

Relationship Between Types Of Parental Attachment, Levels Of Self-Esteem, And Perceived Academic Performance Among Students In Mixed-Day Secondary Schools In Masinga Sub-County In Machakos County, Kenya

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Abstract:

This study investigated the relationship between types of parental attachment, levels of self-esteem and academic performance among students in Mixed-day secondary schools in Masinga Sub- County, Machakos County, Kenya. The objectives included assessing types of parental attachment, examining self-esteem levels, assessing levels of academic performance, and establishing the relationship between these variables.

Materials and Methods: *The study was informed by Maslow's theory of need and Bowlby's attachment theory and adopted correlational research design. The target population comprised 4,796 students, with a sample size of 356 participants selected through simple random sampling. Parental Attachment Questionnaire, the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale, and Demographic Questionnaires were used to collect data. Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 25) software, descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) and inferential statistics (Pearson's product-moment correlation analysis) were used to analyze data.*

Results: *The study found that most (53.3%, n = 213) of the participants scored anxious parental attachment, 25.4% (n = 121) were at avoidance parental attachment, and 21.3% (n = 105) had secure parental attachment. It was also found that 70.5% (n = 281) of the participants scored low self-esteem, 6.7% (n = 27) were at high self-esteem and 43.6% (n = 174) were average in academic performance, 42.9% (n = 171) had low academic performance, while 13.5% (n = 54) had a high academic performance.*

Conclusion: *The study established a negative but significant relationship ($r = -.852, p = .000$) between avoidance parental attachment and self-esteem. There was a moderate significant relationship ($r = -.313, p = .000 \leq 0.05$) between anxious parental attachment and self-esteem. There was a high positive significant relationship ($r = .766, p = .000 \leq 0.05$) between secure parental attachment and self-esteem. There was a strong positive significant relationship ($r = .630, p = .003, \leq 0.05$) between secure attachment style and perceived academic performance. The study recommended that parents should listen to their children and be fully present in their lives. The parents should be made aware of the crucial stage of development of their adolescents and fully collaborate with teachers in school activities whenever they are called upon.*

Keyword; *Parental Attachment, Self-esteem, Academic Performance.*

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I. Introduction

The quality of parental attachment plays a crucial role in shaping adolescents self-esteem growth that significantly facilitate good academic progress (Veiga, 2015). Attachment is the inclination to form intensely emotional and loving ties to significant others (Bowlby, 2014). Rabbani et al. (2014), postulate that parental attachment is the incessant affectionate and enduring bond of strong intensity that exists between the parent and the child in the course of parenting. Parental attachment is an innate human ability that creates strong emotions and relationships with one's caregiver to meet their basic needs. This, in turn, helps a child develop a schema that helps in attaining a balanced life (Jeremy, 2014). Attachment styles may be categorized as secure, anxious, and avoidant (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2013). Some key elements of secure parental attachment comprise comfort, safety, and support for an individual from childhood (Gaik et al., 2013)

Secure parental attachment is developed by parental presence and involvement while imparting values and having the ability to make the child feel safe and protected by being responsive, available and helpful even when out of sight. This gives confidence and enhances the development of high self-esteem while at the same

time improving overall performance for the individual. The presence of a parental figure provides a secure base that allows interaction with the environment, it provides knowledge, competence, and a balanced relationship. Parental attachment styles are grouped as secure, anxious, and, avoidant (McLeod, 2020). According to Yuanzhen (2021), when the attachment is secure, the individual develops resilience to withstand social and environmental challenges in the future. Therefore, as Bonache and Pons (2016) state, it becomes easy for people with secure attachment to open up and express themselves and count on others.

The Avoidant attachment styles, also known as dismissive occur where individuals perceive themselves as hyper-independent and loners (Cihan and Korkut, 2014) and as the term suggests, they avoid being in the company of others. Due to the belief that they do not deserve to be loved, these individuals circumvent relationships. According to Berry and Babb (2021), these are persons who are habitually suspicious in relationships, have difficulty articulating their feelings, and withdraw whenever they feel susceptible. Whitten (2020) explains that the avoidant attachment style is formed when the primary caregiver is absent and the child is left alone to self-soothe and overcome challenges on their own. The Anxious attachment style develops when a caregiver responds sensitively to the child but is regularly distracted from caregiving. Also known as anxious preoccupied attachment, it is an insecure attachment style that manifests due to inconsistent parenting such that the child's needs are met and ignored in waves (Wedekind et al., 2012). Levitt and Leonard (2015) describe the anxious attachment as occurring when the child develops a conflicting behaviour that is portrayed as dependent and clingy but also rejecting towards the caregiver. In adulthood, such persons have a low self-esteem and are unsure of their self-worth. They are afraid of abandonment and constantly need reassurance, making them act clingy and obsessive in relationships.

