

Parents' academic expectations and psychological distress among adolescents in private secondary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya

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Abstract: The increase in levels of psychological distress among adolescents in secondary school in Nairobi county Kenya is alarming which created the need for this study to assess the relationship between parental academic expectations and psychological distress among adolescents in this County. Addressed objective was; to establish if parents' academic expectations contribute to psychological distress among adolescents in private secondary school. A descriptive survey design was employed. A sample of 380 students from 28 private secondary schools was used who were sampled through simple random sampling technique. Data was collected through questionnaires from the students. This quantitative data was analyzed through descriptive (means) and inferential analysis specifically chi-square and Pearson product moment correlation using SPSS version 22 and presented using tables. The findings of the study showed that adolescents in private secondary in Nairobi County Kenya experienced academic expectations from parents. The parents' academic expectations was not significantly influenced by age, gender and parents' educational level. In relation to psychological distress, parents' academic expectations had a weak positive relationship with anxiety, stress and depression symptoms. In the academic fields, outcomes of this study contributes by informing all stakeholders especially, students, parents, academic staffs and government of how parental academic expectations influence psychological distress among school going adolescents hence encouraging them to collectively come up with measures to remedy the negative effects of parental academic expectations on students' psychological distress using these outcomes.

Key words: Adolescence, parents' academic expectations, psychological distress, private secondary schools, academic performance, strategies

I. INTRODUCTION

Struggle for academic attainment is a challenge for everyone undertaking any kind of studies, this could even get worse for adolescents when they get entangled with their identity negotiation crisis. Adolescence is also a crucial and important stage in human development. However, in our world currently this age group which ranges between 13-19 years, seems to be subjected to a number of challenges that expose them to low psychological wellbeing. According to World Health Organization, mental health disorders account for 16 percent of the worldwide burden of injury and disease in people aged 10 to 19. Depression is one of the leading

causes of illness and disability with suicide being the third cause of death among adolescents globally (WHO 2020). This leaves many to wonder what could be the contributing factors to these alarming statistics. The organization for economic co-operation and development (OECD, 2017) conducted a survey that involved 72 countries, which revealed that 66 percent of the students felt stressed about poor grades and 59 percent expressed that they often worry that taking a test will be difficult. 37 percent felt much tensed when studying and 55 percent feel very anxious about-facing exams even when they were well prepared. The above study also reports that the secondary school students who self-report higher levels of academic-related stress also report low well-being, which means the academic challenges the adolescents are exposed to in our current world can be associated with the mental health challenges they face. The key responsibility lies with the school leaders and family members in not becoming perpetrators of this psychological distress but rather creating a safe and nurturing environment in supporting the social and emotional well-being of the adolescents as they negotiate the challenges that are brought by strain for academic attainments.

Higher education is becoming one of the most prized experiences in the developing world, of which Africa is a part. Education is widely regarded as the most important tool for fostering Africa's socioeconomic, political, and cultural growth. This has resulted in a rapid increase in the number of secondary schools and universities, both public and private (National Council for Higher Education, 2018). The most affected persons in the whole scenario are the students because they have to live up to the expectations and the demands of the modern society. These demands from the society could be specifically from the caregivers and the students themselves because of the desire to live up to the standards that are being set by those before them, hence exposing most students to extreme pressures that leave them psychologically drained. A study conducted in East Africa, particularly Tanzania on suicidal ideation among adolescents by Dunlavy, Aquah and Wilson (2015), revealed that 7 percent of the participants had thought about taking their lives of which 6.3 percent were having a clear plan on how to carry out the attempt. The majority of them amounting to 50 percent were female. The study was able to establish that social and

familial support are some of the factors that impacted suicidal ideation. This study gives an indication of how the adolescent in this part of Africa are struggling with mental issues.

