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**Influence of Neglectful Parenting Approaches on Self-esteem of Teenagers Aged 13-19
Years in Selected Day Secondary Schools in Lari Sub County in Kiambu County,
Kenya**

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Influence of Neglectful Parenting Approaches on Self-esteem of Teenagers Aged 13-19 Years in Selected Day Secondary Schools in Lari Sub County in Kiambu County, Kenya



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Abstract

Purpose: Parents play a critical role in influencing the self-esteem of teenagers. The main aim of the study was to investigate how neglectful parenting approaches influence the self-esteem of teenagers aged 13- 19 years in day secondary schools in Lari Sub County, in Kiambu County, Kenya.

Methodology: The researcher used a concurrent correlational research design. In this approach both qualitative and quantitative data collection strategies were used simultaneously to investigate the relationship between the variables. The target population was 4500 students. The sample size was 1280 participants. Questionnaires and structured interviews guides were used for data collection Stratified and Simple random sampling techniques were used to select the accessible study population. The qualitative data was collected using interview guides and presented thematically in narrative form. At the univariate level, the quantitative data was analyzed using (SPSS) software version 27 and presented in tables. At the bivariate level Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient was used to obtain correlations and significance.

Findings: From the descriptive findings 38.7% of the teenagers from neglectful parents are experiencing unhealthy self-esteem. 24.0% of teenagers from authoritative parents have a healthy self-esteem. 37.3% of the teenagers had moderate self-esteem. The results also indicate that out of 1200 respondents (371) 30.9% of respondents had good experiences with their parents. 117(9.8%) had moderate experiences with their parents and 712(59.3%) had antagonistic experiences with their parents. From the inferential findings a statistically significant relationship was also found between neglectful parenting approach and teenage self-esteem, ($r = 0.740$, $p = .000$). From thematic findings presented in narrative mode from school and peer counsellors, it was evident that neglectful parenting dominates the Lari Sub County region since most of the clients had unfavorable experiences with their parents. Few have lovely experiences with their parents.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: The research was guided by the Albert Bandura Social Learning Theory. The theory provides insight that during their initial interaction with their family children observe and learn from the actions and behaviors of caregivers or parents. Therefore, decent actions, words and behaviors from parent's influence positively the self-esteem of teenagers. The teenagers feel good, secure and loved to be part of a warm and loving family which gives them confidence to explore their world and try new things. However, toxic words, actions and behaviors in parental relationships with teenagers influence negatively the self-esteem of many teenagers. The study recommended that policy makers in the state department of early childhood education in Lari Sub County should embrace programs to educate teenagers on healthy ways to adapt to unfriendly experiences with neglectful parents since they cannot change them but they can only build their individual self-esteem. It also recommends that parents to be educated on the need to embrace authoritative parenting strategies to cultivate health self-esteem of teenagers.

Keywords: *Neglectful Parenting Approaches, Self-Esteem, Teenagers*

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INTRODUCTION

Parents are the primary caregivers with whom teenagers spend most of their time from birth through adolescence. Apart from the influence of teachers and peers, parents play the greatest role in influencing the teenager's self-esteem in the process of nurturing, protecting, supervising and guiding them. Parents significantly influence their teenagers' self-esteem through the strategies they use in nurturing, protecting, supervising, and guiding them (Li, 2021).

Parents who effectively carry out their roles in guiding, protecting, supervising, nurturing, and correcting their teenagers with love create a warm and safe environment thus they feel unconditionally loved and accepted which boosts their self-esteem, since their needs are being met. On the other hand, long term chronic rejection of teenagers emotional, social and physical needs by parents, creates feelings of emotional rejection to teenagers which poison their self-esteem, (Sahithya et al.2019). Teenagers that are rejected by parent's desire for security, attention, unconditional love and acceptance. This is because they have been left to raise themselves when one or both parents have no time for care, guidance, support and to respond to their emotional, physical and psychological needs, (Jinan, et. al,2022).

The issue of the influence of neglectful parenting approaches to self-esteem of teenagers is real across various countries. There are concerns on how modern parents respond to the teenagers emotional, psychological and developmental needs which has highly affected positively or negatively the development of self-esteem of teenagers, (Li,2016). Numerous teenagers have been abandoned by parents in the process of trying to cope with pressing global issues related to economic insecurity, poverty, job demands, social media, divorce, trauma, family violence and political instability which highly influence the way parents interact with their teenagers. Therefore, many parents struggle to meet their psychological, physical, emotional and developmental needs as well as provide a safe and nurturing environment as they deal with global challenges, (Mruk,2013).

