

THE INFLUENCE OF PARENTING STYLES ON SELF CONCEPT AND  
CAREER CHOICE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN  
MACHAKOS COUNTY IN KENYA

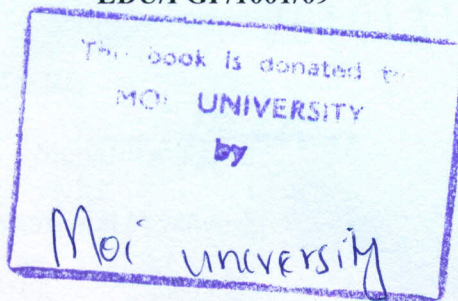
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EDU/PGP/1001/09



A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION MOI  
UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR  
THE AWARD OF MASTERS OF EDUCATION DEGREE IN EDUCATIONAL  
PSYCHOLOGY



2014

## ABSTRACT

Parents are the most crucial factor in the formation of children's personalities and self-concept and that career choices can be regarded as the "implementation" of these qualities. The family is a place in which children learn to interpret reality. Parents act as significant interpreters for children information's about the world and children abilities. The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of parenting styles on children self-concept and career choice among secondary school students. The study assessed the influence of parenting styles in shaping their children educational and career decisions. This study covered 16 secondary schools in Machakos municipality with a student population of 6000. A sample of 4 schools representing 20% of all the institutes was involved in the pilot study. The remaining 12 schools were involved in the study. From each of the 12 schools, a sample of 30 students per school was selected, giving 360 students. The study was quantitative in nature. The research design was ex-post facto and was based on three theories: Attachment theory, Carl Rogers Self concept theory, and Social cognitive Learning theory. Simple random sampling was used to sample respondents in 12 schools. Questionnaires were used to collect data from form three and form four students. The validity of the research instruments was established through discussion with the supervisors and fellow students and reliability through pilot study in four schools in the area of study. The data was analyzed using SPSS computer package. Numerical data on variables was collected and subjected to statistical analysis. Non-parametric statistics like correlations were computed to check the significance of the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variables. The study found that majority of the parents in Machakos municipality practice authoritative and authoritarian parenting style. Further it was found that there was a significant correlation between parenting style and self-concept. Parenting style has been found to predict child's well-being in the domains of social competence, academic performance, psychosocial development, and problem solving. The study found that the students have confidence with themselves as well as they are ready to be guided by their parents. The analysis indicated that there was no significant relationship between parenting styles and career choice among secondary school students. The results indicated that student with authoritative and authoritarian parents choose engineering, medicine and business which are in investigative, realistic and social themes. It was found there was a positive relationship between self concept and students career choice. The findings indicate that parents expect a lot from their children although they were not involved in choosing of career. The study concluded that the most practiced parenting style is authoritative and the least practiced is the neglectful parenting style. The study recommended that, the government should enforce the children act 2001 to control the neglect of children and enhance commitment to child education; career development should be enhanced in secondary schools through training career masters who have the knowledge to counsel and guide students on educational and career choices, education policy would require to consider parenting styles and use mass education to create awareness on parenting issues in education and to improve self- concept of learner's, parents should be counseled to change to authoritative parenting.