The private schools in Kenya, especially in Nairobi are soaring in popularity, even poor families who struggle to get school fee are taking their children to private schools instead of taking them to free public schools (Shiundu, 2019). This is due to the fact that private schools are known for quality education. This demand for private schools in Nairobi, indeed is likely to lead to more academic expectations due to high competition. To live up to the standards of the different levels of category of these schools', high performance from the students is expected. On the other hand, adolescents who make up the population of students in secondary schools, are entangled in these demands for high academic performance in Nairobi city which may expose them to mental health challenges in dealing with this strain. A study done in Nairobi among Kenyan high schools' students, revealed high levels of depression symptoms of about 45.90 percent above clinical cutoff, anxiety symptoms were 37.99 percent. Older and female adolescents showed high levels of anxiety and depression symptoms (Osborn, Venturo, Wasil, Schleider & Weisz 2019). Therefore, there is a clear evidence of the prevalence of psychological distress among adolescents in secondary schools in Nairobi County Kenya.

On the other hand, educational achievement in Kenya is seen as an essential key to a bright future. Due to this the Kenyan society has put great value to academic grades. Many private schools have mushroomed in the country especially in the cities of which Nairobi County is part of, and are in high competition with public schools for better academic achievements. The parents with adolescents in private schools often put too much pressure on their students to attain high academic performance. The strain to meet all these expectations is experienced by the students who have to work excessively to meet the demands of their parents. Such strain without adequate coping skills is likely to produce emotions such as anger, depressions and anxiety among others and hence affecting the psychological wellbeing of the students. Mental health challenges among students attending secondary school in Nairobi County and other parts of Kenya are mainly manifested through deviant behaviors, especially increased indiscipline and mood disorders by the students. However, the association of these mental health challenges with parental academic expectations for the adolescents remain un-researched in this County which created the need for this study to assess whether there was a relationship between parental academic expectations and psychological distress among adolescents in private secondary schools' in Nairobi County Kenya.

The study may inform the parents about the likely psychological dangers of high academic expectations on the children and encourage them on appropriate strategies to employ in supporting their children to go through their academic period without unnecessary pressure. It may inform

the school administrators and teachers on the need to moderate parental academic expectations among school going adolescents hence, reducing the psychological strain that is brought by parental expectations. The study is also likely to inform psychologists and counselors dealing with young people, especially the school going adolescents with these psychological challenges, on understanding them and helping them negotiate their crisis better. The study may inform the policy makers on coming up with appropriate strategies to reduce unhealthy academic expectations among school going adolescents in private secondary schools and other schools.

Young people are experiencing mental health challenges due to different reasons. However, this study concentrated on psychological distress due to academic expectations among adolescents aged between 13–19 years that are in secondary schools. It is also evident that young people in different educational spheres are facing mental health challenges but the study was delimited to private secondary schools in Nairobi County because private schools are known to have high expectations on their students due to the desire of the administrators to create a good name for their schools and hence attract more admissions. On the other hand, the study was conducted in Nairobi because being the capital city of Kenya is a cosmopolitan town with many private schools hence increased expectations and competition among students and schools compared to private schools in rural areas.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Every parent wants their children to achieve academic success. This is because they are their pride, and in poor families, a source of hope for improving the family's economic situation. Little do the parents realize that their high expectations on their children expose them to the risk of mental health disorders, which can impact the child's academic performance or even lead to the adolescent's mental breakdown? Academic stress, parental pressure, anxiety, and mental health among Indian high school students were studied by Deb, Strodi & Sun (2015), the study included 190 pupils from three government schools and three private schools in Kolkata, with an average age of 16.72 years. The information was gathered through a structured questionnaire as well as a general health questionnaire. Almost two-thirds of students (63.5 percent) said they were stressed out by academic pressure, although there were no significant variations in gender, grade, age, or other personal factors. Again, 66 percent of students said their parents put pressure on them to achieve better academically. However, parental pressure levels varied significantly depending on the parents' educational levels, the mother's occupation, the number of private tutors, and the learner's academic success. Parents put more pressure on children whose fathers had a poor educational level to achieve better. The study went on to find that one-third of the students (32.6%) had mental symptoms, and 81.6 percent had exam-related anxiety. The following study clearly shows how parents have a significant impact on their children's academic achievement, implying that students

