

Relationship Between Parenting Styles And Self-Esteem Among Adolescents In Selected Public Secondary Schools In Mbeere North Sub-County Of Embu County, Kenya.

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Abstract: Adolescence is a critical phase in life during which individuals experience physical, cognitive, emotional and social changes. Parenting styles are crucial as they possibly built foundations for various aspects of adolescents' development, achievement and self-esteem. This study examined the relationship between parenting styles and self-esteem among adolescents in selected public secondary schools in Mbeere North Sub-County of Embu County, Kenya.

Materials and Methods: The study utilized the quantitative research method, and applied the correlational research design. The target population was 1821 students who were boys and girls. The study used both probability and non-probability sampling methods at different stages. The Yamane (1967) formula was used for sample size determination and the study attained a sample size of 325 students. The study used standardized research instruments such as; Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) developed by Buri (1991), and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) developed by Rosenberg (1965). The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences; SPSS version 22 was used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages, and inferential statistics, like the Pearson's correlation coefficient were used to analyze data. Ethical consideration were strictly adhered to.

Results: Findings indicated that most parents 73.3% (n = 125) practiced authoritarian parenting style, followed by 23.2% (n = 110) of the parents of adolescents practiced authoritative parenting style, while 2.7% (n = 9) of the parents of adolescents practiced permissive parenting style. It was further found that 51.64% of the respondents had average self-esteem, followed by 47.13% of the respondents had low self-esteem, while 1.27% of respondents had high self-esteem.

Conclusion: This study concluded that there was a weak negative and insignificant relationship ($r = -0.219$; $p = .678 \geq 0.05$) between parenting styles and self-esteem among adolescents in selected Public Secondary Schools in Mbeere North Sub-County of Embu County, Kenya. Parents may be educated on how to practice authoritative parenting style and be encouraged to utilize it.

Keyword; Parenting Styles, Self-esteem, Adolescent

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I. INTRODUCTION

Parenting style is one of the key areas that deals with the development and upbringing of children. Parents play a significant part in shaping the child's life such as offering support, encouragement and affection to their children. Aremu et al. (2018) defines parenting styles as all behaviors, attitudes, and values parents utilize to interact with their child that influences their physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development. Parenting styles account for more variance in externalizing behaviors in children than any other factor. These parenting styles are authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and uninvolved or neglectful parenting.

The authoritarian parenting style is a strict type of parenting where children are expected to follow strict set of rules as well as expectations. Such parents focus on punishment and also tightly monitor their children. This excessive control result to children who are unhappy, withdrawn from people, fearful, struggle with low self-esteem, and shy. Authoritative parents encourage their children to be more responsible and as well independent. These parents are more supportive towards their children and there is open communication with the children (Obiunu, 2018). Based on the support these children get from their parents, they grow to be resourceful, develop high self-esteem, and are socially well adjusted in life. The permissive parenting style, there is manifestation of high warmth accompanied by low parental control. Parents make very few demands for responsibility and rarely punish or discipline their children. Permissive parenting results into children with poor emotional regulation,

rebellion, exhibit antisocial behaviours, poor social skills, poor performance in school due to lack of motivation. With regards to the uninvolved or neglectful parenting, insufficient attention is given to the child. The parents could be indifferent to the child's emotional needs and makes very few demands. The children of neglectful parents lack trust foundation with their parents and feel detached from them. The children may feel rejected and unwanted (Muzaki, 2018). Parenting styles have been associated with self-esteem among adolescents. According to Afen et al. (2022), self-esteem is a person's general positive assessment of the self and the worth one gives the self. Studies have linked parenting styles to self-esteem in children, with authoritative parenting having the most positive impact on adolescents' self-esteem (Larose et al., 2016).