Neglectful parents are also known to ignore or are less involved in meeting the physical, developmental, emotional and psychological needs of teenagers. Through actions and words they provide very little or no parental love, guidance, support, communication, warmth, attention or affection to the teenagers. The teenagers are left to guide, supervise and nurture themselves. Due to such hostile experiences with parents it poisons the confidence of teenagers for they may feel unwanted and unloved since there are no parental figures to validate their feelings and attend to their craving and hunger for unconditional love, attention and acceptance. The ideal situation today is to have countless, if not all parents exercise the authoritative parenting approach. This helps to raise more confidence in teenagers and curb the evils that emerge due to unhealthy self-esteem, (Sethi, A., & Singh, P,2023).

In contemporary society, the majority of parents have ignored their role in raising teenagers thus the issue of neglectful parenting is prevalent in many countries in the world and the consequences on teenage self-esteem have been established. Such parents have abandoned their responsibilities in protecting, disciplining, controlling, guiding and meeting the needs of the teenagers.

In India, it was established by Ansari and Qureshi (2013) that teenagers who are unconditionally accepted by their parents have healthy self-esteem and those rejected were found to be linked with unhealthy self-esteem. This is because they feel unwanted, ignored, insecure, inadequate and powerless due harsh experiences with negligent parents.

In East African countries the impact of neglectful parenting is highly evident. In Tanzania, in a study carried out to teenagers in Dar as salaam it was established that neglectful parenting is a risk factor for psychological distress among teenagers in Dar as salaam. Those teenagers that experienced childhood emotional rejection had unhealthy self-esteem because they felt abandoned and unwanted, (Mwakanyamale et. al,2022). Equally in Kenya it was established in study in Kieni West District in Nyeri County that teenagers in this region who had parents detached from their lives had unhealthy self-esteem compared to those whose parents were involved in their lives. Due to unfriendly experiences with their parents they feel unloved, unsupported and insecure because their needs are not being met, (Mburu, 2016).

Despite being a global issue, it is now an emerging issue of great concern of how parents in Lari Sub County in Kiambu County in Kenya are currently influencing self-esteem of teenagers through their neglectful parenting approaches they have adopted in the process of raising them. Countless of the teenagers are suffering in the hands of neglectful parents who are currently struggling to meet the needs of their families and children amidst the present pressing issues in the region related to rampant parental divorce, financial insecurity, drug addictions, unemployment, family violence, poverty and employment demands.

In summary, the effects of neglectful parenting to teenagers across the world are evident for such teenagers experiencing neglectful parenting are struggling with negative feelings of unhealthy self-esteem. Due to antagonistic experiences with their parents they feel abandoned and lonely, they believe that they are inadequate, hopeless, incompetent, insecure, and less worthy than other people. The negative feelings are a key source of psychological issues related to suicidal tendencies, alcohol abuse, teenage crime, under achievement at school and toxic interpersonal relationships. This is because they struggle to make simple healthy decisions and choices.

As a result of extensive and conclusive empirical review of literature across various countries in the world, the influence of parenting approaches to self-esteem of teenagers is evident. However, the researcher identified various missing gaps in information. Preceding research was done in boarding schools therefore the researcher will carry out study of teenagers in day secondary schools aged 13-19 years to gather more data on their experiences of teenagers with their parents and how they influence their self-esteem. Previous studies conducted were mainly focused on several factors that influence self-esteem in adolescents. Therefore, the researcher intends to carry out a study precisely on how parenting approaches influence the self-esteem of teenagers aged 13-19 years in day secondary schools in Lari Sub County, Kiambu County.

Limitation of the Study

The study did not include the teenager's parents thus all data was obtained from the teenager's self-reports which the researcher thought is to be a useful way of gaining first-hand information to find out the hostile or lovely experiences of teenagers with their parents.

Theoretical Framework

The research was guided by the Albert Bandura Social Learning Theory. Albert Bandura in his model social learning theory argues that learning occurs in children through observation, imitation, and modeling. The theory further adds that learning is impacted by factors such as attention, inspiration, attitudes, and emotions. The theory provides insight that during their initial interaction with their family children observe and learn from the actions and behaviors

of caregivers or parents, (Courtney ,2020). Therefore, decent actions, words and behaviors from parent's influence positively the self-esteem of teenagers. When teenagers observe that parents are determined in satisfying their emotional needs it creates a secure base for growth of a dependable and trusting relationship between teenagers and their parents. The teenagers feel good, secure and loved to be part of a warm and loving family which gives them confidence to explore their world and try new things, (Rekhta,2018). However, toxic words, actions and behaviors in parental relationships with teenagers influence negatively the self-esteem of many teenagers. Harsh, controlling and emotionally cold parents make the teenagers imitate negative patterns of interrelationships thus increase the likelihood of unhealthy behaviors. Due to harsh experiences with their parents the teenagers continuously feel bad about themselves in presence of their toxic parents. They also rob their self-esteem, dignity and poisons their self-confidence. When parents ignore teenagers' needs and fail to guide them, they develop unhealthy self confidence in themselves, (Okunlola et .al,2022).