are often driven to follow their parents' ambitions. As a result, they become vulnerable to mental health difficulties. The goal of this study was to see if Kenyan students, particularly those in private secondary schools, are subjected to the same academic pressure as Indian secondary school students. This gap was filled by this study since the researcher discovered that parents' academic expectations had a weak positive relationship with depression, stress, and anxiety symptoms of the adolescents in private secondary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya.

Another study done in Hong Kong looked on the impact of high parental expectations to teenage academic performance. This study used a descriptive survey in which the researcher used convenience sampling to obtain data from seven secondary schools in Hong Kong. The study included 872 adolescent participants. High Parental Expectations (HPE; Fuligni, 1997), Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale for Children (CES-DC), General Perceived Self-Efficacy Scale (GPSES; Schwarzer 1993), and Child and Adolescent Social Support Scale were used to collect data (CASSS by Malecki, Demaray & Elliott 2000). The methodologies used were descriptive analysis, route analysis, and bootstrapping. High parental expectations were directly associated to adolescents' academic achievement and further positively related to their depression, according to the findings (Ma, Siu & Shing, 2018). The study used convenience sampling, which has the potential to be limited and biased in terms of providing accurate data. This gap was filled in this work by using simple random, proportionate, and purposive sampling techniques, which reported fairly similar results.

Crete, Wirthwein, McElvany, and Steinmayr (2015) conducted a study in Germany on adolescents' academic achievement and life satisfaction: the role of parents' education, which found that mothers' education was a significant moderator of the association between academic achievement and students' life satisfaction, while fathers' education was not. The study employed a convenience sample method to recruit 411 German high school students for a cross-sectional survey. The General Life Contentment Scale by Dalbert (2003) was used to measure students' academic progress and the General Life Satisfaction Scale by Dalbert (2003) was utilized to test life satisfaction. To make sense of the data, descriptive, inter-correlation, and moderator analyses were used. This Germany study highlights how parents' education influences students' aspirations and life satisfaction, but it does not go on to examine how the same influences the psychological well-being of the school-aged adolescent, which is a gap that the current study fills by demonstrating that the father's educational level has a significant impact on depression symptoms of the school-aged adolescent. The educational level of the mother, on the other hand, had a substantial impact on the stress symptoms of adolescents, but not on depression or anxiety symptoms.

The source of academic expectations for pupils is influenced by a number of things. Although parents have been identified

as a source of academic expectation for teenagers in secondary schools, it is clear that the level of academic expectation varies from parent to parent, based on their own educational level, vocations, and socioeconomic status. Lukeine, Okoth, and Njagi (2014) conducted a study in Kenya on parental traits impacting students' performance in public secondary schools in the Isinya area, and found that parents' attitudes encouraged kids to enjoy their studies and do well. A little more than a third of the students said that their parents' level of education had an impact on their performance because it drove them to aim higher in order to match their parents' expectations. This study used a descriptive survey research approach, including 42 PTA members, 150 students, and four principals as participants. Questionnaires and interview guides were used to gather information. The current study filled a gap in understanding how parents' expectations for teenagers at private secondary schools in Kenya and in a different County, Nairobi, changed depending on their educational levels.

When parents or teachers in schools have no expectations of teenagers, it indicates they are less involved, and the adolescent is likely to feel less important, which is also damaging. Mburu, Macharia, and Muiru (2016) conducted a study on parental participation and self-esteem among teenagers in secondary schools in Kieni West District, Nyeri County, Kenya. A mixed method triangulation design was adopted in this study. In the quantitative component, a descriptive survey design was used, while in the qualitative component, ethnography in the form of a case study was used. Questionnaires and unstructured interviews were used as instruments. The quantitative data came from 200 people, whereas the qualitative data came from eight people. Inferential statistics were used to evaluate quantitative data, while qualitative material was coded and categorized for thematic arrangement. The study discovered a substantial relationship between the variables, with a link between adolescent self-esteem and parental participation. This is an area that the current study did not cover, and it is a research gap that needs to be filled. Therefore the researcher feels similar studies could be conducted in other Counties in Kenya.

