

**SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN EMBU-WEST DISTRICT OF EMBU  
COUNTY, KENYA**

**DOROTHY WAMBUI GAKIIVI**

**NUC/012/MCP/00007**

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR  
THE AWARD OF THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE OF MOUNT KENYA  
UNIVERSITY**

**AUGUST, 2013**

## **ABSTRACT**

The general objective of this research was to investigate the influence parents bear on student behaviour in private secondary schools in Embu West District of Embu County, and specifically, to establish the influence that parental involvement, parenting styles and student backgrounds have on student behaviour among learners in these schools.

The literature reviewed identified two relevant behavioural theories, the "Problem Behavior Theory" by Jessor and Baumrind's (1991) "Parenting Styles Theory" in influencing the child's behaviour in school. Both empirical and conceptual or theoretical works by previous authors on the subject were used to inform this research. The descriptive research design was used; purposeful, convenient, stratified and random sampling techniques were used to choose the respondents. Self-administered questionnaires and interview schedules were used to collect data. Data was subjected to tests of central tendency such as means, standard deviations, and the percentages.

The results show that a permissive style of parenting leads to poorly disciplined children, who avoid responsibility and are poor performers academically. The authoritative style of parenting has moderate to high influences in the academic performance, responsibility and leadership qualities but it is poor in shaping the social adjustment of the student. However, authoritarian parenting style fails to positively influence all types of children's behaviour. Parental involvement moderates the influence the parents on child behaviour. The study recommends that parents in private secondary schools be sensitized on the effects of their parenting styles on their children's behaviour. All parents should be involved in the affairs of their children in school; more research should be done to establish how religion, home setting, and parent's occupation modify student

behaviour in private secondary schools and also capture the views of the education officers in the Embu West district on this matter.