METHODOLOGY

The study combined both quantitative and qualitative research methods in one investigation. The researcher applied the combined technique to collect data qualitatively and quantitatively in one phase in various wards in Lari Sub County, then analyze both sets of data together and present the findings at the same time in order to obtain credible data. Quantitative data was collected from the teenage boys and girls in Lari Sub County through semi-structured, open and close-ended questionnaires. Qualitative data was obtained from school and teenage peer counsellors through an interview guide. The mixed methods research was beneficial to the researcher in that it complemented the weaknesses of either qualitative or quantitative approach thus obtaining reliable data.

Research Design

To conduct the study, the researcher used a concurrent correlational research design. In this approach the researcher used both qualitative and quantitative data collection strategies simultaneously to investigate the relationships between the variables without controlling or manipulating any of them since each strategy was accorded equal weight and credibility. The two techniques were carried out separately during the process of data collection and analysis and then eventually merged during data interpretation.

Location of Study

The research was conducted in Lari Sub County. Geographically the region is positioned on the Western region of Kiambu County. Lari sub county borders the sub counties of Kinangop to the North, Limuru to the South, Githunguri and Gatundu North to the east and Naivasha sub county to the west. Most students in this region spend most of their time with or without parents after attending school. It is also a region with most students coming from single parents and abandoned families as a result of increased abuse of drugs and alcohol.

Target Population

The target population was 4500 Kenyan teenage students in Lari sub County aged 13-19years in 30 secondary schools. Other targeted respondents during the research study were 15 peer counsellors and 15 school counsellors who may provide first-hand information on evidence of parental influence on self-esteem of teenagers aged 13-19 years in Lari Sub County in Kiambu County as indicated in Table 1 below

Table 1: Target Population

Name of the Ward regions	Number of schools	Number of teenagers	No. of peer counsellors	Number of school counsellors
Kamburu	5	950	3	3
Kijabe	8	1056	3	3
Kinale	6	846	3	3
Kirenga	5	781	3	3
Nyanduma	6	857	3	3
Total	30	4500	15	15

Source: Author, 2024

Sampling Procedures and Sample size

For the researcher to obtain valid data stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to enable each respondent to have equal chances to participate in the research. Out of the 30 schools in the region, a sample size of 20 schools were selected for study across the 5 wards of Lari Sub County depending on the number of schools. Through the process of stratified sampling across every ward, 3 out of 5 day secondary schools for study were selected in Kamburu ward. In Kijabe ward 5 out of 8 day schools were selected for study. In Kinale ward 3 out of 6 day schools were selected. In Kirenga ward 4 out of 5 day schools were selected. In Nyanduma ward 4 out of 6 day schools were selected for study. This gave a total of 20 schools out of the 30 day secondary schools in Lari Sub county. Therefore, in each school the respondents included 16 students in each form from form one to form four classes. Furthermore, in consideration to gender, a sample size of 8 teenage boys and 8 teenage girls per form from each selected day secondary school were purposely selected for study.

This composition gave a sample size of 1280 Participants as indicated in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Sample Size

Ward	Schools per ward			Sample size of respondents per school in terms of gender		Sample size of respondents per Form per school	
	Total	Sample size of schools per ward	Sample size of respondents per school	Boys	Girls	Form 1-3	Form 4
Kaburu	5	3	64	32	32	48	16
Kijabe	8	5	64	32	32	48	16
Kinare	6	4	64	32	32	48	16
Kirenga	5	4	64	32	32	48	16
Nyanduma	6	4	64	32	32	48	16
Total	30	20	1280	640	640	960	320

Source: Author, 2024

Data Collection Instruments

To effectively obtain valid quantitative and qualitative data among teenagers aged 13-19 years in Lari Sub County, the researcher used two kinds of instruments including questionnaires and structured interview guides.

