the transcript so that it would be easy to confirm the context of the extract in the transcript.

These stages of analysis were repeated for each participant. As I continued with the analysis of the following transcript, the previous transcripts were also reviewed and illustrations from the previous transcripts were added in the ongoing analysis. Once all transcripts had been analysed and a final table constructed, the themes identified in the final table were written up one by one. Each of them was described with extracts from the interview(s). The findings were compared with the existing literature.



## **Ethical Considerations**

The proposal was submitted to the University of Manitoba, Fort Garry Campus, Research Ethics Board for review, and approval was given before the commencement of the study. Before the interview, I informed the participants of the purpose and procedure of the study. Participation was voluntary and nobody was forced to participate; therefore a voluntary consent form (appendix B) was signed by the participants. Written permission was sought from the participants to confirm and affirm that they agreed to their participation in this study. All participants had the right to decline and withdraw their participation at any time they wished to do so. Information provided was treated with confidentiality and anything that could be used to trace the script of the participants back to them (such as name) was eliminated. Instead pseudonyms were used during the interview, analysis and final publication. These pseudonyms were suggested by the participants during the interviews. Although information on referrals in the community was made available for painful emotional responses due to the interview question, none of the participants was emotionally affected to the extent of requiring a referral. After analysing the data and writing up the results, the findings were sent to each participant through emails provided to let them know how the information given contributed to the study. This was done after the data had been presented and approved by the committee members. The information collected was saved on my personal computer with a password that aside from my advisor, was not made available to anyone, and this is to be saved for the period of five to seven years before the data is to be deleted. The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (2005) state that all the data should be kept as long as is necessary to fulfil the research purposes. Research data should be saved for a minimum of five years before it is destroyed (Research data, 2011).

### **Dissemination of the Research Findings**

The research findings are available on Mspace on the University of Manitoba website. Apart from this, the results are going to be published in an academic journal. Also, presentations will be made to the agencies working with African immigrants and refugees such as Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba Inc (IRCOM), African Communities of Manitoba (ACOMI).

### **Methodological Rigor and Trustworthiness**

**Rich rigor.** High-quality qualitative research provides descriptions and explanations. Rigor refers to “the thoroughness of the study” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 181). Rigor of the study is achieved through the careful selection of the sample, the quality of the interview, a thorough analysis process and the time spent in the field (Tracy, 2010). The sample was purposively selected (parenting experiences) and it was homogenous. The interviews were thoroughly conducted. During the interview, I picked up on the important hints made by the participants and explored them. The time that I spent on each interview was between 70 and 90 minutes. The IPA guideline was used to analyse data.

**Sensitivity to context.** Sensitivity to context is shown when there is good interaction with the data collection during the interview process. In order to conduct good IPA, the interview process needs skills, awareness and dedication (Smith et al., 2009). I was actively engaged with the interview by listening attentively to what the participants discussed with me, and I probed in order to have more insight on the information shared by the participants. My advisor listened to the audio recordings of the initial interviews and provided interviewing feedback and advice. I was aware of the matters arising from the information shared by the participants even if they were not on the interview schedule, as long as they were relevant to the research question. I

started the interview with a question that allowed the participants to recall their experiences. Sensitivity to context was also achieved through data analysis. Smith et al. (2009) stated that “making sense of how the participant is making sense of their experience requires immersive and disciplined attention to the unfolding account of the participant and what can be gleaned from it” (p.180). I was sensitive to data by having quite a number of verbatim quotations from the participants’ interview transcripts. Having quite a number of verbatim extract showed that participants were given the chance for their voices to be heard during the interview.

**Transparency.** Transparency refers to a careful description of the stages involved in the research process during the write up of the study (Smith et al., 2009). The selection of the participants was purposive (parenting styles and practices) and homogeneous. The construction of the interview was strengthened by the literature review and pre-testing of the guiding questions. IPA guidelines were used to analyse the data. Quotations from the transcript were written as well as the line number so that it was easy to confirm the context of the extract in the transcript.

**Credibility.** This refers to how much the data reflected accurately the truth of the phenomenon as well as the interpretation. This means that there must be confidence in the truth of the findings (Polit & Beck, 2012). Qualitative credibility is obtained through thick description, triangulation, and multi-vocality (Tracy, 2010). To achieve thick description, I made a concrete detailed report about data in such a way that readers could make their own conclusion. Furthermore, in order to ensure credibility, the participants were given an opportunity to refuse their participation, and only those who were genuinely willing to participate in the research and ready to offer data freely were involved. Also, I recorded the interviews; both recorded interviews and transcribed text were examined critically during the analysis.

**Feasibility.** It is possible that some participants may not be willing to give some information out as they consider such information personal. However, an adequate explanation of the purpose of the study was given. More interviews were not conducted because the participants were able to provide adequate information about their parenting styles and practices. Another issue could be language because participants have their local language that they are fluent in. However, the participants could communicate in English, though it might not be fluent and correct, but the message was still understood. As soon as the first interview was done, the analysis followed even before the next interview. The researcher did not exceed the set time for the interview. The interview was not too long for the participants because they were able to discuss a lot of information about their parenting styles and practices.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Findings**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter reports on the findings from one-on-one interviews conducted with East African newcomer mothers. The five participants discussed their parenting experiences as they raised their children in their native countries (Eritrea, Somalia, Rwanda, Kenya and Burundi). In these interviews, eight themes were identified. The first theme was about the styles of raising children in Africa. It referred to how the study participants had raised their children when they still lived in Africa. The second theme talked about the cultural ways of parenting children in Africa. The study participants explained how they had raised their children through African culture and shared what they liked and disliked about the culture as they raised their children. The third theme was about perceived advantages of parenting their children in Africa. In this theme, the participants talked about what made parenting easier for them in Africa. The fourth theme explained the challenges that participants encountered as they raised their children in Africa. The fifth theme identified the parenting styles that participants are using in Canada to raise their children and the reasons why they are using these styles. The sixth theme was the perceived advantages of raising children in Canada, and they talked about what they like as they raise their children in Canada. In the seventh theme, the study participants explained the challenges that they are having in Canada as they raise their children, and the solutions to these challenges were highlighted. The last theme was about the factors influencing the parenting styles and practices.

## Styles of Raising Children in Africa

Parenting in Africa seemed to be a little bit difficult for the participants. They talked about different styles they had used to raise their children while in Africa. Some of the styles mentioned were talking, corporal punishment, providing guidance and the beliefs around their parenting styles and practices. The sub-themes in this section are presented below.

**Talking to children.** When participants were asked how they used to raise their children in Africa, three of the participants expressed that one of the styles used when their children misbehaved was talking to them. They mentioned that they talked to their children about how they should behave in society. These participants believed that talking to their children would guide and direct them toward good behaviours. For instance,

Sometimes we have time to talk to them, to let them sit with us. I can talk to them to show them the right way. Many times I talk to them to do not follow the bad examples, to follow the good examples (Clara).

As part of talking to the children, the participants mentioned providing guidance to the children. Two of the participants stated that they did sit down with their children to guide them toward good behaviour and encourage them to work hard in order to have a better life. They explained further that they tried to be a good role model to their children. Clara mentioned that:

But many times, we need to sit with kids, show them the right way, how they can, they can good behaviour, how they can work hard to have good life and show them how we are working hard to help them have a better life. I show them the right way, how they can go.

**Corporal punishment.** Another parenting style mentioned by all the mothers was corporal punishment. All mothers had spanked or beaten their children while in Africa and they

believed that this particular parenting style would correct their children's behaviour. Some statements from the study participants follow:

We punish them freely, in back home we are punishing them, when they are, like punishing when they are doing something wrong things (Rahel).

So in back home, you can spank the children, you slap them. I spank my child when he was two years old to be honest, I slap him when he was young (Aisha).

If there is something wrong, we can have some discipline for them. For example, we used to, to use like cane, what is that? (pause..). A small stick. Beat! I beat you like a three sticks in your bottom. She doesn't behave nicely, she will know that she will have the sticks, sometime, can be five, five sticks on his bottom (Clara).

If my country, yes, I take like this, I beat him up (Mom).

Study participants knew that this style was not good for their children but mothers were raised with the belief that corporal punishment is a method to correct children's bad behaviours. For instance, Princess said, "We were raised that punishment is something that we can. You know spank, we can be spanked, that is normal to our culture." Mothers explained that this method was bad because they could cause a lot of harm to their children's body and emotions. For example, Princess mentioned in her narration that, "she figure out that she did too much and it's very, very bad and she just get a lot of scars in her body and it's not good."

Furthermore, two of the mothers mentioned maltreatment as part of the harsh discipline method used in Africa. These mothers explained maltreatment to be yelling and not providing the basic needs for the children. Mothers knew that this style was bad and could affect the emotions of their children. Aisha mentioned in her statement that, "They go to bed without food, we don't care. I say go away, I yell at them."

One mother explained that there is no child's advocate in Africa. This might be the reason why some parents corporally disciplined their children. This statement was made by Aisha that "there is no children advocate for the kids." Despite that African parents corporally disciplined their children, African parents showed love toward their children by providing the basic needs to their children. African society expects parents to provide for their children's needs. Mothers ensured that when their children are coming from school, they have their food ready. For example, Rahel said that "In back home, they are, even they, even they are working in outside, like em, even they are working in office whatever, when they are coming home, they are preparing all the foods." Also, two mothers said that when they fail in fulfilling their responsibility to their children, they become unhappy, like Clara, who said that "If I don't have the thing they are asking me, what they need I don't have that, I did not like."

**Beliefs influencing parenting styles and practices in Africa.** Participants were asked about the beliefs behind their parenting styles and practices in Africa. The way they had been parented seemed to influence the participants' parenting styles. As part of raising their children the way each mother had been parented, the religion of the parents seemed to influence how the participants raised their children in Africa, meaning that Christian parents sought to raise their children through Christianity and Muslim parents sought to raise their children in an Islamic way. For instance, three of the mothers said that they raised their children the way they were raised by their parents.

You know I'm growing up in Christians family, like every day we are praying, every day we are singing, like that family. So, I like that life, you know I'm I want to raising my child like this style (Rahel).



How I get raise in my family, even we were back home when I get em, I was kid, but I can follow the example of my parent, how they raise me and I can raise my kid the same way (Clara).

I'm from Burundi where my culture, it means a lot to me and where we raise children through our culture. So for me how I raise my children, I raise them how my parents raised me (Princess).

**Parenting lived experiences at the refugee camps.** For the three mothers who lived at refugee camps in Africa, parenting experiences at the refugee camp were different from parenting experiences in the participants' native countries and Canada. Poor and unsafe living conditions, lack of proper nutrition and lack of income characterized their living at refugee camps.

The participants believed that parenting at the refugee camp included poor living experiences due to sleeping on the floor and not having portable water which was essential for a better living. Aisha described her living conditions in the refugee camp: "You live in a small camp, you live, and there is a small mattress in the floor and in the floor, there's sand and ah, what I remember was there's no water, ah we use to drink yellow water." Princess talked about the emotional trauma she experienced while living in a war zone camp. She mentioned the psychological torture that she went through, especially seeing people being killed in her presence:

You have problem in your mental first of all because you saw the war, you saw people killing, maybe you overcome that, when you are running you see people who are dying in front of you. So you know you see all of those things in your brain (Princess).

Poor nutrition, which these mothers believed could cause malnutrition in their children, was another major problem. Aisha explained this:

She doesn't have food, she doesn't have a good life, the kids are so malnutrition, there's a lot of impact in those kids' lives, even the grow, when they grow up, they are not growing up to be healthy kids, it's a lot of challenges (Aisha).

Princess further mentioned that because they lacked food, the children went to sleep most of the time with no food: "We eat any, if we don't have, we sleep like that" (Princess). Apart from poor nutrition, living in unsafe condition was another problem mentioned by the participants. Parents and their children were not well protected at the camp and this at times resulted in death due to bites from poisonous animals or rape. Princess expressed her concern over personal safety at the camp:

So you gonna sleep in a tent where there is no door, there is no toilet, kids gonna, whatever, anybody can do bad, they can do anything at the door, at your door, anybody can come and rape you, scorpion can bite you.

Finally, one newcomer mother talked about how lack of income was a difficult situation at the refugee camp, which made parenting harder for them. Clara mentioned her concern about income: "Well it was not easy to raise the kids because they the life was not easy, with many and no income, not having everything."

### **Cultural Ways of Parenting in Africa**

Study participants mentioned that in Africa they raised their children through their culture and shared their lived experiences about the culture that they loved as they raised children. Some of the cultural ways of parenting children in Africa mentioned by the participants are girls staying in their parents' house until they are ready for marriage, obeying family rules, role

modelling and respect, children taking care of their parents, collective parenting, fathers as the sole decision-makers and family heads, just to mention a few. The sub-themes are explored below.

**Raising children through culture.** Two of the participants explained that they really enjoyed raising children through their culture because they loved their culture. Rahel said in her statement that, “So I like my culture, I don’t know how I can explain it”

As part of raising children through the culture, Rahel mentioned that a girl stays with her parents until she is physically, psychologically, socially and financially ready for marriage. This connotes proper parenting because such a girl is thought to have listened to her parents, so she is properly trained. For instance, “And we are staying at home until we are married, especially a girl is like a woman, they are staying home. And but in our culture, people, I’m leaving my home when I wed, when I get married.”