Based on different studies that were reviewed, it showed clearly that school going adolescents are subjected to a lot of pressure from different sides and it is evident that they are struggling with psychological issues. Most of the research studies have established the presence of mental health issues among school going adolescents and have gone further to seek possible interventions for the same. Though a number of studies have looked at the factors leading to this problem among the adolescents, there may be no known study that has looked at parents' academic expectations as a key factor that could be influencing this problem except a study conducted in India by Deb et al. (2015) which revealed that there was a relationship between academic expectations from parents and mental health issues among adolescents. On the whole, there are large gaps in data on the burden of mental health

challenges and the contributing factors in low and middle-income countries. Kenya which falls under this bracket provides little data on the burden of mental illness and root causes especially among the adolescents (APHRC2019). Therefore, the current study worked to establish whether there is a relationship between parents' academic expectations and psychological distress that is experienced by adolescents with special concentration on private secondary school in Nairobi County Kenya, since there may be no known study of this nature which has been done in this area.

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

The Descriptive survey method for quantitative aided this enquiry. The method was appropriate to scan through a large population, and also for academic research due to limited time and resources.

Descriptive survey works to establish the range and distribution of some social characteristics. This was necessary for this study because it gives a clear explanation of the characteristics of the population or situation under study. In this study the focus was to investigate parental academic expectations and how they affect the adolescents psychologically in private secondary schools in Nairobi County. A descriptive survey allowed the researcher to describe behavior as it occurs in the environment. This was done through self-rated questionnaires which allowed for anonymous peek inside the thought processes of large numbers of people simultaneously thus creating an opportunity to describe what is not outwardly observable (Shields & Rangarajan, 2013).

Research Type

A quantitative study approach was employed by the study as it was useful in analyzing the gathered data statistically (Bryman, 2012). This strategy enabled the conduction of a focused empirical study of the phenomenon under investigation so as to clearly show the relationship between the variables of interest (Babbie, 2010).

Target Population

According to Majid (2018), target population is the group of interest which the researcher intends to study and where the sample will be drawn from. It should have some observable characteristics that meet the eligibility criteria that the researcher has set to achieve his/her objectives. The target population for this study was all students in private secondary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya. The students in private secondary schools were targeted because they at the adolescence stage and also there is higher chances of more academic expectation in private schools than public schools. According to Republic of Kenya Ministry of Education (2019), there are 283 private secondary schools in Nairobi County with total enrolment of 33,381 students.

Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

The following was the criteria utilized to select the needed respondents, first, one had to be a secondary school students, secondly, one had to be attending a private school, third, the private school had to be in Nairobi county, fourth, one must have been sampled and lastly, one must have given informed consent for participation.

Subject Selection

It is difficult to collect data from all cases especially where the target population is huge. Thus, there is need to select a sample, since the researchers do not have time or resources to collect and analyze data from the entire population (Taherdoost, 2016). For this study the researcher employed probability sampling procedure to select the respondents needed. In probability sampling, each private school and individual student of the target population had equal chance of being selected. Form three students mainly took part in this study because they were more likely to be settled in the school and were giving full attention to all aspects of their academic performance as compared to form ones and twos who were still adjusting to new school environment, and on the other hand form fours were mainly concerned with their forth coming national examinations.

