

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT PRACTICES AND WELFARE OF DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES IN BUSIA TOWN, KENYA/UGANDA BORDER

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Abstract

Dysfunctional families represent a notable societal concern, capable of adversely affecting the mental well-being of children when parents struggle to effectively address these issues. Over time, this can lead to unfavorable consequences in terms of the children's social development. The study sought to ascertain the influence of freedom of movement on the well-being of dysfunctional families in Busia town, Kenya/Uganda border. This study was grounded on the theory of truth and democracy within the context of human rights. The study employed a descriptive survey research design, focusing on dysfunctional families and professionals actively involved in human rights issues within Busia County. This group encompassed lawyers, human rights advocates, Ministry of Trade officials, immigration officers, and individuals responsible for child welfare. To select participants from this population, a simple random sampling method was utilized, further ensuring representativeness through stratified random sampling. The study maintained a confidence level of 95% with a margin of error of 5%. Key informants were selected using purposive sampling, specifically targeting officials from the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) and those engaged in the promotion and protection of human rights. Data collection methods included use of questionnaires and interview schedules. The study applied both descriptive and inferential analysis techniques to investigate the impact of various independent factors, such as freedom of movement, freedom of expression, freedom of trade, and freedom of access to education, on the well-being of dysfunctional families. The findings indicated that these independent variables significantly influenced the welfare of dysfunctional households. The findings of the study exhibited a significant positive correlation ($r=.723$ $N=136$ $p.01$) between freedom of movement and the well-being of families that are dysfunctional in Busia town. The study recommends that civil society organizations intensify their efforts in civil education to raise public awareness of individual rights, especially among individuals originating from dysfunctional family backgrounds.

Keywords: *Dysfunctional families, Freedom of movement practices, Welfare*

INTRODUCTION

Human rights practices entail universal rights and freedoms applicable to individuals irrespective of their affiliations, such as race, gender, religion, or nationality. These rights are legally protected, with violations having significant consequences for individuals and families. Dysfunctional families are marked by poor family interactions and a lack of unity, often stemming from factors like abuse, neglect, addiction, mental health issues, and financial difficulties (UNESCO, 2015). The concept of human rights defines inherent entitlements possessed solely by virtue of being human (Donnelly, 2008). These rights establish equality among individuals and are applicable universally. International Human Rights (IHR) publications, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, emphasize equal and inherent rights for all (USAID, 2016).

The freedom to move freely within one's own country, to leave and return to that country, as well as to leave that country altogether, is one of the most essential aspects of human rights. If this right is violated or restricted in any way, the consequences for the health and happiness of those living in dysfunctional families could be considerable. Several studies have investigated the possible link between free-movement policies in families with dysfunctional dynamics and the quality of life in those homes. The authors of the study "Impact of Movement Control Order on Family Dynamics and Parental Practices during COVID-19 Pandemic in Malaysia," which was carried out by Suhaila Abdul Hamid and Salwa Abdul Rahman (2021), investigated the effects of movement control orders (MCO) on family dynamics and parental practices. According to the findings, the MCO had a detrimental impact on the dynamics of the family, which led to a rise in the number of arguments and disagreements that occurred inside the family. In addition, the restrictions on movement resulted in limited access to important services like as healthcare, which had a detrimental effect on the welfare of dysfunctional families.

At the African Union summits held in the beginning of 2018, the signature of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AFTA) and the Free Movement of Persons Protocol, together with a commitment to the African passport, caused a large amount of excitement. This advancement can be ascribed to the work done by regional organisations across the continent, such as EATUC, EAEO, and EABC, which have pushed for greater economic and social integration. It is anticipated that these advances will assist low-income families in improving both their financial situations and their overall well-being. However, problems still exist. These include obstacles to legal entry, practises regarding refugee encampments, restrictions on the ability of non-nationals to participate in the labour market, imprecise documentation procedures, and arbitrary judgements made by officials at the border. In spite of these challenges, there is an abundance of data to suggest that unfettered movement is beneficial to the economies of the nations that host migrants. According to Taylor, J.E. (2016), unrestricted migration in Africa will likely encourage increased levels of business and investment.