Furthermore, three of the participants talked about learning how to manage a home as part of raising children through African culture. Mothers stated that they felt that the home training that African parents imparted to their children was good and loved to have their children around to get the house chores done. Clara in her statement mentioned that “when they still young, they can work in the kitchen, helping in kitchen, helping the house, the household? Is household? Housework. So every time we show them how they can make our house clean.”

In addition to the home training mentioned above, one of the participants expressed that in Africa children are culturally trained on how to obey their parents. If children wanted to do anything, such children asked the family for guidance and direction. When such children are married, they still continue to seek advice from their parents because parents have a wealth of

knowledge and experiences. For instance, Rahel said, “If I want do anything, I have to ask from my family.”

**Role models and respect.** The participants talked about role modelling and respect as part of the cultural way of parenting their children, and they are central to their parenting styles and practices in African culture. Role modelling in this context is looking up to a person who serves as an example of good behaviour, and respect is a sign of treating somebody nice. Mothers considered role modelling and respect as a checklist for good behaviour. For instance, Clara mentioned that “Am, sometimes when they are growing they can see how they are, they are um cousin or friends are behaving. They can help, they can behave according how they can see their relatives.” Three mothers stated that the respect that children give to adults in Africa was the reason why they enjoyed parenting in their native countries. In Africa, children do not call elders by their first name and they have regard for them. For instance, Rahel stated that “Most of the time, even mom is like respect, more respecting to dad, that is why the kids are respecting to dad. And the same as dad respecting to mom, they show like doing the same.” In addition to the statement made by Rahel, Princess explained that:

We teach them how to respect. They have to respect people who are grown up people, even though they don't know them, they have to respect them, it doesn't matter what and they have to be very careful in everything they do.

**Children take care of their parents.** It is part of African culture for children to take care of their parents when they become older. One of the participants explained that in her native country, when parents become older, they live with their children. For instance, Aisha said that “I need them to feed me back because in my back home, as you know, we, we don't put the parents in the care, they stay in our house until they die.” This participant mentioned that she

would like her children to take care of her when she is older. Aisha seemed to be scared that in her old age, her children would be too busy to have time for her and they would neglect her, which she thinks is not part of their culture.

**Collective parenting in Africa.** Collective parenting was explained by mothers as shared responsibilities with their neighbours, who looked after the children when the mothers were not at home. Culturally in Africa, children are collectively brought up by family members, friends, neighbours, etc. Three of the participants indicated that they enjoyed this collective parenting in Africa. Princess and Mom explained that:

When I'm not home, my neighbour can be there for me, they can give them food, they can feed them or they can protect them, and the same if they are not there, I can do the same. Children back home is for the family, is for, you know family is neighbours, neighbours are family (Princess).

If children do bad thing, maybe you go to tell your mom, you go to tell your sister. You know my son, he did that, can you talk with him, children is scare, you know. Life is about family, if family talk, don't do that, children no do anything in my country, back home, (pause...), yah. I very like it because to share each other, to raise children everybody, family, friend, friend, family friend, everybody to, to raise the child. Back home everybody help you (Mom).

**Father is the sole decision-maker.** Another cultural issue stated by two of the participants was the view that men are the sole decision-makers. This means that men are regarded as authorities and respected by everyone, especially children, because of their authority. Men are firm when they discipline children, thus children respect and submit to their instructions. To buttress this, Clara expressed that in her culture, "the kids expect their dad is the

king of the house, if they say something, they will have to listen to him more than they can listen to me.” Apart from the fact that men make decisions for the family, it is their responsibility to provide for the family while women raise the children. For example, two participants highlighted that “Yah, in country, in my back home, women is not go work. Husband he go work, he bring for you food, everything, you stay home, you raise your children” (Mom).

### **Perceived Advantages of Parenting Children in Africa**

The participants talked about what they enjoyed in Africa as they raised their children. They showed how they liked weather, community support that they enjoyed in Africa and parents’ freedom; these make parenting easy. The sub-themes are explained below:

**Weather.** Two mothers expressed that the weather made parenting easy for them. To buttress this statement, Aisha stated that “I enjoy most ah the weather, we didn’t have to dress kids every time. We didn’t have to worry there’s winter, there’s storm.” Here is another reason to dislike Winnipeg winters: newcomer mothers felt that they had support from their community in Africa as they raised their children.

**Community support.** African newcomer mothers enjoyed the familial support as they raised their children in their native countries. Participants mentioned that when they went out for groceries, families, friends and neighbours helped them to take care of their children. Three of the participants expressed that they liked the support that they received from their families, as this helped and made parenting easy for them. Support in these terms refers to the assistance from family members, such as bathing the baby or carrying the baby so that mom could rest to regain strength after child birth. Mom explained that “If you born children, you will be with family, family help you, maybe your mother or your sister, until everybody help you, that is not big deal in my country to raise children.”

**Parents' freedom.** Freedom connotes being able to go anywhere without hindrance or restraint from anybody. Two mothers indicated that parents had freedom in Africa to go anywhere as they raised their children in their native countries without getting into trouble or their children being apprehended. For example, Aisha expressed that:

I enjoy the freedom that I have, I don't have it in Canada. The freedom is about going anywhere, you can leave the child at home, you go anywhere, you don't have to worry about anyone is coming to knock the door.

### **Challenges about Parenting Children in Africa**

Participants mentioned things they did not like about parenting in Africa. Some of their concerns are gender inequality, corruption and wars, poverty, how parents abused children and parental control. They thought these challenges affected how they raised their children in Africa, thus parenting became problematic for them. The following are the sub-themes:

**Gender preference and opportunity among the children.** Another problem mentioned by the participants was the preference for male children. They felt that male children had more opportunities than female children. One of the points raised by these mothers was that male children are respected because they have the opportunity of having an education, whereas female children are denied education, which could lead to low self-esteem and feelings of not being valued among female children. For instance, one of the participants expressed that:

When it comes to gender like boys have to be respected that much, but girls they don't have this respect things like that. And you see for example, when it comes parent doesn't have much money and they have three children, what they think first of all is to send a boy to school, and girls they stay home (Princess).

**Corruption and war.** Illegal behaviours demonstrated by the government officials in Africa was an issue mentioned by one mother. This mother believed that this behaviour of “dishonesty” has a negative influence on the children, the future leaders. Aisha was concerned about how the widespread corruption in her country would influence her children’s sense of right and wrong. For instance, “They are not honest, corrupted people, that is the most thing I didn’t like it and the environment is also causing the kids to grow up to be corrupted.” Another concern raised by two mothers was living in an unsafe environment. These mothers expressed that war has taken over their native countries; hence raising children became a problem because their children were being exposed to a dangerous and harmful environment. This unsafe environment was believed to be related to corruption and war and made parenting difficult because of the separation between parents and children. For instance, Mom mentioned that “Back home is fighting, not safety, (pause...), yah, not safety, that is I don’t like it”.

**Poverty.** Apart from corruption and war, three of the participants indicated that poverty, especially begging and sleeping with an empty stomach with no hope for tomorrow was a major problem for them in Africa. For example, one of the participants asserted that:

Poverty in Africa is the main thing. You sleep without knowing what tomorrow you gonna eat. You didn’t know what tomorrow you have to put the food in the table, I didn’t know what next tomorrow is gonna come. So what I didn’t like mostly in Africa is about begging, we beg people. We don’t work hard to earn money, we just like free things, we like to be poor because we just decided to be those people (Aisha).

**Child abuse.** The most important problem mentioned by all the participants was child abuse. They talked about how they had witnessed other parents causing injury and in some cases



death and emotional harm to their children. They believed that such experiences could lead to behavioural problems in children. Aisha considered this kind of abuse as she stated:

I have seen that 7 years old he burnt to death, hmmhm (pause....) and they do that, up till today and they really torture kids very badly. A father kill his own son because he steals \$1 or maybe 5 cents, and we starve kids, we starve kids to death.

The newcomer mothers felt that the perceived disadvantages of parenting in Africa mentioned above could be a result of ignorance. As Aisha stated, "I think ignorance is something I will say. We have no education; we have no education in any means."

**Parental control over individual choices.** Parental control over individual choices was mentioned by one of the mothers. Parental control in this context is the parents' ability to impose their own choices over their children's choices. One of the participants mentioned that African parents continued to control and provide guidance to their children after they had married because it was believed that adults have richer experiences. Rahel shared her opinion:

Like we are the parents so you have to do what we are saying to you, em, because they are seeing us like is, a children even when we are grow up. Even when we are adults, we are not having a choice.

### **Styles of Raising Children in Canada**

East African newcomer mothers discussed the parenting styles that they are using in Canada to raise their children. These mothers shared their views about the freedom that children have in Canada and acknowledged that children are not punished in Canada. The mothers mentioned talking to their children, having a schedule, monitoring their children's behaviour and role modelling as the styles they are using in Canada to raise their children. The sub-themes are written below:

**Children are not punished.** All the participants acknowledged that they knew from the newcomer orientation they had when they arrived in Canada that harsh discipline practices such as spanking, beating, yelling, slapping, kicking, shaking is tantamount to abuse in Canada, hence, this method of discipline was not part of the styles used by the participants as they raised their children in Canada. Princess mentioned in her statement that “I was raise where I can spank my child, I can spank my child, without no problem. When I get here, you cannot touch your children, you know, you cannot spank, you cannot do it.” Also, the participants knew that parenting in Canada is about talking to the children to guide them toward good behaviour. Aisha mentioned that, “I know so the parenting in Canada is about talking to them, don’t do this don’t do that.” They also stated that the best thing about parenting is connecting with the kids. For example, Aisha said that “what I like about most parenting is that you are so connected to your kids.” The participants acknowledged that their parenting styles in Canada encouraged love and care between parents and children, which they believed would create a bonding relationship between them and their children. For instance, Aisha pointed out that “I might kiss them all before they go to bed, they give me kiss.”

Despite the fact that the participants knew they could not physically punish their children, they expressed that parenting becomes difficult for them in Canada because they cannot discipline their children the way they used to discipline them in Africa. For instance, this statement was made by Clara that, “because here we don’t have to discipline them like back home. In Canada is not easy to discipline your kids.”

**Communication.** When participants were asked about the styles they are using to parent their children in Canada, four mothers mentioned they did talk to their children constantly when they did something wrong. Talking to the children was seen as a way of correcting their

children's wrong doing. For example, one study participant said that "I talk with my children to sit down, talk, I like to talk with children many, many times. You have to say oh you know my son, that is not good for you, that is good, that is good."

Some of these participants believed that talking with their children is like giving respect and attention to the children. For example, Clara expressed that "Ok I sit, I drop everything I was doing, I say ok let's talk, they tell me what they want, they tell you what they need." Apart from just talking, the participants mentioned that communicating instructions carefully was important to them. Participants instructed their children on what they should do, and obedience to their instructions enhanced positive parent-child relationships. Aisha made this statement,

I think in Canada, is all about parent and kid to have communication. If you know that you are not for example, you are not gonna be home certain time, tell your child to know that. I have to let them know that they don't go anywhere, they stay in the gym in school, so when I'm from my doctor's appointment, I come there to pick them up.

As part of having communication with children, one of the participants shared her lived experience on how she is teaching her children to be responsible by making a budget with them. Princess stated that:

I had to budget with my children. We sit down, I give each one responsibility each week to take that money so that you can control that money until the end of the week. Another one the next week, another one the next week, so that helps them.

Although the participants knew that talking to children is okay and made parenting easier, one of the participants found it hard to use this style on her children. For instance, Princess stated that:

Sit down and communicate was very, very hard for me, it took me five years to get to know how. Don't get mad, sit down and talk to them and there were times I talk to them, this is what I have learned so far.

**Schedule for kids.** Another style mentioned by the participants was to put the children on a schedule. Three of the participants knew that having a schedule for their children would help them. Rahel said that she was using a schedule for her child: "I have to be em time table for her to watching TV, to eating, to sleeping, to reading, I'm doing like that." As part of having a schedule for her children, Aisha explained that she is using Activity Daily Living (ADL) for her children and this parenting style made parenting easy for her. For example,

I always says ADL, em so what about the daily activities, what can we do? where can we put them? where can they go after school program? What snack can they have? It's call activity daily living. That's how I normally use it to my kids, it's am, it's everyday that we are in, we have to be active daily, living, when we are living, we have to be active everyday I have a timetable, when they wake up around 7:30 up to 7:00 o clock, that's their schedule, they know what they have to do, it's not school day, if it's weekend, if. We go two days at weekend, we go to city kiddies.

They further explained that scheduling involves sharing of responsibilities among the children and this makes each child know and do the task assigned to him or her. As stated by Princess, "so each one they have their own responsibility because it's too much, that is why I divided that and give each one the task so we can help one another." The participants seemed to believe that scheduling comes with rules and once the children are used to their schedule and follow the rules set by the parents, parenting becomes easy. Aisha explained that she is using this

method with her children: “There’s a rules, there’s a timeout, there’s a sharing, there’s a listening time, there’s a opinion time.”