According to Kothari (2013), a sample of 10 percent to 30 percent is necessary for descriptive studies. Since there were 283 private schools in Nairobi County, a sample of 28 schools was used which was arrived at by calculating 10 percent of the total population of schools. The researcher used simple random technique to sample the schools by writing the names of the 283 schools in small pieces of paper, mix them in a container and then randomly pick 28 schools. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula was used to determine the sample size of the students in private secondary schools in Nairobi County that is required for the study. Krejcie and Morgan formula is as follows: -

$$S = X^2NP(1-P) / d^2(N-1) + X^2P(1-P)$$

Where:

S = required sample size

X^2 = the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level (3.841)

N = the population size

P = the population proportion (assumed to be 0.50 since this would provide the maximum sample size

d = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (.05)

The target population for students in private secondary schools in Nairobi is 33,381.

Therefore: -

$$\begin{aligned} S &= 3.841(33381) (0.5) (0.5) / 0.05^2(33381-1) + 3.841(0.5) \\ &\quad (0.5) \\ &= 32054.1052 / 84.41025 \end{aligned}$$

= 379.741858

= 380 Students.

The students were sampled through proportionate sampling, therefore the sample of students from each of the sampled schools depended on the population size of the students in each school.

Research Instrument

A research instrument is the researcher's measurement tool, which is designed to obtain data from the research subjects on a particular topic that is of interest to the researcher (Des Moines University library, 2020). The choice of a research instrument depends on the topic under study and the type of data that the researcher intends to collect. The current study used standard instruments which were Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents (ESSA) and Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale- 21 (DASS-21)

Validity of Research Instruments

According to Heale and Twycross (2015), validity is the extent to which a concept under study is accurately measured. It is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represents the variables of the study. The research instruments were validated in terms of content and face validity. The content-related technique measures the degree to which the question items reflect the specific areas covered. The researcher consulted experts and research supervisors for validation of all the instruments. The questionnaire was administered to another group that has similar characteristics to the sampled group and the issues that were raised during the process were taken into account and corrections made before the actual study.

Reliability of Research Instruments

Reliability is the degree to which measurements in a study are repeatable, when conducted by different individuals. It is the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials (Drost, 2011). The researcher used two standard scales whose reliability has already been tested. Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents (ESSA), reliability was done with Chinese students and revealed good internal consistency of 0.81 which was assessed using Cronbach's alpha (Sun et al., 2011). The Depression Anxiety Stress Scale 21-items (DASS-21), reliability was tested among Nigerian medical students in Lagos State University College of medicine and revealed good internal consistency with Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.81, 0.78 and 0.89 for depression, stress and anxiety respectively (Coker, Coker & Sanni, 2018). The researcher used test-retest reliability test to check the reliability of these scales in Nairobi County, Kenya. This was done by administering the scales to students in two private secondary schools in Nairobi County which were not among the sampled schools. The exercise was done at an interval of two weeks. The responses on the two occasions were correlated using Cronbach's alpha and obtained internal

consistency of 0.83 for ESSA, and for DASS-21 scale the internal consistency was 0.77, 0.8 and 0.85 for depression, stress and anxiety respectively. After the actual data correction, before analysis commenced another reliability was done and obtained a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.738 for ESSA and for DASS- 21 it was 0.81, 0.73 and 0.76 for depression, anxiety and stress respectively. The reliability was carried out using SPSS version 22, and was based on Cronbach's alpha analysis of instruments that the alpha of: $\alpha < 0.5$ was considered unacceptable, $0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$ was considered poor, $0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$ was considered acceptable, $0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.9$ was considered to be good, and $\alpha \geq 0.9$ was considered excellent.

Pre-testing of the Study

Questionnaires were pre-tested using a sample of 38 students making up 10% of the used sample in the actual study in a single private secondary school in Nairobi County. Participants in the pilot study had same traits as those who participated in the real study but the pretest participants were excluded from the actual study. Observed errors in the study instrument were addressed before commencing actual field work.