Piloting of the Research Instruments

The researcher carried out a pilot test of the questionnaires and structured interview test items in two schools within Lari Sub County in St. Augustine Nyanduma Secondary school and Kamuchege secondary school. The schools were not part of the main study but helped to identify any errors that needed to be rectified before finally using the data collection instruments for the entire study.

Testing Validity of Research Instruments

Validity of the research instruments was enhanced to ensure that there is a valid measure of accuracy on what the questionnaires and structured interview guides are supposed to measure in order to obtain credible findings from the study. To enhance validity two experts were given the questionnaire and the interview guide to evaluate their accuracy in measuring what they are supposed to measure.

To enhance external validity, the researcher ensured that the sample size of the respondents given the questionnaires was adequate so that the findings from the study can be generalized to the entire region among schools in Lari Sub County. To enhance face validity, the respondent's self-esteem questionnaire included items about how the teenagers see and think about themselves as a person of worth or unworthy due to experiences with their neglectful parents.

Testing Reliability of Research Instruments

To achieve a good internal consistency, the same test items for questionnaires and structured interview guides were used on the selected groups of participants in each day secondary school to collect data on the influence of neglectful parenting approaches among the self-esteem of teenagers. This is mainly to have consistent and stable results from the selected day secondary schools in Lari Sub County. The researcher used the Cronbach alpha scale to determine internal consistency of the research tools and results were expressed as a number between 0 and 1. Therefore, after correlating the scores a coefficient of reliability of 0.83 of the findings indicated how closely related were the test items.

To gather more firsthand information on individual feelings and beliefs of the teenagers due to their experiences with parents the Rosenberg self-esteem questionnaire was used. The Rosenberg self-esteem questionnaire (RSES) reliability was originally validated in testing the self-esteem status among teenagers and adults. RSES has an adequate internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .87.)

The standardized self-report tool consisted of 10 items that measured self-esteem status of participants. The tool was rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). Those respondents who scored below 15 experienced unhealthy self-esteems between 15 and 25 are within the normal range of moderate self-esteem. Those above 25 experienced a healthy self-esteem.

Data Collection Methods and Procedures

Before proceeding to collecting data in Lari Sub County, the researcher was granted a research permit from Mount Kenya University Institutional Ethics Review Committee. Then it was taken to the National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI) to obtain a research license. Upon gaining the authorizations the researcher disseminated the questionnaires in person to the selected schools. With help of a research aide they administered

to individual sampled teenagers and peer counselors. The researcher encouraged the respondents to answer the questions independently. To complete the questionnaires the respondents were asked to read the questions and provide suitable responses for the open ended and closed set of questions.

To gather more valid data for research the sampled respondents were involved in short 5- 10 minutes' structured interviews. All respondents participating in the filling of the questionnaires and interviews were guaranteed confidentiality of the information given.

After completing the questionnaire, respondents handed it over to the researcher who will check for completion. Once the researcher filled-out all questionnaires, scoring and interpretation was done to unearth how parenting approaches influence the self-esteem of teenagers in Lari Sub County.

Data Analysis Techniques and Procedures

The process of quantitative data analysis from the questionnaires began by keying in the variables in a computer, purposely to obtain frequency counts as scored on the 5 point Likert scale. The Statistical Package for Social sciences (SPSS) software version 27 was used for the purpose of coding and analysis of data. The data collected from the participants was subjected to descriptive analysis and the results were presented in frequency tables and in percentages. First-hand Information from the participants was analyzed by use of the Pearson correlation tool. This is mainly to establish if there is any significant relationship between neglectful parenting approach and teenage self-esteem. The Analysis of qualitative data obtained through interview guides was executed according to the research objectives and then presented in a narrative mode. Finally, the researcher generated results. The data findings for the study were then interpreted, discussed and conclusions drawn from the study.

Ethical Considerations

Mount Kenya University Institutional Ethics Review Committee and the National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI) granted the researcher permission to proceed to conduct the study in Lari Sub County. The researcher sought approval and consent from the participants. All participants were given truthful information about the study and asked for their voluntary participation. The respondents were informed about the reason for the study and were assured that their information will be used anonymously for research purposes only to enhance confidentiality. Informed consent was sought from each participant before being enrolled into the research study. The participants were counseled before carrying out the process of data collection and especially those who come from homes with unique experiences with neglectful parents

FINDINGS

Table 3: Questionnaire Response Rate of the Participants

Questionnaires	Frequency	Percentage %
Responded	1200	93.75
Did not respond	80	6.25
Total	1280	100

The study targeted 1280 respondents, out of whom 1200 respondents filled and returned their questionnaires. This gave a percentage response rate of 93.75%. This was considered quite excellent on data analysis and generalization of the findings to the target population.