Reward was mentioned by three mothers and they connected it to scheduling. Aisha stated that part of the scheduling is when her children are rewarded for something they have done well. She said: “And there’s a price day, when they do something nice, they have a pay back. When they do something bad, they take, we take something out of their stuff.” Also, Mom shared her experience by saying that “I do for you this one, I do for you if you do this, to make deal again, if you make this something, I do for you something.”

**Monitoring.** Another style mentioned by two of the participants was monitoring. They stated that in Canada they monitored their children’s movement and activities. For instance, Clara and Mom said,

Sometime I ask them can I see the movie you are watching? But when they go somewhere they need to give me a phone number and the way they go (Clara).

I look all the time any minute what you do, what is that thing, if he come back home, I check his bag. First, put your bag here, I need to check, because in Canada many thing is not like Africa you know, totally you know, is not like Africa. Like Africa is everything is easy, in this country is not easy. I check his bag (Mom).

Participants mentioned giving guidance through advice as part of monitoring the children. Three of the participants expressed that they talked to their children about their behaviours, as well as the consequences of their behaviours. In the process of talking and encouraging their children, participants shared their lived experiences with their children. Princess said that:

I tell them, this is the right thing that you can do, but it's your choice. If you don't do this, this is the problem that you can face, you know in the long way, but if you do this, that can help you because I have experience I can tell you.

**Role modelling.** Role modelling was another style mentioned by three mothers. Mothers used the older children to train the younger children. Clara explained that, "The big kids can help to talk to the youngest." Apart from this, parents became role models to their children, teaching them good lessons about how to treat other people and behave in the society, as well as not hiding anything from their children by making sure that they have access to everything their mothers have. For example,

My husband he helped me at home. He treated me, so the same as my child respect to me as the that (Rahel).

We want them to be the right person, by being the right person when they still young, we need to show them the right way, how they will be, how they would be right person, so that then they do mistake, we have to show them the right way (Clara).

I don't hide in my password like, I don't hide how much I have, I don't hide anything, so when they know everything for me, it give me peace of mind because they are not gonna ask me what I don't have because they know everything (Princess).

**General views of raising children in Canada.** Newcomer mothers had different views about parenting in Canada. One of the mothers explained parenting to be taking proper care of children. Clara said this, "Parenting is to take care of your kids, (pause...), see if your kids are safe, if your kids are happy, if your kids have everything they need." Another mother explained that parenting involves education. Princess said, "Parenting means education for me, we teach the family, your family how you want them to be tomorrow."

Three mothers mentioned that the divorce rate is high among African parents as they raise their children in Canada. These mothers could not give specific statistics, but in the African community, a “high divorce rate” means that a lot of families are separated due to misunderstanding between the husband and wife. Rahel explained: “But in Canada when they are coming, they get divorce, because of different system.” Lack of communication was another reason for divorce among African families mentioned by one participant: “You can see a parent whereby they are divorced because of there is no communication” (Aisha).

Another reason mentioned by one of these mothers was that African husbands view themselves as the heads of the home, and thus they do not help their wives. African men believed that house chores are meant to be done by women. For instance, Rahel stated, “My friend her husband is good in outside, you know, he bring a lot of money but he didn’t work her, he didn’t help her at home.”

**Reasons behind the styles used by the parents.** Participants were asked the reasons behind the parenting styles they are using in Canada. One of the participants mentioned that she attended parenting class and in this class, she was encouraged to be positive with her children and teach them with respect and love. Aisha made this statement that, “Ah, very positive, very positive because I told you I went for parenting class. So you need to be very positive to your kids, you need to know that your kids have right on you.” Also, another participant mentioned that she attended newcomer orientation and the counsellor encouraged her to be vigilant as she raises her children in Canada. The counsellor explained to her that she should monitor her children and be vigilant of the kind of friends they keep. Clara said the counsellor told her to be friendly with her children. For instance, Clara said,

But I'm happy before we came to Canada, before when we went for the first time, we get orientation from our counsellor, from Welcome Place. The counsellor told us that here in Canada you have to be careful, there is bad friend and good friend. You need, you need to know who your kids is going with, you need to know your friends, the friends of your kids, and then they go somewhere, they, they have to tell you where they are going and they have to give you the phone number for the person you contact if there is emergency. And I'm lucky I, I attend many workshops about how can raise up.

### **Perceived Advantages of Raising Children in Canada**

The participants were happy to discuss what they like as they raise their children in Canada. They talked about the connection between parents and children, the freedom that children enjoy, the school system and peaceful environment. The following are the sub-themes for this theme:

**Children have freedom.** The newcomer mothers said that children have freedom in Canada. Freedom in this context connotes being free to do whatever the children want to do. Mothers seemed to like the freedom that children have as they thought that it would groom them for the future and create independence in them. Three of the participants shared their experiences of this:

You know in Canada, they said like a 16 years old person, he can do by his mind whatever he wants (Rahel).

This country it's only that we have freedom and kids can choose whatever they want. Is about to give my kids freedom (Aisha).



But sometime I let them be free and say. I can give them like a 10 minutes, they can watch what they want, to do not, to be like the I put them in the, in the chain, I let them be free (Clara).

As part of being free, three of the participants mentioned independence as another perceived advantage over their native countries. In Canada, children who are over eighteen years have the opportunity to work and go to school at the same time. These participants believed that in Canada children are taught to be self-sufficient and self-reliant in whatever they do. The participants made these statements:

They train the kids to be independent (Aisha).

They say like kids who has 18 years old can do everything he want or she want (Clara).

I really like how kids they get to be independent (Princess).

Two of the participants expressed their dislike toward the freedom that children have in Canada. They stated that because of the freedom that children have in Canada, they failed to follow through with the parents' instruction and guidance. These mothers believed that the freedom made parenting difficult for them. Princess made this statement: "Kids here, they have so much freedom I think and too much freedom make kids take wrong decision sometimes."

**School system.** Three of the mothers felt that the school system in Canada was good for their children. These mothers believed that the Canadian school system makes parents responsible to take up parental roles and become better parents. For example, Aisha said that "You just wanna make sure the kids having snack. You want to make sure the kids went to school, they are coming back from school to lunch." Mothers further added that in school, children are fed if hungry and are welcomed and treated well, as opposed to Africa where they did not have school supplies. For example, Clara said:

They have food when go to school, they welcome them at school, they will have good clothes that they will want to bring at school they have all the tool they need in school, they call them splies, supplies for school.

Two of the participants continued to talk about Canadian school system as a better way of providing good education to their children that they felt would give their children a better future. Mom said this in her statement: “Education, I like it, if your children is good, he get good education.”

**Peaceful environment.** Peace and safety that mothers enjoy in Canada, which they did not have in their native countries, was mentioned by three of the participants. In most of the countries where the study participants came from there are wars. Parents and children lived in danger and had worries and fears of the unknown. However, in Canada there is no war and this is well appreciated by the participants. When parents panic about war and its effect, parenting is negatively affected. For instance, Mom indicated what she enjoyed in Canada: “What I like here in Canada (pause....), one is peace, no problem, peace is okay. Canada I say safety I like it.”

**Spousal role.** The roles of spouses were discussed by three of the mothers as they raise their children, and the roles of each spouse vary. One mother expressed that her husband was very helpful in raising their children, and this was supported by the statement made by Rahel, “when in, in the morning he pick up my daughter, he drop in day care. Even in home, washing clothes, dishes, he’s really supported me.” Another mother stated that her husband played a big role by talking to the children, which is normal for every father to do, especially when their children misbehave: “Anyway, he plays a very big role by parenting, talking to my kids, by telling them what to do” (Aisha). The third mother explained that her husband ensured that their children have a good life by working hard to provide what they need. For example,

As he is working hard for them to have a nice education, he want them when they finish their education, they can work hard too to raise their family as he is doing. He'll be there asking show me your homework, have you done everything? Your study is the completely, if not you have to drop off the TV, go to do your homework (Clara).

### **Parenting Challenges Encountered by Parents in Canada**

The study participants talked about the challenges they are having as they raise their children in Canada. Some of these challenges include children calling 911 on their parents, apprehension, children lose focus on their career, the selfish personality that children have, freedom, individual living, psychological issues, living in two different cultures and negative influence from peers, just to mention a few. The sub-themes are explored below:

**Parents are afraid of family services.** Four of the participants expressed that they were not happy when children called 911 on their parents. As a result of this call, children are apprehended by family services and when this happened, parents feel bad and this negatively affects the family relationship. For instance, Mom said that “If you say anything you are abuse children, he call 911. If police come, family service they follow you they come, family services come. Canadian people take children from parent.” Mothers believed that their children have been wrongly informed at school “to call 911 on their parents” and this made them act contrary to their parents’ instructions and wishes. Mothers thought that it was wrong when the school authority instructed their children to call 911 and report their parents when they disciplined them. Princess stated: “So the child because they have learn in school that if your parent touch you, you have to call 911, when they call 911, parents are in trouble.” Apprehension was another issue that all participants were afraid of. For instance, Aisha mentioned that “The only thing I get scared is how they take kids from the care, from the parent.”

These mothers further believed that their children lied to family services and family services believed them. Two mothers mentioned that when children called family services, they told lies about parents to family services and they believed the children instead of their parents. Princess explained that “Sometime children they lie and when they say whatever they say, they accept it, when they accept the kids call and these people they come to the home.”

**Apprehended children are not safe.** These mothers still believed that family services made parenting worse and harder for the parents by destroying their children’s lives. Mom said that “family services is not helping anything.” They believed that when children are apprehended and placed in care they are exposed to a lot of bad behaviours. For instance, Princess made this statement:

When they take our children, you see they take them to the place where is like in the home, and these kids when they go there, they meet those who have been doing prostitution, drugs, and then I’m telling you, two girls that I know from the family, now they are pregnant. They don’t put them in a safe place.

**Children lose focus on their careers.** The concern about independence that mothers enjoyed in Canada was brought up here by two mothers as a challenge. These mothers believed that because children can work and earn money, they do not think about pursuing their careers, which has a negative influence on their children’s future. Rahel mentioned that “They are not going to university because they know money.” Princess stated that:

I was advise him to go back to school, you finish high school now, you need to go to university and improve and do something in your life. So he didn’t see that that is very important, he took his way.

**Children have selfish minds.** Two of the participants stated that African children are developing a selfish personality in Canada. Selfish personality means that they only think about themselves alone and are less concerned about their family. For instance, Rahel said that “This individual mind is getting into our kiddies. You know they are living for their lives only, they don’t care about their family.” Four of the participants believed that the reason behind this perceived selfishness is the freedom that children have in Canada. This freedom allows children to do things in their own way, anytime they wish. Aisha shared her experience on this:

I have a teenager now, my daughter, she’s ten and my son is twelve. Ah, they do like sometime stuff which I don’t like it, they wanna stay late at home, ah watching TV, movies. They say I wanna like that movie, I wanna do this movie.

**Freedom to do anything.** The topic of children having freedom kept coming up. Four mothers mentioned that they didn’t like the freedom that children have in Canada. Freedom in this context is about having relationships with the opposite sex and being involved in transgender and sexuality issues. This kind of freedom contradicts African culture because children are not allowed to engage in opposite sex relationships until they are fully mature and can handle the consequences of their actions. The mothers shared their concerns:

They have freedom to have a boyfriend, girlfriends. And that is scaring part, I’m so scared. Because this country is a freedom country, they can choose to be a lesbian, they can choose to be a gay, they can choose to be a bisexual. So, that is the only part I don’t like about the freedom, freedom is about the engagement of sexuality in this country (Aisha).

The children, be it teenager they said mama I am grown up, I need to sleep over (pause), I need the friend (Mom).

You have to let the kids do what they want because they are 16, they are 17, they are in Canada, they can do, and they know their law. Kids here, they have so much freedom I think and too much freedom make kids take wrong decision sometimes. I can do anything I want, my parents will neither do anything to me, I can decide how I want, I can sleep in where I want, so I have no right to tell that child, no you have to stay here. He lived on his own for one year, but life was not easy because I cut off to talk to him, and then for him to parent, to buy food and everything, so that is too, too much. I have a 20 years old and that 20 years old, he want to bring his girlfriend to my home, which in Canada is normal to bring your girlfriend. When a boy and a girl they are in a relationship, they call themselves girlfriend and boyfriend. They can, you know one can come to visit and they wanna go to the room, they wanna do whatever they want to do and that is not acceptable. I was very surprise to see her, take go with my son, they go in, my son take her and then they go to the room. When they go to his room, you know it was not a good experience for me because they start kissing, doing things in the room (Princess).

**Isolation.** Isolation was a challenge to three of the participants. Isolation in this context was that the participants felt that their neighbours do not care about their families; everybody has to mind his or her own business. For example, Rahel said “In Canada there is individual life. Like I didn’t, for a long time, I’m not seeing for my neighbour in Canada, so it makes me, makes me a little bit challenged.” The participants believed that if they needed help with childcare from their neighbours, they couldn’t just ask their neighbours, compared to Africa where neighbours would take care of each other’s children, thus, this made parenting difficult for them. For instance, Princess stated that:

If I'm not home, even though my neighbour is there, they cannot even, they don't even care about me. If I'm not there and then my child is crying, they don't even care about my child. Is just like be yourself and by myself.