According to Fang (2016), self-esteem and secure parental attachment are crucial in boosting academic performance. One of the early proponents of self-esteem, Rosenberg (1965) describes self-esteem as the overall positive or negative attitude towards oneself; this means; the extent to which an individual respects and believes in themselves to be valuable; self-accepting, and self-respecting. Lim and Lee (2017) further argue that self-esteem is the evaluation of an individual's beliefs, as well as attitudes toward one's abilities and values. Self-esteem is a psychological attribute that assists adolescents overcome stressors such as anxiety, depression, and physical, psychological, and social stress. It also helps improve game performance and alleviates the stress of athletic and academic performance. Various factors may influence self-esteem, these include: environment, age, gender, genetics, health, self-comparison, and parental attachment and involvement (Joeng & Lee, 2017). An individual can have either high or low self-esteem. High self-esteem is the positive self-evaluation, of a self-accepting attitude and life as a whole, while low self-esteem is a person's negative perception about oneself and life in general. Some indicators of high self-esteem include; openness to criticism, accepting mistakes, comfort with one's physical appearance, positive attitudes towards life, belief in one's abilities, and rejecting manipulative attempts of others. Individuals with low self-esteem may exhibit feelings of failure, uselessness, lack of self-confidence, inability to cope with one's poor performance, and feeling inferior to others. They are easily irritated, and have a tendency to engage in addictive or avoidance behaviour, they struggle to say no and often engage in self-defeating thoughts (Kernis & Goldstein, 2020). Adolescents with high self-esteem are more likely to perform better and have more self-confidence than those with low self-esteem. They are more goal-oriented and work fervently towards achieving good academic performance (Migunde et al., 2016).

Academic performance, as defined by Obi (2020), is the result of learning made possible by a teacher. Afen et al. (2022) further amplifies this by submitting that academic performance is the acquisition of skills and knowledge by students and their utilization in the various works of life in the human society. A subject grade point average (GPA) is used to evaluate students based on the different levels of expertise they demonstrate in their topics. Poor academic performance may lead to maladjusted behaviors and the eventual drop-out from school due to overwhelming feelings of shame due to failure. Students with secure parental attachment and high self-esteem will avoid decisions that will negatively affect them even in the event of poor performance in school (Mbagaya et al., 2016). The relationship between parental attachment, self-esteem, and academic performance among students are crucial areas of concern in the field of psychology.

The combined effect of secure parental attachment and high self-esteem can create a supportive and encouraging environment that significantly enhances a student's academic performance. According to Mikulincer (2012), secure parental attachment provides emotional security and support, while high self-esteem boosts confidence and motivation, leading to a holistic improvement in academic outcomes (Moretti, 2004). The quality of a young adult's interactions with parents and peers can have a substantial impact on their levels of self-esteem and behavior, as they work towards being independent of their primary attachment figures (Rosenberg, 2015). Self-esteem is crucial at any stage of development, especially for teenagers in secondary school. Psychology is becoming more interested in parental attachment since it is thought to be the basis for young people's development of self-worth and emotional control. Having a stable bond with one's parents is strongly linked to having higher self-esteem (Karreman & Vingerhoets 2012; Wilkinson, 2004). Research by Gnilka et al. 2013; Gamble &

Roberts (2005) showed that low self-esteem was found to be common among those who reported insecure attachment.