To obtain qualitative data the researcher carried out interviews to participants. The researcher successfully managed to engage 12 out of 15 sampled teenage peer counsellors representing a response rate of 80% and 11 out of the scheduled 15 school counsellors translating to a rate of 73%.

Table 4: Age of Teenage Participants

	Age	
	N	%
13-14 years	419	34.9%
15-16 years	420	35.0%
17-19 years	361	30.1%
Total	1200	100

The study targeted 1280 teenage respondents aged 13-19 years. Out of 1280 participants only 1200 responded. 419(34.9%) of the participants were aged between 13-14 years. (420) 35% were aged between 15-16 years and 361(30.1 %) were aged between 17-19 years.

Table 5: Sex of Teenage Participants

Sex		
	N	%
Male	639	53.2%
Female	561	46.8%
Total	1200	100

The study targeted 1280 respondents aged 13-19 years. Out of 1280 only 1200 responded. 639(53.2%) of the participants were male while 561(46.8%) of the participants were female.

Findings on Neglectful Parenting Approach and Teenage Self Esteem

The respondents were asked to give first-hand information concerning their experiences, feelings and beliefs about themselves in their encounter with neglectful parents. Other respondents during the study were the school and teenage peer counsellors who were asked to give their experiences with clients who come from neglected families. The data collected from students, teenage peer counsellors and school counsellors was subjected to descriptive, inferential and thematic analysis and results were presented as follows.

Descriptive Statistical Analysis and Findings

The analysis concerning the influence of neglectful parenting on teenage self-esteem was done to obtain the frequencies and percentages of ratings by the respondents. The results were presented as shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Participants Responses on Influence of Neglectful Parenting Approach and Self-Esteem of Participants

Neglectful Parenting	N	%
Less hostile experiences with parents	371	30.9%
Moderate experiences neglectful parents	117	9.8%
Hostile experiences with parents	712	59.3%
Total	1200	100

Table 6 represents first- hand information on the experiences of the participants with their neglectful parents. The results indicate that out of 1200 respondents (371) 30.9% of respondents had good experiences with their parents. 117(9.8%) had moderate experiences with their parents and 712(59.3%) had antagonistic experiences with their parents. Therefore, it's evident from the findings that most of the teenagers aged 13-19 years in Lari Sub County have overwhelming negative experiences from their neglectful parents.

Table 7: Self-Esteem Status of Participants

SE	N	%
Healthy Self Esteem	288	24.0%
Moderate Self Esteem	448	37.3%
Unhealthy Self Esteem	464	38.7%
Total	1200	100

Table 7 represents first- hand information on how teenagers in Lari Sub County feel and belief about themselves due the interactions with neglectful parents. The findings show that 288 (24%) of the participants portrayed a healthy self-esteem. 448(37.3%) portrayed moderate self-esteem while 464(38.7%) portrayed unhealthy self-esteem. Therefore, the majority of the teenagers have nasty experiences due to their neglectful parents thus they experienced unhealthy self-esteem compared to those from authoritarian and permissive parenting.

Therefore, from the descriptive findings its evident that most of the teenagers aged 13-19 years in Lari sub county have overwhelming negative experiences with their neglectful parents. Many parents have abandoned their parental duties and are completely not involved in the lives of teenagers. Such teenagers feel lonely, insecure, inadequate, unwanted and helpless because their emotional needs have been ignored which leads to unhealthy self-esteem among them.

Inferential Statistical Analysis and Findings

A null research hypothesis was formulated to examine if there was a significant relationship between the neglectful parenting approach and self-esteem of teenagers aged 13-19 years in Lari Sub County, Kiambu County, Kenya.

Null Hypothesis (H₀): There is no statistically significant relationship between neglectful parenting approach and self-esteem of teenagers aged 13-19 years in Lari Sub County, Kiambu County, Kenya.

First-hand Information from the participants was subjected to Pearson's correlation statistical tool to determine if there is a statistically significant relationship between neglectful parenting approach and teenage self-esteem. The results of Pearson 's correlations are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Correlations between Neglectful Parenting Approach and Self Esteem of Participants

		Correlations	
		NP	SE
NP	Pearson Correlation	1	.740**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1200	1200
SE	Pearson Correlation	.740**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1200	1200

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

Table 8 shows that 1200 participants provided first-hand information on their experiences with Neglectful parents. The value of p was .000 which is infinitely low. This was an indicator that it's true that a statistically significant relationship exists between the 2 variables. The value of r is 0.740 meaning that there is a strong positive correlation between neglectful parenting approach and self-esteem of teenagers thus a strong association exists between the 2 variables. Therefore this strong association is sufficient evidence in support of the conclusion that there is a statistically significant relationship between neglectful parenting approach and self-esteem among teenagers in Lari sub County. This is because those participants exposed to neglectful parenting strategies had unhealthy self-esteem. Therefore the null hypothesis was untrue and thus rejected.