**Psychological issues.** Mental health issues which include bad feelings such as feeling of killing oneself became one of challenges that two mothers encountered when they came to Canada. Aisha shared some of her psychological experiences: "Sometimes you feel blue, you feel you are worthless. Sometimes you feel suicidal, so those two years of my newborn I feel that experience."

**Living in two different cultures.** Living in two different cultures was another challenge mentioned by three of the mothers. The African children do not want to recognise and accept their parents' culture. Rahel expressed that, "The children we born here, they are not, they are not accepting our cultures. Even sometimes they hate the people of our cultures, our countries." Part of the culture that the participants would like their children to accept and maintain was their mother tongue. They wished their children would continue to speak their native language so that they could trace back their origin. The mothers wished they could continue to communicate to their children in their native language because it makes parenting easier for them. However, they found that as soon as their children learned how to speak Canadian English, they did not want to speak their parents' native language. Despite this, some mothers still encouraged their children to keep talking in their native language because that is the language spoken at home. For instance, Clara still encouraged her children to continue talking in her language: "The cultural ah the challenging I ask them to, to keep, to keep talking, talking in my maternal language, to do not forget it. Some of them keep talking in my maternal language, but other don't want." Also, the language barrier was another challenge mentioned by four mothers, which could be likened to

living in two cultures. For example, Princess said that “Some people they tell you, oh, you are speaking your languages, like this, you are, accent, you are this and this. You come here, then you don’t speak English, you have your own language that you speak.”

As part of living in two different cultures, participants expressed that African children do not show respect to adults and they considered showing “respect to adults” as part of African heritage. Two of the participants explained that African children had failed to respect adults. Respect in this context is an act of showing regard to the parents. Rahel explained that when she asked one of her friend’s children to give her water to drink, the child turned down her request. She considered this disrespectful:

And, if we asking them to help us as a parent to give us respect, they don’t do that like that. I asked for help children for her child, ah would you give me a water please. He told me is that for you, yes, so you have to take it by yourself.”

One of the participants expressed that African children learnt wrong information about marriage. This participant felt that African children believed that marriage is a contract and once either of the party is tired of it, the person can end the marriage with no obligation. Rahel explained that “My niece what she told me when she came Canada like two years something, if I don’t like even if I don’t like the white eh guy, I can cut it is like contract.”

**Bad influence.** Two of the participants indicated that their children have been negatively influenced by their peers. Negative influence includes hanging out with peers for drugs, stealing, and sleepovers. These participants expressed that when they were in their native countries, their children were not involved in drugs. For instance, Mom mentioned that, “Ah, now I say he go for a friend, the friend he give him drugs, he drinking drug. My children he don’t know drug, me too I didn’t drink drug all my life.” Another participant buttressed the statement made by Mom by



saying that young children go to jail because of their involvement in drugs, drinking, and prostitution. This participant believed that when African children come to Canada, they are easily influenced by the wrong people that they meet. For example, Princess said this:

You see young kids they get up to go to jail because they met wrong people, they start smoking weed, they start drinking, they start doing prostitution, so that is not a good thing. So our children when they come, they meet wrong people, when they meet those people, they take them in the wrong way because they know this is a free country.

Another concern mentioned by the participants was sleepover in a friend's house. Participants explained that allowing children to sleep over in a friend's house shows negligence in their parental duties. Mom shared her experience on sleepovers: "The children, be it teenager they said mama I am grown up, I need to sleep over (pause)." As some of the participants associated their children's bad behaviours to influence from peers, one of the participants associated African children's bad behaviours to the way parents raise their children. Aisha felt that children's bad behaviour was caused by the parents who are negligent in their parental roles and duties. Aisha expressed that:

You see them growing up to be a gang because they see all these negative at home. You see a lot of black people, they become gangs because they didn't get a good at home, so I don't blame those kids, I blame the parents.

Lastly, two of the participants narrated the challenges that they had experienced in this country as they raised their children. These participants had been stressed about their children and they related their children's behaviours such as drugs, drinking and stealing to bad influence from friends. Mom shared her challenges as she raises her children in Canada.

Ah, now I say he go for a friend, the friend he give him drugs, he drinking drug. My children he don't know drug, me too I didn't drink drug all my life, friend is bad, that one I say friend is bad. Ok, he be friend for one boy, he be friend with that boy, he no come home, now he didn't come home 7 days, bad friend, I cry all the time. That is friend is very bad this country. Now I go to look my son another place, if I go there, that is drugs people (pause...). Every drug dealer who was there, now I go there, I said I miss my son, Sometime he go and stealing. Ok one day, he go with family, with friend, he steal stuff, clothes. Now that people call me, you ema mom, I say yes, son he steal my stuff in my store, he give me address, he give me number of that store, I say ok, where is that store, I didn't send him go to steal your stuff, you have to call police, don't call me. All the time he go outside, he sleep outside, I don't know where he sleep, if he come home, if I don't, sometimes I'm not in house, he come to broke all window (Mom).

**Dealing with challenges of raising children in Canada.** As challenges came up, mothers had different ways of dealing with these challenges. Three mothers mentioned talking to their children as a way to deal with the challenges presented by their children. For instance, Aisha explained how she approached sexual education,

I like to involve them to a very good sexual, I tell them about don't try it, you have to get married, you have to do this, you have to do this, so I tell always talk to them about those things.

Three of the participants mentioned that they discussed their parenting concerns with other parents and people in their lives. For example, Princess said that "I had to talk to other parents, especially Canadian. How can I do my kids they don't listen to me, how can I do, tell me how you raise your children so they help me." Also, talking with family members, particularly

the husband, was mentioned by Aisha as she expressed in her statement that “I talk, I talk to my lovely husband, he’s my friend, he’s a man that he always direct me.” Apart from talking, one mother stated that she became a friend to her children as a way of dealing with her challenges. Mom shared this: “I said I have to be friend with that boy and my boy, my son, I be friend with her, he tell me something.”

Furthermore, one mother indicated that her method of dealing with the challenge was to use the help of the older children, as stated by Clara “Good thing I have the big kids who can help.” Princess mentioned that her method of dealing with the challenges presented by her children was to research through the internet and sort information on the website. This method had really helped Princess as she stated that:

I can just go to Google and then see parenting program and parenting whatever, I just use my Google. If I don’t know anybody who can connect me so and then I found a place, I can phone them and say please I need help, this is what to do.

Lastly, one mother explained that she used the help of police to deal with her parenting challenges. It might sound awkward that a parent would call the police on her children when they misbehaved, but Mom mentioned in her statement that:

I call police I say ah this boy he do that, he do that, can you take him for me. I call for family services I go to tell family services, I tell you this boy because he is doing very bad. Oh, these children he see him maybe he do like him, that is bad for my life, you have to take, take out this boy.

## **Factors Influencing Parenting**

This theme was about factors influencing parenting. East African newcomer mothers identified the factors influencing their parenting styles and practices to be knowledge and education, the income of the parents and the ages of the parents.

**Knowledge and education.** Knowledge and education were two factors that the newcomer mothers felt influenced their parenting styles. The mothers believed that education is power and once the parents have this skill, then parenting becomes easier because they can instruct their children on what is right or wrong. Four of the mothers agreed that knowledge and education is an important factor when parents raise their children. For instance, Aisha stated,

By having knowledge, even is one word telling your kids I don't think so this is a good idea, I don't think, sharing with them is very, very important, because I have noticed that ah ah education is power, education is knowledge, education is everything.

Two of the mothers believed that parents who have knowledge can provide direction and have control over their children. Educated parents can provide information on right and wrong behaviours, as well as their consequences. For example, Clara said, "They can be the right person because of my education, I help them to know the, the good thing, to do not do the bad thing." Three mothers indicated that parental lack of knowledge led to children being negatively influenced. For instance, Aisha mentioned that "We are not that educated people, so that cause a lot of image to our kids' lives and that you see a lot of kids are violent." Lastly, Princess explained that having education exposed her to new living environment and helped her learn how to parent her children. She said "Going to school teach me what is Canada because first of all you need to know where you were and that is how you will know how to help your children."

**Income of the parents.** All mothers identified that children need all kinds of things to be happy, such as pets, clothing and so on. When the needs of these children are met, they are happy with everyone. For example, Mom said that:

Kids don't understand, kids need everything, mama buy, now last week I buy cat, I don't have money but you don't be happy with me. Now I need to be happy with me, ok I don't see it, I go to buy cat, cat for you. Yes, my kids is very happy, I let my kids be happy with me, that is my life.

These mothers believed that having a good income does help parents as they raise their children because they would be able to afford children's basic needs. For instance, Aisha mentioned that:

You need to have an income, sort of income to show that your kids they don't have to worry about their bringing up, you have a security, you have a saving, you have things to do with your kids, take them to trip, travel away is all about income.

Furthermore, three mothers believed that life was difficult for parents with a low income because they could not meet the needs of their children. To them parenting was more difficult when there was no income. Rahel explained: "My child want many things, but it's because of a short em, short of money, we can't do whatever she want." Two mothers also indicated that children of parents with a low or no income could be more easily influenced negatively. Clara explained that "If they have, they don't have everything, is how they get the bad friends like gang, is gang? Like gang, they will take them, if you don't have this, I will give to you." Here Clara suggests that if parents do not give their children what they need because they cannot afford it, gangs might offer them things, thus enticing them into the gang. It was also stated that the low income of parents could lead to wrong decision-making by children. Princess buttressed

Clara's statement: "This can make the children take the wrong decision which, they can sell drug so they can take get money. They can do prostitution so they can get money because there is no income at home, no food, nothing." Lastly, one of the mothers stated that not having enough income made her shout at her children. This shows how the lack of money can lead parents to being harsh with their children, and this has negative consequences on how children are raised. For example, Rahel said that "If she is crying, it makes me stress it, so I say no I told you no (raising her voice)."

**The age of the parents.** The age of the parents is an important factor that the participants suggested. They felt that teenage mothers may not be able to cater for their children because their needs are the same as their children's, whereas the older mothers have been exposed to a lot of experiences which could be used as they raise their children. Two mothers expressed that teenage parents may not be able to raise children properly. For example, Rahel said that:

When, but for the parents they came under, is difficult to, it's, it's, it's difficult to grow up their child, but as my experience. If I'm teenager I need the same as my child, like I need a new dress, I need a new things. But for the parents they came under, is difficult to, it's, it's, it's difficult to grow up their child, but as my experience.

While it was identified by two mothers that the age of the mothers influences parenting, two other mothers also expressed that age does not affect parenting. This was supported by the statement made by Princess that "I don't think so, I don't think so, as I say, parenting is parenting, it doesn't matter how old you are."

The age of the children is another important factor mentioned by one mother. Younger children are easier to parent than older children. Aisha stated that:

The younger ones are the best one, I think so when I compared to the two older ones, the two older ones doesn't listen that much, but if I talk to the younger ones, they have their toys, they have their rooms, they go they do the play, they stay nice and they really enjoy their time.

Another factor mentioned by one of the participants is the environment where the children are raised. For instance, Aisha explained that:

Environment where they living is another thing we have to put that. I used to live in em, I used to live in em housing, it's called co-op housing, but I moved there and now I live in Fort Garry. Very nice environment, very good environment, the school, society, the people, it's way different.

All the participants expressed their concerns about parenting in Africa and Canada. These participants felt that parenting in Africa was a little bit difficult because of the challenges like war, parental conflict, lack of parenting skills, and poverty, that they faced when they were raising their children. Also, parenting in Canada seemed to be less cumbersome to the participants compared to their parenting experiences in Africa because some of the challenges they encountered in Africa were not present in Canada, but parents still explained that apprehension, the freedom that children have, the lack of respect by the children, the negative influence from peers, selfish personality that children have were concerns for them in Canada. This is to say that parenting comes with different challenges depending on the environment where children are raised.

## Chapter Five

### Discussion of the Research Findings

This chapter discusses the study's findings in relation to East African (Eritrea, Somalia, Rwanda, Kenya and Burundi) newcomer mothers' parenting styles and practices, which they used in their native countries and are using in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Using an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis approach, the study revealed the parenting styles and practices. As part of the lived experiences shared by the participants, the study identified some differences in parenting styles participants used in Africa and in Canada. Study participants addressed the parenting practices and experiences of the participants as they raised their children in Africa, the beliefs and values guiding the participants, the type of parenting styles and practices that they are using to raise their children in Manitoba, the challenges that they face in their parenting styles and practices, and factors influencing their parenting styles and practices.

Study participants explained that in Africa, parents talked to their children to demand good behaviour. Rahel, who came from Eritrea, stated that in her country, parents freely talked to children to guide them through good behaviour. Clara, a native of Rwanda, explained further that talking to children was part of the responsibility of elders in her community. She said African culture accommodates collective parenting and this makes parenting easy for the parents. Specifically, she mentioned that in her country, aunties and uncles talked to children to encourage good behaviour in society, so it wasn't only the responsibility of the parents. This style of parenting is connected to the African proverb that says, "It takes a village to raise a child," meaning that it takes more than a biological parent's input for a child to have good behaviour and turn out well (Amos, 2013).