In Canada, research was conducted by Weva (2018), investigating the development of self-esteem in relation to parental and peer attachment among low-income urban youth. The participants were 59 youths (females = 25, males 29). Multiple linear regressions (one for each domain of self-esteem) analysis was used. According to the findings of the study, among the attachment figures, only father attachment was a significant predictor of perceptions of social competence, with higher scores on father attachment (secure) associated with higher scores on self-esteem ($\beta = .57$, $t = 2.61$, $p = .01$). The study recommended that the parent-child relationship should be particularly emphasized among young adults. Similarly, Shen et al., (2021) conducted a study in the USA titled "a multiple-mediator model of attachment, self-esteem, and psychological distress." 2,373 individuals were the intended group. 1708 (72%) of the participants finished 95% of the questions and were kept for further examination. Of the participants, 1.3% ($n = 25$) did not disclose their gender, 76.2% ($n = 1302$) were female, and 22.3% ($n = 381$) were male. The mean age of the participants was 29.89, ranging from 18 to 89 years old ($SD = 12.44$). A total of 66.3% ($n = 1,133$) of participants described themselves as White/European American, 8.7% ($n = 148$) as African American, 10.2% ($n = 175$) as Asian/Pacific Islander, 2.6% ($n = 44$) as American Indian/Native American, 7.3% ($n = 124$) as biracial or multiracial, 3.6% ($n = 61$) as other race, while 1.3% ($n = 23$) did not specify their identity. Based on the findings of the study, it was shown that attachment (secure) was positively correlated with self-esteem ($r = .38$, $p < .001$) and negatively but significantly correlated with adult attachment anxiety ($r = -.26$, $p < .001$) and avoidance ($r = -.45$, $p < .001$) This indicated the close relationship between attachment and self-esteem development.

In India, Jamil (2020) conducted a study on attachment styles and self-esteem among adolescents. The sample of the research consisted of 180 secondary school students; in which 90 of them were males and 90 were females, with age ranges between 12 to 16 years ($M=13.27$, $SD=1.13$). Findings indicate a noteworthy correlation between secure attachment styles and self-esteem ($r = .118$, $P = .116$), there was a weak positive correlation ($r = 0.016$, $p = 0.826$) between anxious attachment and self-esteem. Also, there was a negative but significant correlation ($r = -0.49$, $p = 0.517$) between avoidant attachment and self-esteem among the participants.

In Iran, Beigi and Rahimi (2022), conducted a study that looked at the relationship between peer and parental attachment and self-esteem prediction in teenagers from a cultural viewpoint. The sample consisted of 314 high school students, of which 161 were female and 153 were male. The average age of the male and female participants was 16.82 and 16.81, respectively. The association between self-esteem and attachment to parents was evaluated using Pearson's correlation coefficient. The findings showed a substantial positive correlation between mother trust and self-esteem ($p < 0.01$; $R = 0.292$), communication with mother ($p < 0.01$; $R = 0.241$), trust in father ($p < 0.01$; $R = 0.195$), communication with father ($p < 0.05$; $R = 0.119$), trust in peers ($p < 0.01$; $R = 0.155$), and communication with peers ($p < 0.05$; $R = 0.120$). Moreover, alienation from peers ($p < 0.01$; $R = -0.161$), father ($p < 0.01$; $R = -0.198$), and mother ($p < 0.01$; $R = -0.268$) were substantially correlated negatively with self-esteem. This study by Weva (2018) was conducted among low-income urban youth, and it does not directly evaluate the relationship between parental attachment and self-esteem among students, and this further justified this current study. All these studies took place outside the context of Kenya, and as such, results may not be generalized in the Kenya setting.

In Nigeria, a study was done by Obi et al. (2020), examining the influence of parental attachment on students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study. The population of the study comprised 540 public secondary school students, parents, and teachers in Kaduna State, Nigeria. 25 students were randomly sampled from each of the 2 selected schools from the zones. A stratified sampling technique was used to select the population from the subgroups between the age range of 10- 14 years and 15-19 years old. The study sampled 100 students from the target population. The findings of the study showed that parents do understand their role in their children's academic achievement which enhances self-esteem among the students. The F-ratio is (64.670) at 0.000, DF 2, and at the level of 0.05. Additional findings indicated that the level of parents' effective attachment collaboration has a significant difference with the teacher and school management to enhance senior secondary school students' performance, The F-ratio is (161.28) at 99 of 3 and the level of 0.05 at P 0.000. The study recommended that parents through PTA meetings should collaborate with the teachers in motivating students to improve their self-esteem and academic performance. This study examined the influence of parental attachment on students' academic achievement, whereas the current study aimed at investigating the relationship between types of parental attachment, self-esteem and academic performance among students in mixed Day Secondary Schools Masinga in Machakos County, Kenya.