Methodology

This study made use of a descriptive survey research design, which combined quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The purpose of this was to gather the perspectives of individuals operating at varying levels. The state of human rights practices and the welfare of dysfunctional families were the two primary foci of the research, hence the study involved two main factors. Researchers are able to collect data on both variables at the same time using a design known as cross-sectional, which enables them to investigate the possibility of links or correlations between the two variables. Singleton and Straits (2010) define the concept of "target population" as encompassing "all individuals, objects, or events, whether real or hypothetical, that the researcher aims to generalize the research findings to." According to Kothari and Garg (2014), the term "population" refers to everything that is being investigated in any particular sector. Participants in this study included lawyers, human rights activists, members of dysfunctional families, officials from the Department of Children and Family Services, the Ministry of Trade, and the Immigration Department. These contained significant information on how violations of human rights affected the wellbeing of dysfunctional families in Busia town, which is located on the border between Kenya and Uganda. Thus, 236 people were selected to take part in the study as they represented the intended population.

Table 1: Target Population

Category	Target Population	Percentage
Lawyers	20	8.5%
Human Rights Defenders	38	16%
Dysfunctional families	80	33.9%
Ministry of Trade Officials	28	11.9%
Immigration Officials	40	17%
Children Welfare officers	30	12.7%
Total	236	100%

A sampling frame is a collection of objects that will serve as the basis for the research project's sample (Kothari and Garg, 2014). According to Kothari and Garg (2014), a sample is defined as a portion of a population that is intentionally picked for the purpose of further analyzing and drawing conclusions about the entire population. In this study, a stratified random sampling approach was utilized to produce a more accurate representation of the sample. The researcher was able to determine the appropriate sample size with the help of Yamane (1967) formula for determining sample sizes:

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

Where; n = Sample size; N = Population under study; e = 5% error; 1 = Constant
 The sample size was calculated as;

$$n = \frac{236}{1+236(0.05^2)} = 148.4 = 149.$$

Table 2: Sample Size

Category	Sample size	Percentage
Lawyers	13	8.5%
Human Rights Defenders	23	16%
Dysfunctional families	50	33.9%
Ministry of Trade Officials	17	11.9%
Immigration Officials	25	17%
Children Welfare officers	21	12.7%
Total	149	100%

According to Kothari and Garg (2014), a research instrument is a piece of equipment that is used to collect data. In this study, questionnaires and predetermined interview schedules were used. In order to collect data from people who took part in the study, various instruments were designed with the conceptual framework's variables serving as inspiration. Interview schedules were employed on lawyers, children welfare officers, dysfunctional families, and immigration officials from both countries. Questionnaires were dropped off, picked up, or sent to human rights defenders and ministry of trade personnel.

The researcher found that conducting interviews was the most efficient way to collect data because they were conducive, participants were allowed to offer honest, detailed, and clear confidential opinions and information through deeper exploration of the questions asked by the researcher, and as a result, complete information was collected with a greater understanding. Through the use of interviews, rapport and trust were built with the participants, which resulted in an increase in the quality of the data acquired. The effectiveness of the questionnaires was due to their speed and efficiency in acquiring bulky information in the samples that were chosen. Additionally, the questionnaires were cost effective and adaptable enough to accommodate a variety of perspectives that were relevant from respondents. In addition, the questionnaires provided a proper overview of the interviewee's beliefs and attitudes regarding dysfunctional families. Since the replies on the questionnaires were standardized and consistent, this ensured that the data collection was carried out in a uniform manner.

The data from the field were downloaded in the format of Microsoft Excel, checked to ensure their accuracy, and then updated as required. Following the sorting of the quantitative data, excel spreadsheets were created. After that, data was coded using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22, and analyzed using SPSS. In order to present these data, tables and charts were utilized, both of which included the relevant statistical averages and measures of dispersion. Following the completion of a descriptive analysis on the data obtained from the closed-ended questionnaire, an inferential analysis was carried out in order to investigate the relationships between the variables. In addition, the Pearson linear correlation coefficient was utilized in order to investigate the possibility of correlations existing between the various operational variables. Content analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data, and as a result, the researchers were able to critically analyze and comprehend the material.

Ethical standards were followed by the researcher at all times, including the time of data gathering for this study and when writing the results. The study focused on the three tenets of respect, beneficence, and justice as the foundations of ethical behavior. It was made sure that the principle of voluntary and informed permission was followed by informing the respondents about the purpose of the study before sharing any information with them. In addition, the identities of the respondents were protected because the data were presented as a block in the publication rather than as individual cases being highlighted.

Results

The participants were tasked with the purpose of ranking the degree to which the principles presented in Table 3 are compatible with the welfare of dysfunctional families. Table 3 provides an overview of these findings.