Apart from talking to children, all participants explained that they had used corporal punishment on their children in Africa. Aisha from Somalia expressed that she had spanked or beaten her children. Princess who came from Burundi said that it was normal to spank children in her culture. For example, “You know spank, we can be spanked, that is normal to our culture.” The participants expressed that the reason behind their harsh discipline was not to harm their children, but to make sure that they obeyed and respected parental rules. They explained that they valued and loved their children because they are special gifts and when they could not provide the basic needs for them, they felt that they had failed in their parental role. Along similar lines, Evans (1994) reported that the duty of African communities is to care for children because they are special gifts and they have important roles to play in the family.

Parenting in Canada seemed to be somewhat different than in Africa. Participants mentioned that they are talking more to their children, having schedules for them, and monitoring their movements. However, they complained that parenting is not easy for them because their children are easily influenced negatively by their peers, who teach them wrong information that is contrary to their culture. The participants expressed that they are living in two cultures because their children are not accepting the culture of their country of origin. A participant from Ethiopia shared her lived experience about her son’s behaviour with drugs. She felt that children’s involvement in drugs is contrary to her culture and religion, and she associated her son’s behaviour with peer influence. The current findings seem to validate the report of Yakhich (2006) that most immigrants perceive the host children’s behaviour as unacceptable. Also in line with the study by Yakhich, Blake and colleagues (2001) found that recent immigrant youths in United States lacked confidence to refuse peer pressure to engage in drug use, sexual intercourse and violent behaviours. In addition, Leow, Goldstein, and

McGlinchy (2006) explained that due to the weakening of parental control and authority in the host country, many immigrant youths are easily influenced by peers, meaning that immigrant youths are vulnerable to peer pressure in the host country.

The study participants also talked about the factors influencing their parenting styles and practices, as well as the challenges that they encountered and how they have dealt with these challenges.

### **Styles of Raising Children in Africa**

Parenting in Africa seemed not to be easy for the participants but they appreciated how they were able to raise their children in Africa. Study participants identified different styles they had used to raise their children in Africa. Some of the styles mentioned are talking, providing guidance, corporal punishment, as well as the beliefs around their parenting styles and practices.

Study participants provided information about their parenting experiences and practices as they raised their children in Africa. They mentioned that when their children misbehaved in Africa, they talked to them to guide them through good behaviour. They believed that talking to children about how they should behave in society would reinforce positive behaviours from their children. This seems to suggest that they fall under Baumrind's category of authoritative parenting styles. Baumrind (1966) explained that authoritative parents do not completely restrict their children but enforce limits in various ways such as by reasoning, verbal give and take, overt power and positive reinforcements. Similar to Baumrind's explanation, further research conducted among immigrants from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Central Asia and Latvia who lived in Israel reported that parents controlled their children's behaviour and social lives by having communication with them to guide them through their careers and personal wishes (Yakhnich,

2016). This is congruent with the inference that study participants talked to their children to reinforce positive behaviour.

Apart from talking, participants explained that when their children misbehaved in Africa, they spanked and beat them to correct their wrong behaviours. They felt it was the only way to demand respect from their children. This seems to fall into the authoritarian parenting style. The participants recognized that this parenting style was harsh and this agrees with Turkel and Tezer (2008), who argued that authoritarian parents are too strict and use harsh punitive practices to implement rules for their children.

Moreover, studies have affirmed that parental use of harsh discipline is not only practised in Africa. The Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children (2007) acknowledged that parental use of harsh discipline happens in all countries of the world, cutting through culture, class, education, income and ethnic group. For instance, according to a study conducted in Manitoba among mothers of three year old children, about 59% of the mothers reported having used physical punishment in the previous two weeks before the study. Among the mothers who had used physical punishment, about 88% had spanked or slapped, just 6% had grabbed the child's shoulder firmly and only 1% had dragged, pushed and sprayed water on the child's face (Ateah & Durrant, 2005).

Apart from Africa and Canada, Reese (2001) reported that Mexican families in the United States used harsh discipline on their children. Equally, Kim & Hong (2007) explained that the Korean style of parenting involved harsh discipline, which they learnt from their parents. However, the Swedish would not use harsh discipline on their children because of its prohibition (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, 2012). Bearing in mind the present and previous findings on harsh discipline, a contrary statement can be made that harsh

discipline is not practised all around the world because harsh discipline against children was firstly prohibited in Sweden (GITEACPOC, 2012). Therefore, it can be concluded that parental use of harsh discipline is allowed in some countries, but it is not practised everywhere because some countries such as Sweden have abolished harsh discipline against children in all settings.

Study participants mentioned the reasons behind the use of harsh discipline in their native countries. They stated that parents did not harshly discipline their children in order to harm them, but to ensure that they followed parental rules. This finding is directly in line with previous findings that reported that African parents who use harsh discipline do so not to harm children but to make sure that children follow societal norms and parental rules and be obedient and respectful of traditions (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, 2007; African Child Policy forum, 2014). A similar conclusion was reached by Van Campen and Russell (2010) that Asian-American families consisting of Chinese and Filipinos who had used harsh discipline on their children believed that this method would protect their children and command good behaviour in them.

Study participants expressed that African parents might have harshly disciplined their children, but they still loved them, cared for them, and provided the basic needs for them. African society expected parents to provide for their children's needs, and parents ensured that the basic needs of the children were met, but when they failed in fulfilling their responsibility to their children, they became unhappy. The statement made by the participants is consistent with the report of Emmanuel, Akinyemi and Nimotalai (2012) that African parents love and train children on family norms, values and standards because family is seen as the agent of socialization and during the process of socialization, children learn cultural values of their society and these cultural values include child-rearing practices, which may differ from one

society to another. Also, the present findings support Kudzai's (2012) study that it is the responsibility of the community to ensure that children are properly raised in Africa because they are part of family life and society. The results of the present study suggest that mothers used a combination of parenting styles to raise their children while in Africa.

Furthermore, one of the participants explained that children are harshly disciplined in Africa because there is no child's advocate. In contrast to this statement, studies show that laws are put in place to protect children against physical abuse and any other forms of abuse. Article 16 in the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child states that, children should be safeguarded from all forms of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment, most especially physical or mental injury or abuse, neglect or maltreatment including sexual abuse (ACRWC, 1990). Also, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1991), as mentioned in articles 18 and 19, recognises the child's rights to physical integrity and promotes the best interest of such child. Article 18 states that it is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that "the best interest of the child will be their basic concern." The Committee on the Rights of the Child recommends that physical punishment in the family and institutions should be prohibited (p. 19). Article 19 requires state parties to "take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child" (GITEACPOC, 2008, p.20).

Therefore, it can be stated that there is awareness towards the prohibition of harsh discipline against children in Africa, and progress has been achieved in some African states. For example, in seven African countries, the prohibition of harsh discipline has been achieved in all

settings. In eight countries, prohibition is only in alternative care and day care, and in twenty seven countries there is prohibition in all schools. About eighteen African countries have shown commitment toward the prohibition of harsh discipline in all settings. Only six African countries have not fully prohibited harsh discipline in any setting (GITEACPOC, 2017).

Study participants provided information about the beliefs and values guiding East African parents as they raise their children. The belief behind the combined parenting styles used by the participants in their native countries was parental rearing. The participants' parenting styles seemed to be influenced by the way each mother had been parented. This finding ties well with the previous research where Reese (2001) reported that Mexican families in the United States liked to raise their children the way they had been parented so that their children would behave well and turn out good. Also, immigrants from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Central Asia and Latvia would parent their children depending on parents' cultural background (Yakhnich, 2016).

As part of raising children the way each mother had been parented, family life and parenting in Africa is easily influenced by the religious beliefs of the parents. The participants parenting styles were based on the family religion and this played a significant role in the way each participant raised their children in Africa. To buttress this point, the present findings affirm Boakye-Boaten (2010) research that in Africa, religion is part of the cultural system that parents would like to raise their children with. In addition, Aderibigbe (2015) asserted that in Africa, the major religious traditions practised are Christianity, Islam and traditional religions, and African parents would raise their children based on their religion. For instance, Judith Louise (2010) reported that in Somalia about 99% are Muslim and they would raise their children in Islamic way to ensure that their children know their religion and the history of Islam and pray together.

After discussing their parenting styles and beliefs in their country of origin, some of the participants talked about their parenting experiences at the refugee camps in Africa. They mentioned poor living conditions due to sleeping on the floor and not having access to portable drinking water, which is essential for a better living. They also talked about poor feeding, as they believed that this caused malnutrition for children because they slept most of the time with no food. Furthermore, they mentioned psychological torture as a result of witnessing other human being like them being killed in their presence. Lastly, they talked about insecurity due to bites from poisonous animal, rape and lack of income, leading to improper care for their children. Prior studies have identified the participants' experiences at refugee camps. Some scholars reported that refugees had lived several years in refugee camps, where they had been exposed to poor living conditions that contributed to isolation, depression, mental illnesses, and poor emotional status which had a negative influence on parenting ability (Lustig et al., 2004; Murthy, 2007; Kanu, 2008). Also, Almqvist and Broberg (2003) explained that war created terrifying situations for mothers and children, exposed families to hunger, fatigue and homelessness and caused poor attachment between mothers and children, affecting care-giving from mothers to children. In addition, Osman and colleagues (2016) reported that wars had caused long separation between parents and children, thus making parenting difficult.

### **Cultural ways of Parenting in Africa**

African culture meant a lot to the participants and they loved to raise their children through their culture. Some literatures have been published on cultural parenting of children in Africa. These include the study of Evans and Myers (1994) that reported that child-rearing practices have their foundation in cultural patterns and beliefs. Also, the African Child Policy Forum (2014) explained that parenting in African culture examines child rearing as of utmost

importance to support the personal development, safety and social well-being of children. Some of the cultural ways of parenting children in Africa mentioned by the participants are home training, girls staying in their parents' house until they are ready for marriage, obeying family rules, children taking care of their parents when they are older, collective parenting, and fathers as the sole decision-makers and family heads.

Study participants felt that the training that African parents imparted on their children at home was good and enjoyed having their children help them to finish household chores faster. The current finding agrees with King (2015) who found that black parents did impart values of respect and responsibility to their children by spending quality time together with them, learning about their interests and assigning house chores and duties to them. The study participants further mentioned that African parents exercised parental control over their children's individual choices by providing guidance even after the children were married, which could be considered as part of good home training and respect of the elders. This is in line with what Amos (2013) reported: African parents continued to control and provide guidance to their children after they had married because of adults' richer experiences. In addition, study participants argued that it is part of African culture and good training from the parents for a girl child to live with her parents until she is fully ready for marriage, in terms of physical, psychological, social and financial readiness. A previous study by Amos (2013) explained that African children and youth lived with their family until they are ready for marriage. Apart from African culture, Mexican culture also forbids children to leave home before marriage to live on their own (Reese, 2001).

As part of raising children through culture, participants mentioned that they raised their children through role modelling and respect. Role modelling is looking up to someone of good behaviour and such behaviour is encouraged and emulated. Respect was the other value guiding



how mothers raised their children through African culture. Mothers explained that children showed respect adults in Africa and this was the reason why they enjoyed parenting in their native countries. Similar to the findings, Ochocka and Jazen (2008) identified that respect for elders and other authority figures was an important value guiding African immigrant and refugee parents in Canada. For example, in Africa children do not call adults by their first name; instead children respect adults by calling them their brother, sister, auntie, or uncle, just to mention a few. This “respect” was in agreement with the findings of some scholars who reported that in Africa, elders are respected when they are addressed as aunt, uncle, madam, master, brother, sister, professor, director, etc. (Lewis, 1996; Sung & Kim, 2010). Equally, as part of respect in Africa, in Kenya to be precise, children greet elders by bowing their head to allow the elders to touch their head (Parenting in Africa Network, 2014). Likewise, the Asian-American families value respect for parents and elders (Van Campen & Russell, 2010). Also, Mexicans families’ value respect for parents and others, and the younger children have respect for the older children (Reese, 2001). In the same manner, Maiters and George (2003) reported that South Asian mothers also valued respect as a way of promoting good behaviour in their children.

As part of the respect given to parents, every parent wants their children to take care of them when they are older and this is part of African culture. When parents become older, they move in with their children, who will take full responsibility on them. Immigrants reported that instead of sending their parents to a nursing home, they have taught their children how to provide care and support for their parents (Jazen and colleagues, 2001). From the current and previous findings, it can be summarised that respect was an important value guiding how African parents raised their children and this determines the kind of parenting styles used by the parents.

Participants mentioned that culturally men were the sole decision-makers in Africa. Men were the heads of the families and everyone, especially children, respected them because of their authority. An African man provides for his family as part of being head and the woman raises the children. Deng and Marlowe (2013) agree with this finding. They reported that mothers played an important role in raising children and the fathers, as the heads of the family, played an essential part in role modelling and disciplining children. In addition to Deng and Marlowe's report, Sudanese culture also recognised a husband as the head of the family and breadwinner who would make decisions and have authority over his wife and children (Elhag, 2010). Also, the father is regarded as a person with authority in Kenya because he is the breadwinner and protector of the home (Parenting in Africa Network, 2014).

### **Perceived Advantages of Parenting Children in Africa**

Participants mentioned what they enjoyed in Africa when they were raising their children. The participants' perceived advantages seemed to make parenting easy for them in Africa. These advantages ranged from good weather to collective parenting to the freedom that they had in their native countries.