In Germany, Krauss et al. (2020) conducted a study to investigate the impact of parenting styles on the self-esteem of adolescents. The sample size was 441 German adolescents aged 12 to 17. Self-reported questionnaire was used to measure the adolescents' self-esteem and the parents' parenting styles. The study found that authoritative parenting was associated with higher self-esteem in adolescents, while authoritarian parenting was associated with lower self-esteem. Furthermore, the authors found that authoritative parenting had a greater impact on self-esteem than authoritarian parenting. Similarly in China, Yun et al. (2018) examined the connection between a group of teenagers' self-esteem and their parents' parenting practices in the national Chinese school in Penang. The perceived authoritarian or permissive parenting style of the teenagers' parents was negatively associated with the teenager's level of self-esteem. While an authoritative parenting style had a positive connection on a child's sense of self. Still in China, Bi et al. (2018) used a survey design to investigate parenting styles and how it affects adolescent relationships. The sample size comprised of 633 adolescents. Parenting styles were assessed using the Chinese version of Steinberg et al. (1994) parenting styles questionnaire. Cluster analysis with K-means method was used to identify the four parenting styles. The study found that all the four parenting styles: were practiced with authoritative being the most practiced type $n = 200$ (31.6%) followed by permissiveness $n = 177$ (28.0%), authoritarian $n = 152$ (24.0%) and neglectful at 13.1% (Chang et al., 2018). In Portugal, Spain and Brazil, Martinez et al. (2020) conducted a study on parenting socialization and adolescents' self-esteem. It was revealed that authoritative and indulgent parenting are both characterized by parental warmth and are well connected to higher levels of self-esteem than authoritarian model of parenting.

In Nigeria, Akomolafe et al. (2015) carried out a study by exploring the relationship between adolescent self-esteem and parenting style. The study used a sample of 400 adolescents aged 11-18 years old. The adolescents were assessed using the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale and the Parental Authority Questionnaire to measure self-esteem and parental authority, respectively. The findings of the study pointed that there was a statistically significant relationship between adolescent self-esteem and parenting style. Adolescents who experienced authoritative parenting had higher self-esteem than those who experienced authoritarian or permissive parenting. This relationship was stronger for boys than girls. The researchers also found that the adolescents who experienced authoritative parenting had higher self-esteem regardless of their age, gender, or socio-economic status. This suggests that parenting style has a significant influence on self-esteem, regardless of other factors. A subsequent study by Aremu et al. (2018) carried out in Oyo state found that the majority of the respondents perceived their parents to be using the authoritative parenting style; father 183 (36.3%) and mother 196 (38.9%). This was followed very closely by the authoritarian parenting style; father 173 (34.9%) and mother 165 (32.7%). Few (8.7%; 44) of both parents were perceived by respondents as utilizing more than one parenting styles. Equally in Uganda, a study was conducted by Muzaki (2018) on parenting styles, self-esteem and students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Sironko District. The study sample size was 255 students. It was revealed that there was no significant relationship between authoritative parenting styles and self-esteem. This study also revealed that authoritarian parenting style had a significant negative relationship with self-esteem whereas permissive parenting style showed a significant negative relationship with self-esteem. The study concluded that lack of significant relationship meant that authoritative parenting style could cause both high and low self-esteem.

In Kenya, Njogu et al. (2017) conducted a study on parenting styles as predictors of risky sexual behaviours among a sample of public secondary school students in Embu County. The study targeted 475 participants comprising 221 girls, 178 boys, 15 guidance and counseling teachers and 70 secondary school drop outs. According to the study, 70.9% of the students gave authoritative parenting style a very high rating, followed by authoritarian parenting style at 59.4%. Permissive and negligent parenting practices were the least, at 50.1%. The research found that parenting styles were predictors of students' behavior. More studies have shown that parenting styles are associated with adolescents' sense of self-worth. Mburu et al. (2016) affirmed this by indicating that adolescents with authoritative parenting styles had higher self-esteem than those with authoritarian or permissive parenting styles. Adolescents who were raised by authoritative parents had higher self-esteem than adolescents who were raised by permissive, uninvolved, or authoritarian parents. Additionally, the study found that the gender of the adolescent had a significant effect on self-esteem, with female adolescents having higher self-esteem than male adolescents.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK –ATTACHMENT STYLES THEORY

John Bowlby (1988) was a British psychiatrist who developed the theory of attachment styles. This theory states that the way an individual forms relationship with others is based on their earliest experiences of attachment to their primary caregivers. Bowlby (1988) identified four main attachment styles: secure, anxious-avoidant, anxious-ambivalent, and disorganized/disoriented. He suggests that adolescents' self-esteem is strongly affected by their relationships with caregivers during their childhood. He proposes that the quality of the primary attachment relationship, especially between the adolescent and their primary caregiver, is the major determinant of the adolescent's self-esteem.