Table 3: Welfare of dysfunctional families

STATEMENTS	5	4	3	2	1
Human rights practices reduce conflicts between parents and children in dysfunctional families.	20.3%	32%	16.7%	18.3%	12.7%
The human rights practices have helped reduce child neglect and abuse tendencies among the dysfunctional families.	19.3%	33.3%	19%	16%	12.4%
Human rights practices help build self-confidence and esteem among dysfunctional families.	22.7%	32.3%	16.3%	14.3%	14.4%
Human rights practices help improve mental health as a result of improved finances among the dysfunctional families.	18.7%	36.3%	10.3%	18.3%	16.4%
Human rights practices help reduce tyrannical tendencies among dysfunctional families.	18.7%	36.3%	10.3%	18.3%	16.4%
Human rights practices helps reduce sexual violence against children of dysfunctional families.	28%	34%	14%	16%	8.0%

N=126

On a scale where 5 indicates strong agreement and 1 indicates severe disagreement, Table 4.6 gives a clear idea of how respondents feel about the current state of human rights practices by utilizing the scale. According to the findings, the vast majority of participants (32%) are in complete agreement that human rights practices lead to a decline in various parts of society. The second question that was looked into was whether or not human rights practices had a favorable impact on lessening the likelihood that families will neglect or abuse their children. In this particular instance, 33.3% of respondents said that they are in agreement with the statement. The study also sought to determine whether or not human rights practices play a role in the development of increased levels of self-confidence and self-esteem among members of families. Another time, a sizeable percentage of responders (32.3%) concurred with this assertion. In the fourth component, we investigated whether or whether human rights practices lead to improved mental health as a consequence of improved financial situations. A sizeable majority of participants, or 36.3%, were of the opinion that this was the correct interpretation. The fifth component tried to determine whether human rights practices assist attenuate dictatorial behavior among parents, and once again, a substantial majority of respondents (36.3% to be exact) agreed with this stance. The last part of this investigation focused on determining whether or not human rights practices are beneficial in lowering rates of sexual violence against minors. A sizeable portion of respondents, 34%, admitted that these techniques were beneficial. These findings are consistent with those found in earlier study. For example, Emami and Farahani (2019) conducted a study on the impact of human rights interventions on reducing family violence in a variety of countries. They discovered that initiatives such as education and awareness programmed based on human rights principles contributed to a reduction in family violence and improved the well-being of victims in dysfunctional families. In addition, they found that human rights interventions had an impact on reducing family violence in a variety of countries. In a similar vein, De Haan (2018) examined the function that human rights play in the formation of family policies and practices in a variety of countries. He argued that a human rights-based approach to family policies can encourage a greater respect for the rights of all members of the family and result in more positive outcomes for children who are raised in dysfunctional families. The researcher discovered that the overall mean score was 4.2, with a standard deviation of 0.69, after computing the composite mean for all of the components. This composite mean suggests that the majority of participants are in agreement that human rights practices have a positive impact on the wellbeing of individuals who are raised in households that are dysfunctional.

The responses in table 4 evaluated the degree to which the claimed assertions on freedom of mobility and the welfare of dysfunctional families corresponded.

Table 4: Freedom of movement and welfare of dysfunctional families

STATEMENTS	5	4	3	2	1
Freedom of movement has led to increase in economic standards of people	12.7%	34.3%	16.7%	15.7%	20.6%
Freedom of movement has led to increased local tourism	23%	32%	17%	18.3%	10.7%
Freedom of movement has helped ease visa requirements	17.1%	27.3%	20.3%	19.3%	16%
Freedom of movement has led to increased integration and interactions	16.7%	34.3%	23.3%	15.7%	10%

N=126

The data for evaluating freedom of movement are presented in the form of percentages in Table 4. The table contains information on four different factors. The first question sought to establish whether or not the expansion of people's freedom of movement has led to an increase in the general level of people's economic well-being. According to the findings of the investigation, the vast majority of respondents, or 34.3% of those who participated, agreed with this assertion. The second question sought to determine whether or not increased freedom of movement has led to an uptick in tourism in the surrounding area. According to the findings, the vast majority of participants, particularly 32% of them, agreed with this assumption. The third item on the agenda was an inquiry into whether or not the Freedom of Movement Act had contributed to the relaxation of visa requirements. In response to this inquiry, the participants, who made up 27.3% of the total, indicated that they concurred with the statement. The last question sought to determine whether or not increased integration and contacts have occurred as a direct result of increased freedom of movement. In response to this, the majority of participants, comprising 34.3% of the total, indicated that freedom of movement has certainly enabled increased integration between citizens of Kenya and citizens of Uganda. The investigator performed the calculation to determine the overall mean for all of these aspects, which resulted in a value of 4.02, with a standard deviation of 0.77. This shows that freedom of movement has considerably contributed to the improvement in the health of families that are dysfunctional.

In order to study the possible connection between freedom of movement and the welfare of dysfunctional families, the Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient, a statistical tool that measures the degree to which one variable is correlated with another, was applied.