The participants indicated that weather made everyday parenting tasks easier in Africa because African weather was the best as there was no winter and storms. They explained that they did not have to dress their children with layers of clothes and winter boots. This finding agrees with Josephine (2001), who reported that adjusting to Canadian weather, dressing and food became challenging to African Canadian immigrant women, especially as they did their daily activities in the snow and unpleasant cold. In addition, Woodgate and colleagues (2017) reported that African immigrant families faced hardship during winter because of cold weather where children needed winter clothing.

The participants said they liked how they raised their children in Africa. They mentioned that they enjoyed collective parenting and freedom as they raised their children in their native countries. The participants explained that collective parenting meant shared parenting responsibilities between neighbours and family members who supported them as they raised their children. Mothers appreciated that when they went out in Africa, they could leave their children with their neighbours and this seemed to make parenting easier for them. The experience shared by the participants related to the studies of some scholars. Across African culture, once a child is born, different people raise and care for the child, starting from the mother to family members, to extended family members and to the community at large (Evans, 1994; Emmanuel, Akinyemi, & Nimotalai, 2012). In addition, extended families and friends did provide care and support to families regarding child rearing in Africa (Deng & Marlowe, 2013; Stewart, et al., 2015). Similarly, Levi (2014) reported that parenting among Sudanese while back home was supported by a network of relations and community, but in Australia parenting had not been easy and presented challenges to the family.

### **Challenges about Parenting Children in Africa**

As participants talked about what made parenting easy for them, they also mentioned what made parenting difficult for them in their native countries. Participants were asked about what they did not like when they were parenting their children in Africa. They explained that they did not like gender inequality among the children, corruption and wars, poverty and some of the ways parents raised children in African. They thought these challenges affected how they raised their children in Africa, and thus parenting became cumbersome for them.

Gender issues became a concern for the mothers. They explained that parents, especially fathers, preferred male children and they have more opportunities than female children do.

African fathers would deny female children access to education in favour of male children. For instance, a male child is sent to school because he would keep the family name, but a female child is not because she would be given out in marriage and then bears her husband's name. The present results support the research conducted among immigrants in Canada by Jazen and colleagues (2001) that immigrant fathers said boys had more freedom and were treated differently from girls because girls were raised to become good homemakers.

As part of the challenges experienced by the study participants, they believed that dishonesty demonstrated by the government officials in Africa negatively influenced the children. Some mothers were concerned about how the widespread corruption in their native countries would influence their children's sense of right and wrong. Apart from dishonesty, they said that war exposed children to dangerous and harmful conditions, and that poverty that involved begging and sleeping with an empty stomach with no hopes for tomorrow was a major problem in Africa. In contrast, Kimenyi and Mbaku (2011) reported that corruption is everywhere as the prevalence of corruption is still one of the world's most difficult obstacles for development. To buttress Kimenyi and Mbaku's report about the prevalence of corruption everywhere, the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) ranked the widespread corruption in the world. Among 176 countries and territories ranked in 2016, no country gets close to a perfect score. For instance, Canada was ranked 9<sup>th</sup>, United States was ranked 18<sup>th</sup>, Rwanda was 50<sup>th</sup>, China was 79<sup>th</sup>, South Africa was ranked 64<sup>th</sup>, Ethiopia was ranked 108<sup>th</sup>, and Mexico was ranked 123<sup>rd</sup> just to mention a few (CPI, 2016). From this ranking, a high rank means less corruption than a low rank. Thus, it can be concluded that no country is free of corruption, but the level of corruption is higher and more prominent in some countries than others.

As the study participants continued to share their experiences on how they raised children in Africa, they expressed how they felt that some parents abused their children when they disciplined them. Mothers expressed that they had witnessed how parents caused injury, death and emotional harm to their children when they disciplined them in Africa, and they believed this could lead to behavioural problems, poor emotional, mental and physical health, and cognitive difficulties in children. This is in accordance with what Durrant (2005) argues, that this kind of discipline is wrong and that physical force such as spanking and slapping being used on children are not the right approach to discipline children as it may harm them.

### **Styles of Raising Children in Canada**

Parenting in Canada seemed to be good for the newcomer mothers, but they complained of their children's disobedience. They explained that parenting meant taking proper care of children and expressing love to them. They believed that parental love toward their children would create bonds between them and their children. They acknowledged that harsh discipline practices such as spanking, beating, yelling, slapping, kicking, and shaking is tantamount to abuse in Canada, hence, they are not using this method of discipline to raise their children in Canada.

To answer the research question about the styles that the participants are using to raise their children in Canada, they mentioned their styles to be talking, having a schedule, a reward method, role modelling and monitoring. Study participants said they talked to their children to correct their wrong doings and they felt that this method would positively change their children's behaviour. The women identified giving instructions to children as a better way of communicating with their children. They believed that talking to the children is like giving respect and attention to them. There is a strong congruence between the current findings and

those reported by Jazen and colleagues. Jazen et al. (2001) explained that immigrants in Canada reported that speaking to children about their behaviour and its consequences was a popular discipline method used by parents. This confirms that newcomer mothers in Canada commonly use authoritative parenting style to raise their children.

Furthermore, participants mentioned that they are using a schedule for their children in Canada, and they felt that this parenting style would better coordinate the children. Mothers explained that having a schedule for the children created understanding between them and their children because schedules come with rules and once the children understand their schedules and follow the rules set by the parents, parenting becomes easy. Apart from having a schedule, some participants explained that they monitor their children's movement and activities in Canada. Another important parenting style that some participants are using in Canada is reward and role modelling methods. The participants explained that role modelling meant using the older children to train the younger children. The current findings agree with Jazen and colleagues (2001) who reported in their research with immigrants in Canada that immigrant parents used positive reinforcement to encourage good behaviour in their children. In addition, Onwujuba and colleagues (2015) observed that in Africa, particularly Nigeria, children are expected to yield to adults, and age is equal to a certain degree of authority, meaning that older children direct and look after younger children. Study participants stated that the reason behind their parenting style in Canada was their prior exposure to positive parenting tips and counselling when they arrived in Canada.

After talking about the styles they are using in Canada to raise their children, the participants generally shared their views on parenting. Two of the participants viewed parenting as taking care of the children. Others mentioned that parenting involves education. Participants

viewed that the divorce rate is high among African parents as they raise their children in Canada. Many families are separated due to misunderstandings between husband and wife. Apart from misunderstandings, lack of communication was another reason for divorce among African families. Another reason mentioned was inability to negotiate gender roles, meaning that African husbands view themselves as the heads of the home and they are not helping their wives because they thought that women are meant to be in the home doing house chores. This finding supports the research done by Stewart and colleagues (2015) that the participants reported that many new refugee families from Africa, particularly Sudanese and Zimbabwean, encountered marital breakdown, in which single parenting was becoming common because they could not negotiate new gender roles in Canada. Similarly, Mexican families complained that families are separated in the United States, which was contrary to what happened in their home country, because in their home country, families are more united (Reese, 2001). Despite that the participants are having challenges with gender roles, some participants expressed that their husbands were helpful in raising their children because they played a big role by talking to the children, which is normal for every father to do with their children when they misbehave. Husbands ensured that children have a good life by working hard to provide what they need.

### **Perceived Advantages of Raising Children in Canada**

As participants talked about the styles they are using in Canada to raise their children, they also explained their perceived advantages in Canada over their native countries. The participants were very happy to discuss what they like as they raise their children in Canada. They talked about the freedom that children have, the school system and the peaceful environment.

Participants explained that children have freedom in Canada, particularly children who are over eighteen years of age, because they can work, earn money and at the same time go to school. The Canadian school system seemed to be good for the mothers as it makes parents be responsible, take up their parental role and become better parents. Also, the Canadian school system provides good education to the children and prepares them for a better future.

Furthermore, study participants talked about peace and safety that they enjoyed in Canada that they did not have in their native countries. They believed that in most African countries there are wars, which caused pains, separation, injuries and made parents and children lived in dangers, worries and fears of the unknown, but in Canada, there is no war and they expressed that they love to raise their children in a safe environment. The present findings support the report of Stewart et al. (2015); they explained that in particular, new parents from Sudan and Zimbabwe who now live in Canada had experienced mass killing and the deaths of relatives due to war and conflicts in their countries of origin. Similarly, Woodgate and colleagues (2017) explained that some African immigrants who arrived in Canada after exposure to difficult situations (such as violence and conflicts at the refugee camps) expressed that life was difficult and cumbersome in the refugee camp. In fact Leow, Goldsten, and McGlinchy (2006) affirmed that many refugees are traumatized because of the violence and torture that they had experienced in their homeland, causing post traumatic stress disorder for them.

### **Parenting Challenges Encountered by Parents in Canada**

Study participants provided information about the challenges that they encounter in Canada as they raise their children. Participants were not happy as they talked about what they did not like as they raise their children. African children calling 911 on their parents was perceived as a challenge, as well as the potential apprehension of children from such calls,



which has created fears in mothers as they raise their children. The participants said that no African mother wants her children to be apprehended, as this suggests that parents could not control and put their children in order. The participants stated that when children called family services to report their parents, they lied about their parents and family services believed them. They felt that family service is making parenting worse for the parents in Canada. For instance, when family services apprehended their children, these children seemed to be exposed to negative behaviours such as girls becoming pregnant and/or boys getting involved in drugs during their placement, which did not occur when they were with their parents before apprehension.

Participants also felt that the school authority encouraged their children to call 911 on their parents when they disciplined them. The concerns mentioned by the participants support Creese and colleagues (2011) findings, that fear of drug and alcohol use among male children and pregnancy among female children, were the challenges that immigrants faced in their parenting experiences. In line with the previous study, Rasmussen et al. (2012) reported in the focus group discussion and individual interviews that were held in New York City and northern New Jersey among West African immigrants, that the parents acknowledged that their children were taught by their teachers to call police when their parents tried to harshly discipline them. A similar pattern or finding was obtained by Reese (2001), who reported that Mexican families are dumbfounded when the schools in the United States undermine their authority by telling their children that it is not a parental prerogative to harshly discipline their children, because such parental discipline is tantamount to child abuse, and the school authority encourages children to go against their parents when they discipline them. In fact, they blamed the teachers and laws for making children get out of control. However, when comparing the present results to those of

older studies, it can be concluded that immigrants generally have the same impression about family services and school authority when the issue of how to raise their children in the host country was mentioned.

As a result of the same impression that the participants have about family services, it seems that the participants may not be properly aware of the legislation in Canada that protects the interest of children. For instance, section 17 of the Manitoba Child and Family Services Act (CFS Act), explains that a child needs protection when such child is exposed to physical injury, emotional disability of a permanent nature or sexual exploitation when an action is not taken by a person (CFS Acts, 1985). If parents had knowledge of the Child and Family Services (CFS) acts, they would know that family services workers or police apprehend when they assess that a child is at risk and not because they want to make parenting difficult for the parents or destroy children's lives.

In continuation with the challenges encountered by the parents, some participants said that because of the freedom that children have in Canada, African children lose focus on their career because they can work and earn money, and participants were not happy, as they believe that education is the only legacy they can give to their children. The participants thought that going to school would make their children independent, become professionals and have better future. From the standpoint of Reese (2001), the educational aspirations of the children of the immigrants are usually expressed as part of broader goals for the children's futures. Several reports from scholars agree with the current findings. Immigrant and refugee parents may want their children to become professionals such as engineers, lawyers, doctors, nurses and pharmacists. However, these dreams gradually disappear as their children start behaving contrary to their parents' wishes, such as wanting to learn art work ("Canada's online magazine for

immigrant professionals,” 2012). Similarly, Atwell and colleagues (2009) observed that as immigrants and refugees arrive in their new country, they have various hopes for their children, such as becoming successful by attending the host school, but the children begin to act contrary to their parents’ hopes. Parental expectations on the children over their careers became uncertain because children refused to go to the high school or university.

In addition, newcomer mothers thought that African children have selfish personalities in Canada. According to the participants, a selfish personality meant that children only think about themselves and are less concerned about their family. The participants felt that the reason behind this selfish mind is the freedom that children have in Canada. While some mothers thought that freedom was good in Canada, others thought the freedom that children have in Canada made them misbehave. They believed that freedom allows children to do things in their own way, anytime they wish. Study participants explained that as part of the freedom given to children in Canada, friends influenced African children in a negative way. For instance, African children want to hang out with peers for drugs, stealing, and sleeping over at a friend’s house, and mothers became worried about these negative behaviours. Some mothers mentioned that their children in Canada had stressed them and they related their children’s problems to the bad influence from friends. The current findings support Creese and colleagues’ (2011) study that reported that immigrant children were lured into making money easily, leading to involvement in criminal activities and these problems emanated from bad peer influences. Reese narrated the experience of Mexican families in the United States that as part of the freedom that their children have, they do whatever they want and they relate the lack of control and the freedom that children have to seeing adolescents on the street late at night, taking drugs, being involved in gangs and engaging in sexual relations out of wedlock (Reese, 2001). In the same manner, Blake

and colleagues (2001) described that the youth of immigrants were likely to have less parental support to avoid risky behaviour such as alcohol use and marijuana and most likely to experience peer pressures to engage in risky behaviour. Moreover, from previous and recent findings, it can be concluded with the study of Yakhnich (2016) that some immigrant children are easily influenced by the host environment.