In Kenya, Majimbo (2017) carried out a study on the influence of attachment styles on academic performance of adolescents in high-cost private secondary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study had 4 boys' only schools, 5 girls' only schools and 20 mixed schools. The sample size of the study was 161 students, equivalent to 10% of 6,761 target population. According to the outcomes of the study, Spearman's rank correlation coefficients of attachment style on academic performance indicated that there was a statistically

significant inverse relationship between academic performance and avoidant attachment style ($r = -.203, p < .05$), anxious attachment style ($r = -.239, p < .05$). Though, the correlation between secure attachment style, although positive, was not statistically significant ($r = .117, p > .05$). The author noted that as insecure attachment increased, academic performance declined

Similarly in Kenya, another study was carried out by Wairimu et al. (2016), which focused on the analysis of parental involvement and self-esteem among secondary school students in Kiini West Sub-County, Nyeri County, Kenya. The study used the mixed methods research design where qualitative and quantitative methodology were combined. Quantitative data was collected from 200 participants selected from 8 schools using a probability sampling method. Qualitative data was collected from 8 participants selected from 8 schools using the purposive sampling method. Also, 36% of these students were in 4 single-sex boarding schools, 40% in day/mixed schools and 24% in day /boarding mixed schools. The findings of the study revealed that there was a significant and moderate positive correlation between parental involvement and self-esteem among adolescents ($r = .203, p = 0.004$), indicating that the more parental involvement increased the higher the self-esteem. More findings also showed a significant correlation between parental attachment and self-esteem among adolescents in secondary schools in the Kiini West sub-county ($p = 0.002$). The study recommended that stakeholders in education needed to identify and understand the psychological needs of adolescents. It was observed that parental involvement can be encouraged by organizing parenting workshops. This was a mixed method of research, whereas, this present study specifically employed quantitative research design.

Studies have tended to link parental attachment with the development of self-esteem. However, these studies were conducted in different locations with different demographics. The findings of these studies did not establish the relationship between parental attachment, self-esteem, and academic performance among secondary school students. Due to limited studies, the current study filled this gap by investigating the relationship between types of parental attachment, levels of self-esteem, and academic performance among secondary school students in Mixed-day secondary schools in the Masinga sub-county in Machakos County, Kenya.

II. Theoretical Framework – Maslow’s Theory Of Need

Maslow (1943) developed the Theory of Need. He submits that human behaviour is driven by needs. The hierarchy of needs can be compared to a pyramid. At the lowest level of the pyramid, he placed the basic needs. These life-sustaining sets of needs are universal, and they are placed at the bottom of the pyramid, while the need for self-actualization and transcendence are shown at the top of the pyramid (Maslow, 1943).

According to Maslow (1943), there are several necessities that a human being must fulfil. Needs are significant because they reveal an individual's inner state of mind and its subsequent outward expression. Tensions may arise when needs are not met. Consequently, tension makes room for action, and action leads to the achievement of a goal. Human needs, according to Maslow, are dynamic and always evolving. He explained that unmet needs act as a magnet, compelling people to take action to satisfy them, and if, for some reason, these needs are not met, an individual may develop maladaptive behavior. According to Maslow, safety needs come before esteem needs. An individual must first feel secure, physically, emotionally, and psychologically before they can aspire to satisfy esteem needs. He argues that human beings require both internal self-respect and external esteem. The satisfaction of the various stages of need is necessary for a person to develop a higher level of self-actualization. The crux of the theory is that basic needs must be met before an individual can become motivated to achieve higher-level needs. Maslow in his hypothesis articulates five basic needs which are: physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, self-esteem needs, and the need for self-actualization (Trivedi & Mehta, 2019).

According to Maslow (1954), the first set of needs are physiological or biological, they are the intrinsic needs for sustaining human life. These needs comprise food, shelter, clothing, water, rest, air, sleep, and sexual satisfaction. These basic human needs lie at the lowest level in the hierarchy of needs since they have priority over all others. The physiological needs cannot be postponed for long, and until they are met, other needs can hardly be met. The second need is the need for safety. Human beings do not only desire to have their physiological needs met but they also need to feel safe and protected from any harm. The need for safety and security is intrinsic. This need is crucial for the preservation of life and properties and guard against attacks either from people or animals (Deckers, 2018). Third in the hierarchy is the need for love and belonging Maslow (1954). Humans are social creatures by nature, and they require interaction and socialization from other members of their species. Socialization influences behaviors in reaching out to other humans. There is the intrinsic craving to be loved, and cared for, by others.

Next in the hierarchy of needs is self-esteem. According to Maslow, esteem need drive people to pursue their goals in life. These needs fall under two categories; those related to competence, respect, confidence, and self-worth, and those related to status, reputation, acknowledgment, and praise from others. This is a form of inflated self-importance that must be appeased (Maslow, 1987).