Additionally, Bowlby (1988) argues that adolescents who have a secure attachment with their primary caregiver are more likely to develop a healthy self-concept and self-esteem. Conversely, if the primary caregiver is unsupportive or neglectful, the adolescent may develop low self-esteem and a negative self-image. Bowlby's theory suggests that self-esteem is a result of the quality of the attachment relationship and that it can be improved or damaged depending on how the caregiver responds to the adolescent. The way each type of parenting style is practiced will inform the type of attachment which the adolescents may develop towards their parents and could in turn affect their self-esteem. Therefore, with the knowledge of how children develop attachment as proposed by Bowlby, helped this study understand how parenting styles contribute to the development of secure or insecure attachment which may affect the self-esteem either positively or negatively.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study employed the positivism approach to acquire knowledge on the relationship between the relationships between parenting styles and self-esteem among adolescents. The study utilized the quantitative research method. This involves collecting and analyzing numerical data that were used to measure and compare variables. Quantitative research is often used to understand the prevalence of phenomena and establish the relationships between variables. (APA, 2020). The study further adopted correlational research design. This correlational design helped in showing relationship between variables. The study was conducted in Mbeere North Sub County, Embu County. Embu County is located in the southeastern part of Kenya and borders Tharaka-Nithi County to the east, Machakos County to the south, Kirinyaga County to the west and Meru County to the north. The study had a target population of 1821 Form 2 students who were boys and girls. The study used both probability and non-probability sampling methods at various stages. Under probability sampling, stratified sampling technique was used to classify the schools according to the ward they are located. The Yamane (1967) formula for sample size determination was applied to attain the sample size of 325 students. Parenting styles were measured using Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) developed by Buri (1991). Also, Self-esteem was measured using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), developed by Rosenberg (1965). The instruments were pretested among students from another school. The Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) was found to have Cronbach's alpha of .812, while Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) had Cronbach's alpha of .823 and they were found to be reliable. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used to analyze data. Inferential statistics, like the Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to analyze data collected from the standardized questionnaires. Ethical consideration were adhered to strictly. The study found that 36.9% of the respondents were 16 years old. This was followed by 28.7% for those who were 15 years old then 17 years old having 22.1%. The least percentages of 7.0% and 5.3% were for respondents aged 18 and 14 years respectively. It was also found that 56.97% of the respondents were females while 43.03% were males.

IV. FINDINGS

Parenting Styles Practiced by Parents of Adolescents

The first objective of this research intended to find out the parenting styles practiced by parents of adolescents in selected public secondary schools in Mbeere North Sub-County of Embu County, Kenya. Descriptive analysis was conducted, and scores were summed up according to the dimensions of the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ). The PAQ has 3 dimensions which are: permissive parenting style (items 1, 6, 10, 13, 14, 17, 19, 21, 24 and 28), authoritarian parenting style (items 2, 3, 7, 9, 12, 16, 18, 25, 26 and 29), and authoritative parenting style (items 4, 5, 8, 11, 15, 20, 22, 23, 27, and 30). The findings are tabulated in Table 1.

Table 1
Distribution of Parenting Styles

Parenting styles	Frequency	Percentage
Authoritative	110	23.2%
Authoritarian	125	73.3%
Permissive	9	2.7%
Total	244	100%

The findings in Table 1 indicated that most parents 73.3% (n = 125) practiced authoritarian parenting style, followed by 23.2% (n = 110) of the parents of adolescents practiced authoritative parenting style, while 2.7% (n = 9) of the parents of adolescents practiced permissive parenting style.

Levels of Self-Esteem among Adolescents

The second objective of this study sought to examine the levels of self-esteem among adolescents in selected public secondary schools in Mbeere North Sub-County of Embu County, Kenya. To measure the different levels of self-esteem, the total scores (0-50) on the RSES were transformed into three categories and analyzed. Out of the 10 items, items 3, 5, 8,9,10 were reversed. The score below 25 were suggested low self-esteem, the score of 26-40 suggested average self-esteem and the score 41-50 suggested having high self-esteem. The findings of the levels of self-esteem among adolescents are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Levels of Self-Esteem among Adolescents

Levels of self esteem	Frequency	Percentage
Low self-esteem	115	47.13%
Average Self-Esteem	126	51.64%
High Self-Esteem	3	1.27%
Total	244	100%

The findings in Table 2 indicate that 51.64% of the respondents had average self-esteem followed by 47.13% of the respondents who had low self-esteem. The least (1.27%) of respondents had high self-esteem.