Peer influence could be a variable to negative behaviour in African immigrant children, but one of the participants had a contrary opinion. It was mentioned by one of the participants that parents should be blamed for their children's negative behaviour. This participant explained further that children's misbehaviour could be caused by the parents who are negligent in their parental roles and duties. Along similar lines, Weissbourd (2002) associated the decline in immigrant children's behaviour to poor relationships between children and their parents. It was further explained that mature immigrant children are less likely to be influenced by their peers. Children become mature when parents who have ideas provide ongoing guidance and communicate hopes about the future, social and moral expectations into their children, as well as regularly listening and understanding them.

Furthermore, mothers continued to talk about the freedom that children have in Canada. They felt that the freedom that children have in Canada has encouraged them to have relationships with the opposite sex, be involved in trans-gender and sexuality issues which conflict with African values and cultural heritage. Jazen and colleagues' (2001) research suggested that the Canadian legal and cultural expectations associated with parenting differed from child upbringing practices of the newcomers' home countries. For instance, touching and kissing in public (dating), wearing clothes that expose the body, different hair styles, and the marital status of the parents (such as same-sex parenting), just to mention a few, differ and

conflict with African immigrants' cultural heritage and may affect the way newcomer parents raise their children (Jazen et al., 2001). In like manner, South Asian mothers mentioned that seeing a boy kissing a girl on the bus is contrary to their values (Maiters & George, 2003). In addition, Scott identified dating among young people as another challenge that parents face in the new country. For instance, dating between Eritrean and Somali young people seems to be a taboo because sexual relationships are only allowed during the marriage (Scott, 2001).

Some participants highlighted that children have refused to respect adults and this was another challenge that they encounter in Canada. Respect in this context meant an act of showing regard to adults, not only to the parents. The findings of Jazen et al. (2001) were in agreement with the current finding. They reported that respect became an important issue and was valued among the immigrants. Similarly, Yakhnich (2016) reported that immigrant children in Israel did not have respect for adults or parents' authority and this often led to conflict between parents and adolescent children, causing confusion and helplessness for the parents.

Apart from respect, some participants talked about individualistic living in Canada. They said neighbours do not care about their next-door neighbour; everybody has to mind his or her own business. This same concern was mentioned by Degni, Pontinen and Melissa (2006), who expressed that parenting became challenging to Somali refugees who lived in Finland because in their new country, the environment promoted an individual type of parenting, whereas these refugees culturally recognized a collective type of parenting.

Furthermore, psychological issues such as feeling worthless, suicidal feelings and feeling guilty, which some mothers experienced when they went to work leaving their children alone by themselves became a challenge. There seems to be similarity between the current finding and the study of Yakhnich (2016), which reported that immigrants did not have time for children because

of their jobs since they work more hours, thus spending less time with their children. The present findings also support other scholars' research. A study done among 1,400 Rwandese and Somali refugee residents in a Ugandan refugee settlement found that 32% of the Rwandese and 48.1% of the Somalis refugees had suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as well as depression and anxiety, which made them more vulnerable to mental health problems (Onyut et al., 2009).

Some of the participants stated that because they are living in two cultures, African children have learned wrong information about marriage and are not speaking in their mother's tongue, and that parents are experiencing language barriers due to their accent. Some mothers wished their children could continue to speak their native language so that they could trace back their origin. These findings concur with previous studies. Fox (2009) in his report explained that many refugee families were afraid that their children might lose their cultural identity, thus they wished to have some control over their children and impart traditional wisdom and values. Also, Creese and colleagues (2011) reported that it was difficult for newcomer immigrants to raise their children in their new country because they are within two cultures and may perceive a clash in the parenting practices of African and Canadian cultures. Specifically, African immigrants and refugees face challenges in the area of spoken English. Local reaction to African immigrants in the area of African-English accents is an issue even in Commonwealth countries where English is the official language (Creese, 2010). The language barrier that African immigrants face is not because they cannot communicate in English but due to their African-English accent. For instance, Canadians may say an African-English accent is very heavy, and because African immigrants and refugees do not speak "Canadian" English, they may be denied access to certain professions like receptionist, English teacher, and customer service (Creese & Kambere, 2003).

Also, Woodgate and colleagues (2017) reported that African refugee and immigrant families faced language barriers because communication and understanding of English or Western language was difficult, making access to some places difficult, as well as parenting cumbersome.

Study participants talked about how they were able to deal with all the challenges they had encountered as they raised their children, and this answered the research question on how the participants are adapting to their parenting challenges. All the participants stated that they talked to their children to deal with the parenting challenges presented by their children. Some participants said they learned from other parents and people involved in their care by having conversations around their parenting concerns. Dominguez and Lubitow (2008) explained that some of the challenges of immigrants are overcome by transitional support, in which family members connect with other immigrants from the same country of origin to get emotional support.

Furthermore, some participants became friends with their children. Some participants also mentioned that they used the help of the older children. Some mothers researched through the internet to sort information on the website and some mentioned that they brainstormed with family members, particularly their husband. Lastly, one participant said she used the help of the police to deal with her parenting challenges.

### **Factors Influencing Parenting**

Study participants provided information about the factors influencing their parenting styles. Firstly, knowledge and education became a factor commonly mentioned by the newcomer mothers. Knowledge about parenting plays a vital role in parenting practices. Dichtelmiller et al. (1992) defined knowledge about parenting as an area of adult social cognition, consisting of the understanding of the processes of child development, caregiving and child-rearing skills, as well

as developmental norms. The mothers believed that education is power and parents who are knowledgeable about parenting would provide direction and have control over their children. Direction and control meant that parents teach their children the right and wrong things and provide information on right and wrong behaviour, as well as their consequences. When parents lack knowledge, this affects children and leads to negative influence for the children. The present findings agree with previous studies. A study conducted in seven provinces and regions (Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta & British Columbia) in Canada examined parenting knowledge among Canadian couples and single mothers of children under the age of six. The results showed that parents' knowledge about children and parenting helps the parents to behave positively towards their children (Oldershaw, 2002). Bornstein (2001) stated that if the knowledge, skills, emotional and physical needs of the parents are met, they can positively and effectively parent their children.

Secondly, participants said having a good income makes better parenting because parents are able to do many activities with their children and live a better life. Making a living is hard for parents with a low income because they cannot meet the needs of their children, and thus parenting becomes hard for them. The children of the parents with low or no income could be easily influenced negatively and not having enough income could make parents shout at their children, which means that low income makes parents be harsh on their children, and this has a negative influence on how children are raised. The present findings support Hoff, Laursen, and Tardif (2002) research. They found out that mothers with a low socio-economic status were more controlling, restrictive, and disapproving than mothers with a high socio-economic status.

Thirdly, the age of the parents was mentioned as an important factor in parenting. Some participants believed that teenage mothers may not be able to provide all necessary needs for



their children because they have similar needs as that of their children. They argued that older mothers have many experiences that they can use as they raise their children. The present findings support those of a study conducted by Lee and Gutterman (2010), who examined mother-father dyads (based on ages, comparing adolescent couples to adult couples) and maternal harsh parenting behaviour among non-Hispanic Black and Hispanic parents in all cities in the United States. Harsh parenting behaviour, according to the study, could mean spanking a child. The results of this study showed that adolescent mothers (no matter how old their partners were) were at a higher risk of using harsh parenting behaviour than older adult mothers. Similarly, other studies showed that adolescent parents were more likely to report the use of spanking than older parents (Regalado, Sareen, Inkelas, Wissow, & Halfon, 2004). Furthermore, Kim, Pears, Fisher, Connelly, and Landsverk (2010) reported that maternal age was positively related to harsh discipline used by the mothers. Mothers in this study might have lacked effective parenting skills and were more likely to depend on a harsh parenting method as the only way to discipline their children.

Fourthly, some participants talked about the age of the children as another factor. It was explained by the participants that parenting seems to be easy because younger children listen and follow parents' instructions, whereas older children may not follow parental rules and may prove stubborn. Lastly, some participants mentioned the environment as another factor. Study participants felt that the environment is the place where children grow up, which has an influence on the behaviour of children because of the people they meet.

### **Limitations of the Present Study**

The first limitation experienced by the researcher was that the first participant that was supposed to be interviewed did not come for the interview despite the fact that the date, time and

venue had been agreed to by phone. The researcher was at the venue on the scheduled date and time and tried to call the interviewee, but she did not answer her phone; hence, the scheduled interview did not happen. It took a while for the second interviewee to get in touch with the researcher.

Some of the participants' responses are reflective of the period of time they were in their native country where they grew up prior to migration. Although, reflexivity involves remembering, thinking, wishing and drawing back on one's past experiences (Smith et al., 2009), their current parenting practices and ideologies might have changed due to increased globalized awareness that is going on in African states to abolish harsh discipline against children.

Fathers did not participate in this study, thus the parenting experience of fathers was not explored. The reason to focus on mothers was to have a more homogenous exploration of parenting experiences of those parents that stay at home with their children and spend more time with them. Nonetheless, understanding fathers' parenting experiences is important and further studies should include both fathers and mothers.

The parenting experiences of the mothers who participated in this study cannot be generalized to all newcomer mothers due to small sample that was recruited for the interviews. It cannot be assumed that the participants represented the population of East African newcomers in Canada due to the small number of mothers interviewed. Also, most of the participants did not have English as their first language so consequently we can assume that they may have had difficulties in understanding the interview questions, as well as expressing themselves. Although prompts were used to further ask them questions on their parenting styles and practices, some of the participants mentioned that their English was bad, which affected their expressions. Also, the parenting experience of the fathers was not explored and fathers' parenting experience is

important and needed because parenting involves both fathers and mothers. Future research should increase the number of participants as well as inclusion of fathers.

Another limitation to the study was that the time required for data collection, analysis and interpretation was lengthy. The recorded interviews were transcribed before the next interview was conducted. It took time to transcribe the scripts of the participants. At times I found it difficult to understand what they wanted to pass along, but since the interview was done by me and that the transcription was done immediately, this addressed the limitation.

The religion of the participants was not explored in this study but one of the participants mentioned that African parents love to raise their children through their religion. It is important to identify and understand how African parents would raise their children through their religion. Thus, raising children through the religion of the parents should be explicitly explored in future studies.

Single researcher interpretation is another limitation of the analysis. At the same time, reading and re-reading of the interview transcripts several times, as well as the observations and reflections about the interview experience, which led to the identification of super-ordinate themes, give credibility to the findings.

### **Directions for Future Research**

Study participants included mothers with a refugee background and who had been in Winnipeg between two and ten years. The reason for choosing these periods was to understand the parenting experiences of mothers during their initial years in Canada. I believe that using these time periods, the East African mothers with a refugee background would be speaking English because they must have attended English classes. Also, mothers were selected for this study because of their experiences in parenting. Most of the time, mothers stay at home with

their children and they are exposed to lot of experiences because they spend most of the time with their children. It is part of many African cultures for mothers to stay with at home with their children while fathers go out to work in order to provide and care for the needs of their family.

Since mothers spend lots of time with their children, they have a lot of challenges confronting how they raise their children in Canada. Mothers know that their children would have a better life in Canada, thus they have decided to remain in Canada and look for how to adjust and proffer solutions to their challenges. In the process of adjusting their parenting styles in Canada, they came up with different solutions to their parenting challenges. African parents do not want their children to be apprehended; instead they are ready to do everything possible to ensure that parenting becomes easy for them. As mentioned by some mothers, they are taking time to talk to their children and brainstorm with family members, particularly their husbands, in order to deal with the parenting challenges presented by their children. Some mothers are learning from other parents who are successful in raising their children. Mothers have decided to update their knowledge through the internet to sort information on the website and even called the phone number on the parenting website to seek advice on how to positively parent their children.

Talking was mentioned by the participants as a strategy that they used to raise their children in both Africa and Canada. The parenting strategy of talking that the participants mentioned could be seen as an important issue for programming. It would be necessary to know how parents talk to their children in Africa and Canada. There might be differences in the way parents talk to their children to reinforce positive behaviours in them. It is possible that African parents shout or scream when they talk to their children because they want their children to understand what was being communicated to them in order to demand positive behaviour from their children

in society. On the other hand, it is also possible that when African parents talk to their children in Africa and in Canada, they talk gently and warmly to them to communicate with them and demand positive behaviour. The differences in the way participants talk to their children in Africa and Canada were not explored in this present study, but this could be an interesting area to be explored in future studies for programming for African parents.

For future research, fathers should be involved in such studies to share their experiences on their parenting styles and practices. Parenting involves fathers and mothers, as mothers alone cannot properly raise children in Africa. In addition, the number of the participants interviewed in this study was small, and thus this number should increase.

It would also be useful to focus on specific cultural groups, instead of examining the whole range of East African immigrants. The information yielded by such a study would inform program developers as they create programs for newcomer families. A comparative study can be conducted in the future between immigrants and refugees on their parenting experiences.

There seems to be limited studies on how mothers have dealt with their challenges as they raise their children in their new country. Some of the solutions mentioned by the participants represent a new area for future investigation.