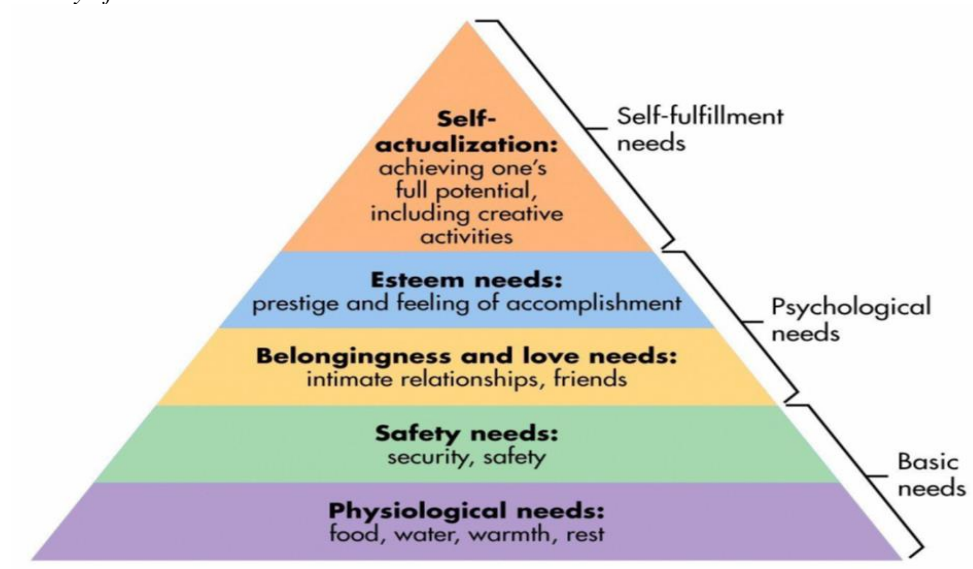
On top of the pyramid is the need for self-actualization. This is a need for growth. To be happy in the end, human beings need to strive to contribute towards the ultimate progress of society. Humans want to become

everything that they can be and want to use their abilities to the fullest. A human being wants to be challenged and to do something exceptional in their life or in their field of expertise. Even though self-actualization is possible for everyone, many people never get to this stage (Maslow, 1987).

In the figure below, Maslow categorizes the hierarchy into 2 distinguishable levels: levels 1, 2, and 3 (lower-order needs level) and levels 4 and 5 are the higher-order needs level (Maslow, 1987).

Figure 1

Maslow Hierarchy of need



Source: Deckers (2018).

The first level of needs is deficiency needs (D-needs), while the upper level is known as growth or being needs (B-needs). D-needs emerge because of certain deprivation and this pushes people to satisfy their unmet needs. The longer the needs go unmet, the more determined the desire to satisfy them (Maslow, 1954). Therefore, parental attachment is a D-need and will determine how an individual progresses toward attaining self-esteem growth. Students who have secure parental attachment and parental presence have a likelihood of developing high self-esteem. A student who struggles with self-esteem may not function optimally in social, intellectual, and academic settings. Being confident and with secure parental attachment is essential for both academic success and meaningful engagement in school activities (Trivedi & Mehta, 2019).

III. Methodology

The epistemological framework of this study was based on the positivist approach. This research approach has the advantage of having universal principles and observable facts that may be recorded (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The philosophy of positivism is based on the notion that science offers a logical way of discovering truth. This strategy features a high level of structured data gathering and a big sample size, and it uses a quantitative way to gather and measure data. Collins (2010) argues that positivism believes that factual knowledge is gained through observation and measurement. In light of this epistemological stance, the focus of this study was on the relationship between types of parental attachment, levels of self-esteem, and academic performance. This study adopted the correlational research design. The correlational research shows the degree of association between research variables rather than a causative connection. The study employed multi-stage sampling techniques which were: proportionate stratified sampling technique and simple random sampling technique. The target population comprised 4,796 students, with a sample size of 356 participants selected through simple random sampling. Parental Attachment Questionnaire, the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale, and Demographic Questionnaires were used to collect data. Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 25) software, descriptive statistics like frequencies and percentages, and inferential statistics like the Pearson's product-moment correlation analysis were used to analyze data. Based on data collection procedures, the researcher obtained the required approvals before going to the field. This included getting a research letter of authorization from the Tangaza University Institutional Scientific Ethics Committee (TU-ISERC), which is part of the college's director of post-graduate studies duties. The researcher obtained Research Permit from the National Council of Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI). To collect data from the study's locations, the researcher sought for permission from the County education office and the County Commissioner. Permission was also sought from

the principals of respective schools and parents. The respondents were also requested to sign a consent form. Ethical considerations were strictly adhered to.