Therefore, it's evident from the inferential findings that ($r= 0.740$), $p= .000$) which shows that there is statistically significant relationship between neglectful parenting approach and self-esteem among teenagers aged 13-19 years in Lari Sub County. Therefore, this strong association is sufficient evidence in support of the conclusion that those teenagers exposed to neglectful parenting strategies had unhealthy self-esteem. This is because their parents are known to ignore or are less involved in meeting the physical, developmental, emotional and psychological needs. Through actions and words they provide very little or no parental love, guidance, support, communication, warmth, attention or affection to the teenagers. The teenagers are left to guide, supervise and nurture themselves. This poisons their confidence for they may feel unwanted and unloved since there are no parental figures to validate their feelings and attend to their craving and hunger for unconditional love, attention and acceptance

Thematic Data Analysis and Findings

First hand qualitative information was also obtained from teenage peer counsellors and school counsellors through interviews. The information was presented in a narrative mode. The processed data indicated that most of the respondents had negative experiences with their neglectful parents which has highly impacted negatively on the self-esteem of teenagers in Lari Sub County.

Responding on their experiences with neglectful parents one of the teenage peer counsellor PCO12 during interviews attested that;

“I feel abandoned and unwanted because my parents don't care about me or support me in any way. They don't pay my school fees, buy clothes, give me guidance on what is wrong or right. They don't give me any of their time for they are always busy”

These feelings were also backed by another teenage peer counsellor respondent, PC013 who acclaimed that;

‘‘Most of the teenage clients that I meet claim that they feel lonely even in the presence of parents who are have no time for them since they are busy with their own issues like seeking money for their daily beer drinking.’’

These opinions were also backed by another teenage peer counsellor respondent, PC014 who said;

‘‘As a form 4 student I feel abandoned because my parents are not involved in my studies. They have never attended any academic clinics in school since I was in form 1.’’

These feelings were backed up by other respondent PC 015 who attested that

‘‘I feel abandoned because my mother since I went for form 1, she sent me to live with my grandmother who lives next to the school and she went to Dubai to seek a job. She does not know whether I am in form 4 class.’’’

Reacting to how neglecting parenting may have influenced self-esteem of teenagers one of the school counsellor SCR6 through interviews confirms that;

‘‘Majority of teenage clients that come for counselling services complain they feel rejected by their parents in this crucial age of teenage life challenges. They have been left to raise themselves by their fathers and mothers since primary school. Some feel lonely even in the presence of their cold parents. Since most parents have denied them support for the emotional, social and physical needs like food and medical. They feel unloved and abandoned thus they have harbored extreme negative feelings of anger and bitter and hatred towards life and themselves.’’’

Replying to how neglecting parenting may have influenced self-esteem of teenagers one of the school counsellor SCR6 through interviews confirms that;

‘‘Many of the teenage clients with indiscipline issues come from absent parents who have neglected their roles in providing attention and guidance to their teenagers’’

From the responses of most of the interviewees, it is apparent that neglectful parenting plays a significant role in negatively influencing teenage self-esteem among teenage students in Lari Sub County. This is because the abandoned teenagers feel unloved, unsupported and insecure because their needs are not being met by their absent parents.

Therefore, information obtained from descriptive, inferential and thematic analysis its evident that the negative effects of neglectful parenting to teenagers across Lari sub county is rampant for such teenagers experiencing neglectful parenting are struggling with negative feelings of unhealthy self-esteem. They feel abandoned and lonely, they believe that they are inadequate, hopeless, incompetent, insecure, and less worthy than other people. The negative feelings are a key source of psychological issues related to suicidal tendencies, alcohol abuse, teenage crime, under achievement at school and toxic interpersonal relationships. This is because they struggle to make simple healthy decisions and choices.

The findings in Lari Sub County on the negative influence of neglectful parents on the self-esteem in teenagers aged 13-19 years in Lari sub county echoes with findings from Mwakanyamale et al (2022) in Tanzania. They found out that neglectful parenting was a risk factor for psychological distress among adolescents in Dar as salaam and those that experienced childhood emotional abandonment had unhealthy self-esteem. Due to hostile

experiences with their parents they feel abandoned and unwanted which makes them susceptible to people who may try to manipulate them and take advantage of them.