## **Conclusion**

Many studies have been conducted on how immigrants raise their children in their new country of residence. The present study has added to the existing literature on the parenting styles and practices of the East African newcomer mothers in their native countries and in Canada. The findings from this study provide insight into how immigrant agencies and African communities can provide effective support to immigrants, particularly African families.

The general conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that parenting style as a global construct reflects the quality of parent-child relationships, which varies from one cultural context to another, and which is driven by the cultural beliefs, values, and practices of the particular culture. Thus, agencies working with African immigrants and refugees, as well as social workers can make good use of this research to better understand the needs of immigrants and refugees, especially those from Africa. Understanding the parenting styles and practices, beliefs behind their styles and challenges facing immigrants can shed light on the way they raise their children. Hopefully, this study will contribute to the understanding of the challenges that African immigrants and refugees face in acculturating into Canada while preserving and transmitting traditional values and culture.

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## Appendix A: Interview Guide

### SECTION A

#### DEMOGRAPHY QUESTIONS

1. What is your age? 10 – 19 ( ) 20 – 29 ( ) 30 – 39 ( ) 40 – 49 ( ) 50 – 59 ( )  
60 – 69 ( )

2. What is your country of origin?

Burundi ( ) Eritria ( ) Ethiopia ( ) Kenya ( ) Somalia ( ) Rwanda ( ) Tanzania  
( ) Uganda ( )

3. How long have you been in Canada?

4. What is your marital status?

Married ( ) Divorced ( ) Widowed ( ) Separated ( ) Never been married ( )

5. What is your education background? Grade 6 or less ( ) Grade 7 to 12 ( )

College ( ) University ( )

6. Family income:

7. What is the age of son(s) ..... and daughter(s).....

### SECTION B

1. Can you tell me more about how you bring up children in your country of origin?

(Prompt: What did you enjoy most and what did you dislike?)

2. Can you tell me more about parenting in Canada? (Prompt: What did you enjoy most and what did you dislike?)

3. How does your education, knowledge, age, income, etc., influence your parenting in Canada

4. Describe the challenges that you have experienced in your family before and after you coming to Canada? (Prompt: Physical, Psychological and Cultural challenges)
5. How have you dealt with the challenges mentioned above?
6. How would you describe your style of parenting? (Prompt: Methods used to bring up children)
7. Describe the role of your spouse on parenting practices both in your home country and Canada
8. How do you describe parenting in Canada? Please give examples

**Appendix C: Informed consent**

Rady Faculty of Health Sciences

Max Rady College of Medicine

Department of Community Health Sciences

Room S113 - 750 Bannatyne Avenue

University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB R3E 0W3

Date: December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016**INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

**Research Project Title:** Parenting Styles and Practices of East African Newcomers in Winnipeg, Manitoba

**Principal Investigator and contact information:** This research is being conducted by Ola Omolayo, of the Department of Community Health Sciences, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3T 2N2, Canada. The phone number is 204-XXX-XXXX and email is olao3@myumanitoba.ca.

**Research supervisor and contact information:** The research supervisor for this study is Dr. Javier Mignone, a lecturer in the Department of Community Health Sciences, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3T 2N2, Canada. The email is javier.mignone@umanitoba.ca

-----Verbatim-----

**This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you will like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.**

**Purpose of research:** This study aims to explore the parenting perspectives and practices of East African newcomers in Winnipeg. It is towards partial fulfillment of the Master of Science (MSc) degree in Family Violence and Conflict Resolution, from the Department of Community Health

Sciences, University of Manitoba. The findings will help in understanding the differences in parenting styles of East African newcomer mothers between the periods they were in their home country and when they arrived in Winnipeg, as well as the challenges they face as they bring up their children in Winnipeg.

**Procedure:** I will tell the participants that the study will involve them providing answers to semi structured interview questions that will be asked by the researcher. Interview will be conducted with the participants on one to one basis to establish good rapport for the participants to think, speak and be heard, and to avoid any sense of intimidation, and confidentiality will be maintained. Interviews will be done between 45 and 90 minutes. When the first draft of the transcript is written by the researcher, each of the transcripts will be brought back to you to review for accuracy. Bringing the first draft of the transcript to you will help researcher to include anything that might have been missed out in the interview, as well as giving feedback on the information provided by you and concerns that you may have with how I have used the data collected from you in my thesis. Also, this time will be used to identify any details that you feel could compromise your anonymity. Bringing the draft back to you will give me the opportunity to let you know that the information you provided during interview had been analyzed and I have decided to use this information in the final publication. The final draft (result) will be mailed or emailed to you depending on your choice. This procedure will take two or three months.

**Recording device:** The interview session will be recorded using an audio digital recorder to ensure that all information is gotten and understood correctly and accurately.

**Risks and Benefits:** It is possible that content of the interviews might bring some painful emotional responses. In order to protect and ensure that everyone is not affected emotionally after the interview, you will be referred to counselors in agencies such as Family Dynamics, Aurora Institute at University of Winnipeg and Mount Carmel Clinic. These agencies have professionally trained counselors who have a lot of experience with issues experienced by newcomer families. The issue of contacting these agencies has been discussed with Hospitality House Refugee Ministry and has agreed that you can be referred there. Afterwards, I will call you to find out how you are doing.

**Confidentiality:** Your name will not appear on the interview script neither will it be used in connection with the information obtained from this study, instead number such as 001, 002 will be used on the interview script during analysis. I plan to use pseudonyms in the final publication. The pseudonyms that will be used in the final publication will be suggested by you during the interview. Also, no one other than the researcher and the supervisor will have access to any information provided. The information you will provide will be stored in the researcher's personal computer with the password that will not be made available to anyone. Interview notes, audio tapes will be kept securely locked in the small cabinet. The data will be stored for the

period of five years before the data is deleted.

**Remuneration:** You will receive financial compensation (\$25 gift card for groceries) for participating in this research. This financial compensation will be given to you after all information (data) has been collected and it will be given to you in hand.

**Voluntariness and alternative to participation:** Your participation in this study is absolutely voluntary and you are free to decline if you so wish. Also you can withdraw your participation at any time during the study by calling either the phone number (204-XXX-XXXX) or send an email to this email address (olao3@myumanitoba.ca). But as soon as the data is analyzed, interpreted and written in the thesis (May, 2017), it will be too late to withdraw from the study. You are free to withdraw at any time prior to this date (May, 2017). If you have any questions, you can contact Omolayo Ola (204-XXX-XXXX) or Javier Mignone (204-XXX-XXXX) (javier.mignone@umanitoba.ca).

**Debriefing:** When the first draft of the transcript is written by the researcher, each of the transcripts will be brought back to you. Bringing the first draft of the transcript to you will give you feedback on the information provided by you to the researcher. Summary of the result will be emailed or mailed to you depending on your choice. I will be debriefing you. I will give every participant simple, clear and informative explanation about the nature of the study, the rationale for the design of the study, the methods used, information related to the purpose of the study and the study results. You will be given opportunity to ask questions.

**Dissemination of result:** The results will be published as a Masters' thesis at the University of Manitoba. Furthermore, a manuscript may be submitted to academic journals such as Canadian Journal of African studies, the Journal of Family Violence, etc. The findings may also be shared at conferences and seminars. Some demographic items in the interview such as age of the parents, socio-economic status of the parents, gender of the children will be used in the final publications. I will include this information as long as it does not create any risk of you being identified.

**Destruction of data:** The data will be stored for the period of five years (May, 2022) before the data is deleted from my personal computer and the hard copies are being shredded.

**Legal obligation:** If at any time you tell me about harm to yourself or abuse that is happening now to you, this will be reported to the appropriate authorities. If you tell me about abuse happening to your children, family members or others, I must report these to the appropriate authorities. As a researcher, I am required by law to report current and past abuse or situations dangerous to people to the legal authorities. These are the same laws followed by service providers (e.g., doctors, teachers, counselors, etc.).

-----Statement of consent-----

**Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding your participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and/or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.**

**The University of Manitoba may look at the research records to see that the research is being done in a safe and proper way.**

**This research has been approved by (University of Manitoba, Fort Garry Campus, Research Ethics Board). If you have any concerns or complaints about the project you may contact any of the above named persons or the Human Ethics Coordinator (HEC) at 204-474-7122. A copy of this form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.**

Please check (✓) the box below before you sign this consent form

I give permission for this interview to be recorded: Yes ( )          No ( )

Participant's Signature..... Date .....

Researcher's Signature..... Date .....

### Appendix C: Poster

Department of Community Health Sciences  
 Faculty of Health Sciences  
 Winnipeg, MB, R3T 2N2, Canada  
 Ph: 204.474.8065

## ARE YOU AN EAST AFRICAN MOTHER?

DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN IN YOUR HOUSE?

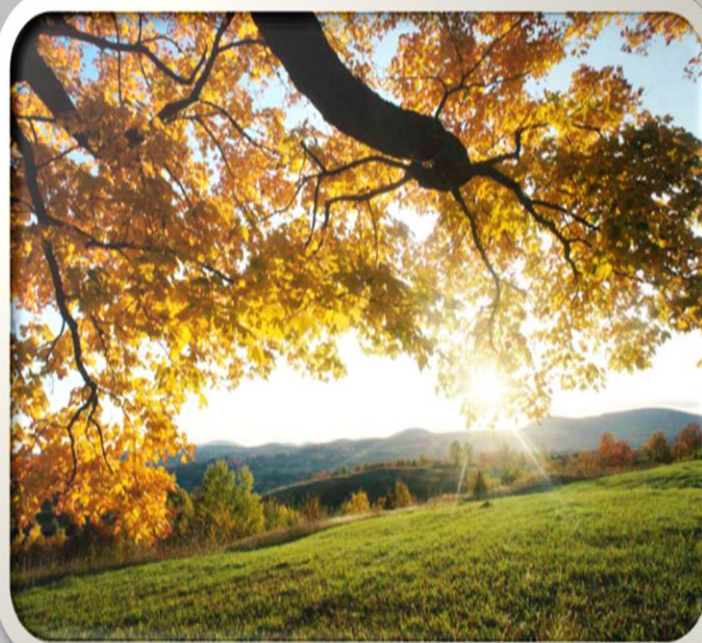
HAVE YOU LIVED IN CANADA FOR A MINIMUM OF TWO YEARS?

HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED PARENTING IN YOUR HOME COUNTRY AS WELL AS CANADA?

DO YOU SPEAK ENGLISH?

IF YOUR ANSWER TO THE QUESTIONS ABOVE IS YES, I INVITE YOU TO AN APPROXIMATELY ONE HOUR INTERVIEW TO GAIN KNOWLEDGE ABOUT YOUR PARENTING PRACTICES.

YOUR ANSWER WILL BE TREATED WITH CONFIDENTIALITY AND USED ONLY FOR THIS STUDY.



## PARENTING STYLES AND PRACTICES OF EAST AFRICAN NEWCOMERS IN WINNIPEG

Take few minutes to participate in this study.  
 You will be rewarded with \$50 gift card for the time spent for the interview.

Contact : Omolayo Ola @ 204-XXX-XXXX with this e-mail [olao3@myumanitoba.ca](mailto:olao3@myumanitoba.ca)

## **Appendix D: Request Letter to the agency**

### **Hospitality House Refugee Ministry**

December 9, 2016

Ms. Omolayo Ola, BSc Public Health  
 Graduate Student ,  
 Department of Community Health Sciences  
 University of Manitoba  
 Winnipeg, MB

Dear Ms Ola,

Thank you for sending me a copy of your thesis proposal entitled “Parenting Styles and Practices of East African Newcomers in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

As Executive Director of Settlement for Hospitality House Refugee Ministry (HHRM) , I have worked to help settle hundreds of privately sponsored HHRM newcomer refugees at the request of their Winnipeg family members (family links). In the first eleven months of 2016, Hospitality House greeted more than 1070 family-linked newcomer refugees, mostly Africans who had fled countries with failed states, civil wars or oppressive regimes like Eritrea, Somalia, Ethiopia, Burundi, South Sudan, D.R. Congo, etc. Thousands more arrived in earlier years, and we have maintained contact with many. Most of their sponsorship applications had been submitted to Immigration Canada between five and ten years ago, so they had lived a very long time in refugee circumstances (extreme poverty, little access to education, employment, severe discrimination, etc) before arriving in Canada.. During that long waiting time, many singles married, established families expanded and there were many children born and raised in those difficult and often desperate circumstances.

Our experience is that the vast majority of family–linked cases generally settle quite well, due to the many supports and connections of their Winnipeg host families. We refer many newcomer families with children to the NEEDS Centre, which specializes in working with newcomer children age 6 – 18, preparing them to enter the regular school system, and supporting them with various after-school homework clubs, recreational and other programs after they enter their neighbourhood schools.



For newcomer families suffering psychosocial adjustment issues, we routinely refer them to professional counsellors at agencies like Family Dynamics Inc, the Aurora Institute at the University of Winnipeg and

Mount Carmel Clinic. Often these agencies have counsellors on staff who are fluent in the language of newcomers, and also familiar with their cultural background.

We would be pleased to assist you post your poster in our bulletin board for the recruit of a number of privately sponsored families to participate in your research program interviews. We have newcomer families where the parents had highly varying education and career backgrounds, from illiterate/labourer to highly educated university/professional.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Regards,

Karin Gordon

Executive Director Settlement