IV. Findings

Demographic Characteristics

This section presents the findings from the demographic characteristics of participants of this study. These are; age, gender and level of education. The findings are tabulated in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

	Frequency	Percent
Age range		
13-14 years	36	9.0
15-16 years	307	76.9
17-18 years	56	14.0
Gender		
Male	196	49.1
Female	200	50.1
Level of Education		
Form 1	154	38.6
Form 2	97	24.3
Form 3	81	20.3
Form 4	67	16.8

As seen in table 1, findings revealed that most of the participants of this study (76.9%, n = 307) were between 15-16 years old, while the lowest ages range (9.0%, n = 36) were between 13-14 years old. Gender revealed that the highest participants were females (50.1%, n = 200) then followed by the males, being at 49.1% (n =196). Levels of education indicated that 38.6% (n = 154) of the students who participated in this study were in Form 1, and the lowest class was the Form 4 (16.8%, n = 67)..

Establishing the Relationship Between Types of Parental Attachment, Levels of Self-Esteem, and Perceived Academic Performance among students in Mixed-day secondary schools in Masinga Sub- County in Machakos County, Kenya

The Pearson coefficient correlation analysis was conducted to realize this objective, and the findings are tabulated in Table 2.

Table 2

Relationship Between Avoidance, Anxious, Secure Parental Attachment and Self-Esteem

		Avoidance parental attachment	self-esteem
Avoidance parental attachment	Pearson Correlation	1	-.852**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	399	399
self-esteem	Pearson Correlation	-.852**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	399	399
		Anxious parental attachment	self-esteem
Anxious parental attachment	Pearson Correlation	1	-.313**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	399	399
self-esteem	Pearson Correlation	-.313**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	399	399
		Secure parental attachment	self-esteem
Secure parental attachment	Pearson Correlation	1	.766**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	399	399
self-esteem	Pearson Correlation	.766**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	399	399

Findings as shown in table 2, indicated that there was a negative but significant relationship ($r = -.852$,

p = .000) between avoidance parental attachment and self-esteem among students in Mixed-day secondary schools in Masinga Sub- County in Machakos County, Kenya. This shows an inverse relationship, in which an increase in avoidance parental attachment leads to a decrease in self-esteem.

Findings revealed that there was a weak negative but significant relationship ($r = -.313, p = .000 \leq 0.05$) between anxious parental attachment and self-esteem among students in Mixed-day secondary schools in Masinga Sub- County in Machakos County, Kenya. These finding points that an increase in anxious parental attachment leads to a decrease in self-esteem. Also, there was a high positive significant relationship ($r = .766, p = .000 \leq 0.05$) between secure parental attachment and self-esteem among students in Mixed-day secondary schools in Masinga Sub-County in Machakos County, Kenya. Based on this finding, this suggests that the higher the secure parental attachment, the higher the self-esteem among the students

Also, the Pearson coefficient correlation analysis was conducted to investigate the relationship between parental attachment styles (avoidance, anxious, secure) and academic performance among students in Mixed-day secondary schools in Masinga Sub-County in Machakos County, Kenya. The findings are tabulated in Table 3.

Table 3

<i>Relationship Between Avoidance, Anxious, Secure Parental Attachment and Perceived Academic Performance</i>			
		Avoidance Attachment Style	Perceived Academic Performance
Avoidance Attachment Style	Pearson Correlation	1	-.130**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	399	399
Perceived Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	-.130**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	399	399
		Anxious Attachment Style	Perceived Academic Performance
Anxious Attachment Style	Pearson Correlation	1	-.105*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.035
	N	399	399
Perceived Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	-.105*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.035	
	N	399	399
		Secure Attachment Style	Perceived Academic Performance
Secure Attachment Style	Pearson Correlation	1	.630
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	399	399
Perceived Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	.630	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	399	399

As observed in table 3, there was a weak negative but significance relationship ($r = -.130, p = .001, \leq 0.05$) between avoidance attachment style and perceived academic performance. This finding suggests that there is an inverse relationship, and this means that an increase in avoidance attachment style leads to a corresponding decrease in perceived academic performance.