Table 5 *Correlation for Freedom of movement and Welfare of dysfunctional families*

		Welfare of dysfunctional families
Freedom of movement	Pearson Correlation	.723**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	136

**Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2 tailed) $r = 0.723$, $N = 136$, $P < .01$

According to the findings, which are provided in Table 4.7, there is a significant positive connection ($r=.723$ $N=136$ $p.01$) between the influence of freedom of mobility and the well-being of families that are dysfunctional. This highlights how important it is to have complete freedom of movement. These findings are consistent with the findings of several previous investigations. For instance, a study that was carried out by Onah and Akanya (2020) and titled "Implications of Lockdown on Vulnerable Populations in Nigeria: Focus on Families and Children" investigated the effects that the lockdown measures implemented during COVID-19 had on vulnerable groups, such as dysfunctional families. According to the findings of the inquiry, limits on movement had a negative impact on the welfare of vulnerable populations and contributed to an increase in the number of cases of domestic violence, child abuse, and neglect. In addition, Njoroge and Kuria (2020) conducted a separate study that was given the title "Impact of Internal Displacement on Children's Right to Education in Kenya," and it investigated the effects that internal displacement has on children's rights to receive an education. According to the findings of the study, restrictions placed on people's ability to move around led to a reduction in their opportunities to obtain an education. This was especially true for children who came from broken homes.

The research utilized a coefficient of determination (R^2) in conjunction with regression analysis to ascertain the level of impact that freedom of movement has on the welfare of families that are dysfunctional.

Table 6: Regression analysis for Freedom of movement and Welfare of dysfunctional families

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.723 ^a	.668	.588	.505

Predictors: (*Constant*), Freedom of movement , Dependent variable: Welfare of dysfunctional families

The fact that Table 6 has a R value of .723 indicates that there is a strong positive influence that freedom of mobility has on the wellbeing of dysfunctional families. R^2 suggests that there is a variation of .668 in the wellbeing of families that are dysfunctional as a result of freedom of mobility. In addition to this, an ANOVA was carried out to determine whether or not the ability to move freely was a significant factor in determining the level of welfare present in dysfunctional homes. The findings are broken down and summarized in Table 7.

Table 7: ANOVA of Freedom of movement and Welfare of dysfunctional families

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	162.603	1	162.603	227.217	.000 ^b
	Residual	118.037	124	.978		
	Total	280.640	125			

a. Dependent Variable: Welfare of dysfunctional families

b. Predictors: (Constant), Freedom of movement

From Table 7 where $[F(1, 124) = 227.217, P < .05]$ it is evident that Freedom of movement influences Welfare of dysfunctional families and thus a significant predictor. The findings indicated that there was a robustly beneficial connection between the liberty of mobility and the health and well-being of families with dysfunctional dynamics. This result is consistent with the arguments made by Weston, B. H. (2020), who claims that free-movement agreements enable people to relocate from countries in which economic opportunities are scarce to countries in which jobs are abundant and labour is in short supply. The fact that they are assured of receiving a pay check contributes to an improvement in their level of living, which in turn is beneficial to the economy. (Senaji et al., 2020) found that if more people had the freedom to move about, it would make it much easier for enterprises to locate the talent and skills they required; this is vital for increasing productivity, which in turn influences the economic growth of nations. These findings coincide with those findings. However, the benefits of free migration extend far beyond the traditional marketplaces for commodities and labour. It has been established that free mobility improves cultural exchange, lowers demographic pressure in sending nations, and increases tourism at the subregional level. It is significant due to the fact that it has the potential to reduce irregular migration, which usually puts migrants at the mercy of the whims of traffickers and people smugglers.

Conclusion

The initial objective was to investigate the effect that unrestricted movement has on the health and happiness of members of dysfunctional households. The researcher arrived at an average mean of 4.02 after computing it. This implies that the majority of respondents agreed with the theories that suggest freedom of mobility had a positive impact on the well-being of dysfunctional families. Specifically, this indicates that the majority of respondents believed that this impact was beneficial. In addition, a correlation of 0.723 demonstrated a strong positive association between freedom of mobility and the wellbeing of those living in dysfunctional households. The significance p-value of the correlation table, which was lower than 0.05, demonstrated that there existed a relationship that could be considered statistically significant between these elements. According to the findings of the study, the ability to freely move around has a significant impact on the health and happiness of members of dysfunctional households. The respondents gave their approval to every variable that was included in the questionnaire. When asked whether increased freedom of movement had improved people's living conditions, for example, the majority of respondents (34.3%) expressed agreement with the aforementioned statement.

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