V. DISCUSSION

Parenting Styles that are practiced by Parents of Adolescents in Selected Public Secondary Schools in Mbeere North Sub-County of Embu County

This study found that the most practiced parenting styles was authoritarian parenting style (73.3%), authoritative parenting style (23.2%), and permissive parenting style (2.7%). This findings may reflect the possibility that in rural areas, most parents still believe that their word is final and their children must always comply in total obedience and submission to the authority as parents. These findings are supported by the study of Altay et al. (2020) in Turkey, and they found that 58.2% of the parents of adolescents exhibited authoritarian behaviour, and 41.8% exhibited permissive behaviour. Similarly, Manyama and Lema (2017) study also agreed with findings of this study. Their study found that authoritarian parenting was the most acceptable in Tanzania. However, a study by Vasiou et al. (2023) web-based survey in Greece via the Internet to explore parenting styles patterns. Had contradicting findings. Their study pointed that 66.6% of the participants practiced authoritative parenting style followed by 12.4% of the participants whose parents practiced Permissive style, and 4.4% practiced authoritarian parenting style.

Similarly, Bi et al. (2018) study in China did not corroborate this study findings. Their study found that authoritative parenting style was the most practiced type n = 200 (31.6%) followed by indulgent, n = 177 (28.0%), authoritarian n = 152 (24.0%) and neglectful n = 83 (13.1%). In addition, Mandal et al. (2020) study did not agree with findings of this study. The study found that the parenting styles practiced were authoritative (73.2%), authoritarian (20%) and permissive style (6.8%). Aremu et al. (2018) in Nigeria revealed that majority of the respondents perceived their parents to be using the authoritative or flexible parenting style; father 183 (36.3%) and mother 196 (38.9%) contradicted the findings of this study.

Levels of Self-Esteem among Adolescents in Selected Public Secondary Schools in Mbeere North Sub-County of Embu County, Kenya.

This study found that 51.64% of the respondents had average self-esteem, 47.13% of the respondents had low self-esteem, while 1.27% had high self-esteem. These findings pointed that slightly more than half of respondents had average self-esteem. Based on these results, psychological interventions may be employed to help build the students' self-esteem, especially those with low and average self-esteem. Afen (2022) postulates that low self-esteem is a person's negative perception about oneself and life in general. Some signs of low self-esteem may include: feeling of failure, feeling useless, emotional insecurity, lack of self-confidence and poor social boundary. Average self-esteem is characterized by some degree of instability in thoughts, feeling and behaviors High self-esteem is seen as central aspect of personal well-being as well as adjustment in life, and it is characterized by openness to criticism, accepting realities, assertiveness, positive attitudes towards life and accepting others the way they are. The findings of the current study are supported by Raju (2019) in India, who used a sample of 60 adolescents and found that majority 55% of the adolescents had normal level of self-esteem,

followed by 36.7% who had strong self-esteem compared to 8.33% who had low self-esteem. On the contrary Munanu and Kobia (2016), conducted a study on the connection between the type of school and the level of self-esteem among secondary school students in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study found that 62.5 % of adolescents had low self-esteem, 37.5% had normal range of self-esteem. Omweno (2020), used descriptive survey to determine the connection between students' academic achievement and self-esteem in Kenya, Kisii County. This research found that the student self-esteem in secondary schools was high (mean 4.07).

VI. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that there was no relationship between parenting styles and self-esteem ($r = -0.219$; $p = .678 \geq 0.05$). The study concluded that all the three parenting styles are practiced by parents of adolescents in selected public secondary schools in Mbeere North Sub County, Embu County Kenya. While most of the students had average self-esteem, some of the students were at low self-esteem.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Parents may be educated on how to practice authoritative parenting style and be encouraged to utilize it. From the findings of the current study, slightly more than half of respondents have average self-esteem. This is an indicator that schools may start focusing more on the mental health of the students with special attention to self-esteem. The schools may come up with ways of helping those who have low self-esteem by engaging professionals as well as employ preventive measures to help those are at risk of developing low self-esteem. Further study may be carried out in another school to explore factors responsible for low self-esteem among adolescents.

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