There was a weak negative but significance relationship ($r = -.105, p = .035, \leq 0.05$) between anxious attachment style and perceived academic performance. This demonstrates that an inverse relationship; implying that an increase in anxious attachment style leads to a decrease in perceived academic performance. Also, there was a strong positive significant relationship ($r = .630, p = .003, \leq 0.05$) between secure attachment style and perceived academic performance. This finding shows a direct relationship, which implies that an increase in one variable leads to an increase in another variable. Thus, an increase in secure attachment style leads to an increase in perceived academic performance.

V. Discussion

Relationship Between Types Of Parental Attachment, Levels Of Self-Esteem, And Perceived Academic Performance Among Students In Mixed-Day Secondary Schools In Masinga Sub-County In Machakos County, Kenya

This study found that there was a negative but significant relationship ($r = -.852, p = .000$) between avoidance parental attachment and self-esteem among students in Mixed-day secondary schools in Masinga Sub-County in Machakos County, Kenya. It was also found that there was a moderate negative significant relationship ($r = -.313, p = .000 \leq 0.05$) between anxious parental attachment and self-esteem among students in Mixed-day

secondary schools in Masinga Sub- County in Machakos County, Kenya. Also, there was a high positive significant relationship ($r = .766, p = .000 \leq 0.05$) between secure parental attachment and self-esteem. In addition, there was a weak negative but significant relationship ($r = -.130, p = .001, \leq 0.05$) between avoidance attachment style and perceived academic performance. There was a weak negative but significant relationship ($r = -.105, p = .035, \leq 0.05$) between anxious attachment style and perceived academic performance. Also, there was a strong positive significant relationship ($r = .630, p = .003, \leq 0.05$) between secure attachment style and perceived academic performance.

The findings on avoidance parental attachment, self-esteem, and perceived academic performance suggest an inverse relationship, which means that an increase in one variable leads to a corresponding decrease in another variable; this implies that an increase in avoidance behavior leads to a decrease in self-esteem and perceived academic performance. Based on the moderate negative significant relationship between anxious parental attachment and self-esteem, this result pointed out that an increase in the anxious pattern of attachment leads to a decrease of self-esteem and perceived academic performance. Also, the finding on high positive significant relationship between secure parental attachment, self-esteem, and perceived academic performance, possibly suggests that an increase in secure parental attachment leads to a corresponding increase in self-esteem as well as an increase in perceived academic performance. Thus, teenagers' development of close bonds with their parents enhances the possibility of building self-esteem and this may positively contribute to good academic performance.

The findings of this current study confirmed the study by Weva (2018) in Canada, investigating the development of self-esteem in relation to parental and peer attachment among low-income urban youth. Although regression analysis was used in the study, and based on the findings of the study, among the attachment figures, only father attachment (secure) was a significant predictor of perceptions of social competence, with higher scores on father attachments (secure) associated with higher scores on self-esteem ($\beta = .57, t = 2.61, p = .01$). The current study's findings corroborated the findings of Shen et al. (2021) in the USA. According to the findings of the study, it was shown that attachment (secure) was positively correlated with self-esteem ($r = .38, p < .001$) and negatively but significantly correlated with attachment anxiety ($r = -.26, p < .001$) and avoidance ($r = -.45, p < .001$).

The current study's findings corroborated the findings of Jamil (2020) in India. Report indicated a noteworthy correlation between secure attachment style and self-esteem ($r = .118, P = .116$). There was a negative but significant correlation ($r = -0.49, p = 0.517$) between avoidant attachment and self-esteem among the participants. Also, there was a weak positive correlation ($r = 0.016, p = 0.826$) between anxious attachment and self-esteem. However, this differs from an aspect of the current study result which found a negative significant relationship ($r = -.313, p = .000 \leq 0.05$) between anxious parental attachment and self-esteem among students.

The findings of this present study confirmed the findings by Majimbo (2017) in Kenya. The study established that there was a statistically significant inverse relationship between academic performance and avoidant attachment style ($r = -.203, p < .05$), anxious attachment style ($r = -.239, p < .05$). Though, the correlation between secure attachment style, although positive, was not statistically significant ($r = .117, p > .05$), and this disagrees with the current study, which showed that there was statistically significant relationship ($r = .630, p = .003, \leq 0.05$) between secure attachment style and academic performance.