Equally the results of the study in Lari Sub County were consistent with findings of Mburu (2018) in his study in Kieni West District in Nyeri County. He found out that teenagers in this region who had parents detached from their lives experienced unhealthy self-esteem compared to those whose parents were involved in their lives. This is because they feel unloved, unsupported and insecure because their needs are not being met by parents.

Summary

First-hand Information from questionnaires given to the participants indicates that out of 1200 respondents (371) 30.9% of respondents had good experiences with their parents. 117(9.8%) had moderate experiences with their parents and 712(59.3%) had hostile experiences with their parents. Therefore most of the respondents in Lari Sub County have overwhelming experiences with their neglectful parents.

Additional first-hand information obtained from participants in Lari Sub County on how they feel and belief about themselves due the interactions with their neglectful parents shows that 292 (24%) of the participants portrayed a healthy self-esteem. 457(38.8%) portrayed moderate self-esteem while 451(37.58%) portrayed unhealthy self-esteem.

Therefore, most of the respondents in Lari Sub County have overwhelming negative experiences with their neglectful parents. Many parents have abandoned their parental roles and are completely un-involved in the lives of teenagers. Such teenagers feel lonely, insecure, inadequate, unwanted and helpless because their emotional needs have been ignored which leads to unhealthy self-esteem among teenagers.

The inferential findings from the Pearson correlation tool indicated that ($r=0.740$), $p=.000$) which shows that there is statistically significant relationship between neglectful parenting approach and self-esteem among teenagers aged 13-19 years in Lari sub county. Therefore this strong association is sufficient evidence in support of the conclusion that those participants exposed to neglectful parenting strategies had unhealthy self-esteem. This is because such parents are known to ignore or are less involved in meeting the physical, developmental, emotional and psychological needs of adolescents. Through actions and words they provide very little or no parental love, guidance, support, communication, warmth, attention or affection to the teenagers. The teenagers are left to guide, supervise and nurture themselves. The hostile experiences with their parents poisons the confidence of children for they may feel unwanted and unloved since there are no parental figures to validate their feelings and attend to their craving and hunger for unconditional love, attention and acceptance.

Additional first-hand information from teenage peer counsellors and school counsellors presented in a narrative mode depicted that few respondents have good experiences with their parents. Majority of the clients are students experiencing overwhelming negative feelings due to punitive experiences with their neglectful parents. This has led to unhealthy self-esteem among the majority of teenagers.

In summary, according to the descriptive, inferential and thematic findings of the study from participants, a large percentage of teenagers in Lari sub county aged 13-19 years have overwhelming experiences with their neglectful parents. Compared to other parenting approaches the negative effects of neglectful parenting to teenagers across Lari Sub county is evident for such teenagers experiencing neglectful parenting are struggling with negative

feelings of unhealthy self-esteem. Due to hostile experiences with their parents they feel abandoned and lonely, they believe that they are inadequate, hopeless, incompetent, insecure, and less worthy than other people. The negative feelings are a key source of psychological issues related to suicidal tendencies, addictions to drugs, teenage crime, under achievement at school and fatal interpersonal relationships. This is because they struggle to make simple healthy decisions and choices in life.

Conclusion

The study targeted 1280 respondents aged 13-19 years. Out of 1280 only 1200 responded. First-hand Information from questionnaires given to the participants indicates that out of 1200 respondents (371) 30.9% of respondents had worthy experiences with their parents. 117(9.8%) had moderate experiences with their parents and 712(59.3%) had hostile experiences with their parents. Therefore most of the teenagers aged 13-19 years in Lari Sub County have overwhelming experiences with their neglectful parents. Few have lovely experiences with their parents.

The participants also gave additional information of their true feelings and beliefs concerning themselves as a result of experiences with their parents. 288(24%) of the participants were found to have a healthy self-esteem. 448 (37.3%) had moderate self-esteem and 464(38.7 %) had unhealthy self-esteem. From the descriptive findings it's true that the majority of the teenagers aged 13-19 years in Lari Sub County are experiencing unhealthy self-esteem due to neglectful, authoritarian and permissive parenting and a few are experiencing healthy self-esteem due to authoritative parenting.

From inferential findings it was evident that there is a significant relationship between neglectful parenting approaches and self-esteem of teenagers aged 13-19 years in Lari Sub County in Kiambu County.