Data Collection Procedures

Prior to the commencement of data collection, the researcher obtained all the necessary documents and permits, including the introductory letter from the university. After securing a research permit from National Commission of Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to carry out the research, the researcher went to the County of Nairobi education department to seek permission using the permit. After obtaining the necessary permissions the researcher did a pretest of the research instruments with a population similar to the sampled group at an interval of two weeks to test the validity and reliability of the instruments. Upon obtaining the required internal consistence and making the appropriate adjustments on the instruments, the researcher then proceeded to the sampled schools. This entailed visiting the principals of the sampled schools with a view of consenting with the schools and arranging when the instruments will be administered. Upon getting all the clearance needed, the researcher then carried out data collection.

Methods of Data Analysis

The data collected was cleaned, coded and analyzed to facilitate answering of the research questions of the study. The quantitative data obtained through questionnaires was analyzed using descriptive (means) and inferential statistics in particular correlation analysis. Chi-square was appropriate since the variables under investigation were measured under ordinal and nominal levels. Pearson correlation was carried out because the data collected was normally distributed and linear regression was done to estimate the cause and effect and interaction of different independent variables in influencing the dependent variable. In this way the quantitative data was summarized and organized to describe

the characteristics of the sampled population and also test the relationship between different variables. This was aided by a computer program, which is Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.

IV. RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Parents’ Academic Expectations and Psychological Distress among Adolescents in Private Secondary Schools in Nairobi County

The objective was to establish if parents’ academic expectations on the adolescents lead to psychological distress. The information on parents’ academic expectation was obtained from the respondents through the following items of the Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents (ESSA), items: 5, 9, and 12. Descriptive statistics were used to investigate the mean and standard deviation of the parents’ academic expectations in relation to demographic features of the adolescents on a scale of strongly disagree (M= upto 2.5), Disagree (M= 2.5 - 5.5), Neutral (M=5.5 – 8.5), Agree (M= 8.5 – 11.5) and Strongly Agree (M = 11.5 and above).

Table 4.1: The Mean of Demographic Features in Relation to Parents’ Academic Expectations

Demographic Factors		Mean (M)	SD
Age of Respondents	16	13.38	1.525
	17	12.88	1.982
	18	12.81	2.080
	19	12.82	1.704
	20	13.00	1.732
Gender	Male	12.89	1.934
	Female	12.89	1.958
Father’s Educational Level	Primary	12.34	1.786
	Secondary	12.97	1.686
	College	12.73	2.039
	University	13.13	2.025
Mother’s Education Level	Primary	12.32	1.637
	Secondary	13.30	1.727
	College	12.94	2.079
	University	12.89	2.071

As indicated in table 4.1, in relation to age all respondents strongly agreed that there were academic expectations from parents with the highest mean of (M = 13.38 & SD = 1.525) and (M = 13.00 & SD = 1.732) for ages 16 and 20 years respectively. The means for the other ages were relatively in close range being 17 (M = 12.88, SD = 1.982), 18 (M = 12.81, SD = 2.080), and 19 (M = 12.82, SD = 1.704). In relation to gender the mean was fairly distributed with both male (M = 12.89 & SD = 1.934) and female (M = 12.89 SD = 1.958) respondents strongly agreeing to the fact that there was

academic expectation from their parents. In relation to their parents’ educational level, the mean was fairly distributed across all levels with the respondents whose father’s had attained university level being on the higher side with a mean of 13.13 and SD of 2.025, in strong agreement that there were academic expectations from their parents. On the other hand, the same was noticed in relation to mothers’ educational level, in strong agreement that there were academic expectations from mothers. However, in this case the respondents whose mothers had attained secondary educational level had a slightly higher mean: Secondary (M = 13.30, SD = 1.727), followed by University (M = 12.89, SD = 2.071), and Primary (M = 12.32, SD = 1.637). From the mean scores there are no clear indication whether parents’ educational levels had any effect on the academic expectations that they put on their adolescent children in private secondary schools. The researcher carried out a further analysis to establish any possible influence.