It can be observed in this current study that, in different degrees, all the attachment styles (secure, avoidance and anxious) were distributed among the participants. Attachment is an interactive process of emotional communication that likely influences psychological and cognitive growth of teenagers which possibly determine how they develop relationships later in life. Individuals with secure attachments to parents are likely to show good academic performance. Secure attachment also enhances self-esteem which possibly contributes to good academic performance.

According to Wang (2021), academic achievement is one of the most important predictors of success. Most parents believe that the greater one's academic performance, the better one's chances of success. The different levels of academic performance may be attributed to the different types of parental attachment. Previous research has shown that students who have a secure attachment with their parents tend to get better grades than those who do not. Teenagers that have a secure attachment are more confident and willing to explore their environment, and they also exhibit more interest and attention to learning, which improves their academic achievement (Wang, 2021). To develop high self-esteem, teenagers need a lot of encouragement, support, and constructive feedback from parents and teachers. Thus, fostering an environment where they feel valued and understood. It is also important for parents, educators, and mentors to model healthy self-esteem and self-care practices.

VI. Conclusion

The study's findings revealed distinct distributions of parental attachment styles among participants, categorized as avoidant, anxious, and secure attachment. Most students reported low self-esteem, alongside a

range of academic performance levels that included both average and low achievement. Significantly, the research identified a negative relationship between avoidant parental attachment and self-esteem. Additionally, a moderate negative correlation was found between anxious parental attachment and self-esteem. In contrast, a strong positive relationship was established between secure parental attachment and self-esteem among students in mixed-day secondary schools in Masinga Sub-County, Machakos County, Kenya.

Furthermore, while there was a weak negative relationship between anxious attachment and perceived academic performance, a strong positive correlation was noted between secure attachment and perceived academic performance. These findings underscore the importance of parental attachment styles in influencing both self-esteem and academic outcomes in students.

The relationship between parental attachment styles and academic performance is a crucial area of research that underscores the profound impact of early parent-child interactions on educational outcomes. Studies consistently demonstrate that secure attachment—marked by reliable and supportive parenting—correlates with positive academic performance. Students with secure attachments typically exhibit better emotional regulation, higher self-esteem, and greater resilience, all of which contribute to their academic success.

In contrast, insecure attachment styles, such as anxious or avoidant attachment, can detrimentally affect academic performance. Anxious attachment may lead to increased anxiety and a fear of failure, undermining academic confidence and hindering performance. Avoidant attachment, conversely, often results in disengagement and difficulties in seeking help or participating in classroom activities. Overall, fostering secure attachment can enhance students' emotional well-being and academic achievements, while insecure attachment can pose significant barriers to their educational success. Understanding these dynamics is essential for educators and parents aiming to support students in their academic journeys. seeking help, leading to poorer academic outcomes. Overall, the quality of parental attachment plays a crucial role not only in shaping students' self-esteem but also good academic progress.

VII. Recommendation

The study offers valuable insights for school administrators in crafting personalized learning plans that address each student's unique strengths, weaknesses, and learning styles. By implementing diverse teaching methods tailored to various learning preferences, educators can better meet the needs of all students. Over and above, organizing workshops or offering lessons focused on effective study techniques, time management, and organizational skills can empower students in enhancing their academic performance. Schools should cultivate a positive, supportive, and inclusive learning environment where students feel secure and valued. Such an atmosphere not only promotes engagement but also fosters resilience and emotional well-being, ultimately contributing to improved academic performance.

It is important for parents to listen to their children and be fully present in their lives. They also need to be made aware of the crucial stage of development of their adolescents and fully participate in school activities whenever they are called upon. Open discussions between parents, teachers, and students will go a long way in promoting healthy relationships within the school community.

Fostering secure parental attachment is essential for enhancing academic performance. By encouraging healthy parent-child relationships and addressing attachment-related concerns, educators and parents can collaboratively create environments that support both academic and self-esteem development. Establishing strong communication channels between teachers and parents is vital to keep families informed about their child's progress and specific needs. Enhancing communication among teachers, students, and parents can cultivate positive relationships and foster a sense of teamwork. This collaborative approach not only strengthens support networks for students but also promotes a shared commitment to their overall success. By working together, educators and parents can effectively nurture an environment where students thrive academically and emotionally.

Future researchers may consider conducting longitudinal studies to track on how parental attachment styles influence academic performance across different educational stages.

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