From thematic findings presented in narrative mode from school and peer counsellors, it's evident that neglectful parenting dominates the Lari Sub County region since most of the clients had unfavorable experiences with their parents. Few have lovely experiences with their parents.

From the descriptive, thematic and inferential findings it's true that the majority of teenagers aged 13-19 years in Lari Sub County are experiencing unhealthy self-esteem because of their antagonistic experiences with their neglectful parents which has led to negative feelings and beliefs about themselves. It's also evident that a few of the teenagers have a healthy self-esteem due to their lovely experiences with their parents.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings and conclusions, the following recommendations for implementation and areas requiring further investigations were made;

Recommendations for Practice

From the findings of the study it is evident that neglectful parenting negatively influence the self-esteem of teenagers in day secondary schools in Lari Sub County.

D) The researcher recommends that parents in Lari should embrace authoritative parenting roles to build a healthy self-esteem among the teenagers. The findings of the study indicated that neglectful parenting approaches contribute to unhealthy self-esteem among teenagers within the region. This is because parents who responsibly carry out their roles in guiding,

protecting, supervising, nurturing, and embracing positive discipline create a warm and safe environment. As a result of lovely experiences with their parent's teenagers from such homes feel unconditionally loved and accepted which boosts their self-esteem, since their needs are being met.

On the other hand, parents who have chronically neglected their teenagers' emotional, social and physical needs create feelings of emotional rejection to teenagers which poison their self-esteem. Adolescents rejected by parents crave for security, attention, unconditional love and acceptance. This is because they have been left to raise themselves when one or both parents have no time for care, guidance, support and to respond to their emotional, physical and psychological needs.

Such negative feelings are a key source of psychological issues related to suicidal tendencies, addictions to drugs, teenage bullying, teenage sex, teenage crime, under achievement at school and poisonous interpersonal relationships. This is because they struggle to make simple healthy decisions and choices in their life.

ii) The researcher also recommends that teachers in secondary schools should learn to consider the parenting experiences of teenagers when dealing with their indiscipline issues for most come from homes with different parenting strategies. Teachers should be aware that abandoned teenagers experience negative feelings about themselves and other people. Moreover, such teenagers have unhealthy self-esteem thus struggle with negative feelings and beliefs about themselves as a result of hostile experiences with their parents. This is a key source of psychological issues related to addictions to alcohol, pornography, teenage sex, bullying, teenage crime, terrible academic grades and engaging in dangerous and lethal interpersonal relationships like lesbianism and gaysm. Therefore, helping them to rebuild their self-esteem is a viable remedy to such rampant vices among teenagers due to psychological issues as a result of their experiences with parents using different parenting strategies.

iii) The researcher also recommends that school counsellors, policy makers in the education sector and Non-Governmental organizations should initiate self-esteem enhancement programs in primary and secondary schools in Lari Sub County. Affected students by neglectful parenting should be helped to learn how to cope with their overwhelming negative feelings and beliefs about themselves and top up their self-esteem since you cannot change the parents and their parenting approaches.

iv) The researcher also recommends the need for training programs for equipping guidance and counselling teachers and peer counsellors in secondary schools on skills to help their teens from neglectful homes to adapt to their homes. This is despite the negative parenting experiences because they cannot change their parents but can only top up their self-esteem. This is because a person can always re-build their self-esteem.

v) From the findings of this study, the researcher recommends that parents be educated on effective authoritative parenting skills. This may be done during parents meetings or academic clinics organized by the school administrators. This is purposely to educate them on the need to embrace authoritative parenting strategies and attitudes towards the teenagers to uplift their self-esteem.

Recommendations for Theory

The researcher recommends that future research may be carried out to establish if neglectful parenting is the main source of unhealthy self – esteem among teenagers aged 13- 19 years compared to other factors like peers, authoritarian parenting, teachers, poverty and poor academic performance.

Recommendations for Further Research:

- i) This study only investigated the influence of parenting approaches on self-esteem among teenagers in day secondary schools whereby as day scholars they have frequent experiences with their parents. More research may be necessary in boarding schools where students have less time for encounters with their parents and spend most of their time in school.
- ii) This study only investigated the influence of parents and their parenting strategies on self-esteem among teenagers. Further research may be required to assess the influence of teachers on self-esteem of teenagers for it could be a new source of information.
- iii) The researcher recommends that future research may be carried out to obtain new knowledge to establish if there could be a relationship between negative teenage behaviors like addictions to drugs, alcohol, pornography, bullying, teenage crime, lesbianism, gaysm and unhealthy self – esteem due to neglectful parenting. This could be a new source of knowledge for counselling psychologists.

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