THE INFLUENCE OF PARENTING STYLES AND SELF- CONCEPT ON STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN MATHEMATICS

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ABSTRACT

Poor performance in Mathematics over the years by students has raised many questions which can only be answered through research. The need for research against the background of the importance of Mathematics in the curriculum and career placement cannot therefore be overemphasized. This study was designed to respond to the concern raised due to low achievement of some of the students in Mathematics. The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of parenting styles and self concept on students' achievement in Mathematics among secondary schools. Other variables investigated were gender differences, category of school, family land size and parental levels of education. This study was modeled on the cognitive social learning theory by Bandura (1977), which is built on the premise that behavior is learned through observation. A casual comparative research design was used and a sample of 214 respondents consisting of 96 boys and 108 girls drawn from 11 secondary schools was used. Stratified random sampling was used to select respondents from 11 out of 20 schools. The respondents in the study were form three students in Kaplamai Division in Trans-Nzoia District. A total of 214 students responded to the questionnaires. Scores in Mathematics were extracted from internal examination records of schools which participated in the study. The data collected was analyzed using means, standard deviations, Pearson product moment correction, t-test and one way ANOVA. The findings from the study indicated that Authoritative and Authoritarian parenting styles have significant influence on students' self concept and achievement in Mathematics; the values obtained were (t= 6.58 and 4.83) for self concept and (t = 7.51 and 5.23) for Mathematics achievement at $P \leq 0.05$. Gender differences were found to have significant influence both on Mathematics achievement and Mathematics self concept of students. The values were (t = 10.21and 8.46) at $P \leq 0.05$ respectively. Male students had positive Mathematics self concept and were better achievers in Mathematics compared to female students .Parental levels of education and school categories registered significant relationships with students' self concept and achievement in Mathematics. Parental level of education versus self concept (F = 6.18); school categories versus self concept (F = 14.05). Parental levels of education versus Mathematics achievement (F = 9.05); school categories versus Mathematics achievement (F = 12.08) respectively. However no significant relationships were found between school categories, family land size with students' achievement in Mathematics and self concept. No significant relationships were found between Neglectful and Permissive parenting style with students self concept and achievement in Mathematics. From the findings it was concluded that Authoritative and Authoritarian parenting styles as well as self concept have significant influences on students' achievement in Mathematics; parental levels of education and school categories have significant relationships with students' achievement in Mathematics and their self concept. It was therefore recommended that parents, teachers and all stakeholders in Mathematics education should strive to foster positive self concept of students and make attempts to eradicate stereotyped roles which promote gender disparity in Mathematics achievement.