Significance of Demographic Features in Relation to Parents’ Academic Expectations

Using a chi-square test, the researcher sought to investigate if the respondents’ demographic characteristics of age, gender and educational level of the parents had any significant influence on the parents’ academic expectations that they experience. The examination followed the principle that if $\rho < \alpha$ (0.05), then the demographic features in question has significant influence on parents’ academic expectations of the adolescents also, if $\alpha = 0.001$, it indicates that the significance is very high; and if $\rho = \geq \alpha$ (0.05), then the demographic features in question have no significance influence on parents’ academic expectations of the adolescents.

Table 4.2: Significance of Parents’ Academic Expectations as Distributed by Demographics

Demographic	X^2	feature p
Age of the respondents	10.222	0.250
Gender of the respondents	1.501	0.472
Educational level of the fathers’	9.594	0.143
Educational level of the Mothers’	9.453	0.150

From Table 4.2, the results for age in relation to parents’ academic expectations ($X^2 = 10.222$ & $\rho = 0.250$) show the p value is greater than alpha ($\alpha = 0.05$) implying that the age of the adolescent students had no significant influence on their parents’ academic expectations of them. Similarly, the other demographic characteristics of gender ($X^2 = 1.501$, $\rho = 0.472$), father’s educational level ($X^2 = 9.594$ & $\rho = 0.143$), and mother’s educational level ($X^2 = 9.453$ & $\rho = 0.150$) presented ρ values greater than alpha ($\alpha = 0.05$), implying these characteristics did not have any significant influence on the parents academic expectations of their adolescent children in private secondary schools in Nairobi County.

Relationship between Parents' Academic Expectations and Psychological Distress of Adolescents.

Person correlation was carried out to test the strength of relationship between parents' academic expectations and the psychological distress that the adolescents in private schools experience. Pearson Correlation Coefficients can indicate both positive and negative relationship, hence indicating a direct or inverse relationship respectively. The magnitude of correlation coefficient follows the following scale: 0.00–0.10= Negligible correlation, range 0.10-0.39 = Weak correlation, range 0.40-0.69 = Moderate correlation, 0.70 - 0.89 = Strong correlation, while range 0.90 - 1.00 = Very strong correlation (Schober, Boer & Schwarte, 2018).

Table 4.3: Correlation of Parents' Academic Expectations and Psychological Distress

		Parents' Academic Expectations	Anxiety	Stress	Depression
Parents' Academic Expectations	Pearson Correlation	1	.310	.306	.210
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	380	380	380	380

The findings in table 4.3, show that there is a positive weak relationship between parents' academic expectations and all three psychological distress variables: anxiety symptoms ($r = 0.310$), stress symptoms ($r = 0.306$), and depression symptoms ($r = 0.210$).

V. DISCUSSION

Parents' Academic Expectations and Psychological Distress among Adolescents in Private Secondary Schools

The research objective worked to establish whether the psychological distress that the adolescents experienced was as a result of parents' academic expectations. The result of current study as indicated in relation to demographics of age, gender and parents' educational level, all the respondents strongly agreed that their parents expected them to perform in a certain way. However the parents' expectation was not in any way influenced by the demographic features mentioned. Again parents' academic expectations had a weak positive relationship with anxiety, stress symptoms and depression symptoms. The finding of the current study are in agreement with a study conducted by Venkatachlam and Chellamuthu (2019) which also found parents' academic expectations to have direct relationship with the mental health challenges that adolescents experience. Other studies (Deb et al., 2015) also concluded that parents' academic expectations contributed to stress and depression symptoms that the adolescents in secondary schools experience. The finding of this study are also supported by Brenfenbrenner (1979) in the Ecological System Theory. This theory states that all the interactions in

the immediate environment of an adolescent, which parents' are part of, influence their psychological development.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the finding of the current study, parents' academic expectation had a weak positive relation to psychological distress experienced by adolescents in private secondary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya.

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