

**SELECTED FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE STUDENTS' SELF ESTEEM IN  
PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NYAHURURU DIVISION, LAIKIPIA  
WEST DISTRICT, KENYA**

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**A Research Project Submitted to Graduate School in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for Master of Education Degree in Guidance and Counselling of  
Egerton University, Njoro.**

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# DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

## Declaration

This Research Project report is my original work and has not been presented for diploma or degree in this or any other university.

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## Recommendation

This Research Project report has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor

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## DEDICATION

James, my dear husband, to Cornie and Niso my daughters.



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I would like to thank all those who have contributed towards the successful preparation and completion of this research project report. I would like to acknowledge the tireless role played by my supervisor, Dr. B.E.E Omulema for his guidance and support through out the process of preparing this report. Special thanks go to my husband James and my daughters Comfort and Clenciee for their support, encouragement and understanding during the many times I forsook them and gave this project the first priority.

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## ABSTRACT

Despite the government's efforts geared towards improving secondary school education, the students' performance and more so their external efficiency has been dismal. Although the teachers and the parents have a major role to play in the total outcome of secondary education, the student is the most important subject as far as performance is concerned. It is therefore important to assess the student's own values, worthiness and competence of various domains that contributes to the student's self esteem. The main purpose of this study was designed to determine some of the factors that influence students' self esteem in public secondary schools in Nyahururu Division, Laikipia West District. The study utilized *Ex-post facto* research design. It involved five public secondary schools with an accessible population of 2340 students from Form one to Form four. The Sample was made up of 330 participants (boys and girls) who were selected using simple random and proportionate sampling techniques. Out of 330 subjects, only 319 students responded to the questionnaire. Eleven students did not respond. Data was collected using a self-administered questionnaire. The data collected was analyzed using Descriptive Statistics with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 11.5. The high factors that influenced student's self esteem were academic performance, age, gender and grade of the student. The low factors were type of school and category of school. One of the recommendations of the study is that the Ministry of Education, KIE and all stakeholders should enhance positive self esteem in secondary school education in order to achieve maximum external efficiency in the society and to achieve the goals of education. This study could be replicated in another division or another district for comparison purposes.



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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>KCP</b>	-	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
<b>KCE</b>	-	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
<b>KIE</b>	-	Kenya Institute of Education
<b>ME</b>	-	Ministry of Education
<b>NEC</b>	-	Kenya National Examination Council
<b>ISE</b>	-	Kenya Institute of Special Education



# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background to the Study

Education is the most effective vehicle through which the society transmits its desired knowledge, skills, values and attitude to the youth. In other words, education is an important tool of socializing the youth to be productive members of the society. This intimates that learners have to properly master the stipulated curriculum as they go through the school system. This will ensure that by the time the learners leave the education system they will be better placed to make a positive contribution to the society. This value is always in terms of quality grades and a whole socialized personality that a student acquires at the end of the four year course. This allows the student to join a higher institute of learning and acquire professional knowledge and skills. It is disheartening; however, to note that majority of students perform poorly Secondary Education.

Table 1

National KCSE Performance between the years 2002-2006

Year	No. of candidates	% Mean Score	Mean Grade
2002	198,356	36.51%	D+
2003	207,730	37.52%	D+
2004	22,676	38.56%	D+
2005	260,665	38.50%	D+
2006	243,453	50.72%	C-

The data in Table 1 presents the national performance of K C S E from the year 2002 to 2006. The mean performance was a D+ for the first four years, which represents 4 points on a 12-point scale. In 2006 the mean score was slightly below average with a C-, which represents 5 points on a 12 points scale, and the mean grade was a D+ nationally. (See Appendix C)

## Nyahururu Division KCSE Performance between 2002-2006

School Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Mean
Ndururi	3.9	4.4	4.3	4.4	4.5	C-
Ndururumo	6.9	7.2	8.0	6.7	6.4	C+
Njonjo	7.1	7.6	8.3	8.5	8.2	C+
Igwamiti	3.2	3.6	4.4	3.7	4.8	C-
Munyaka			3.8	4.9	4.9	C-

The data in Table 2 presents the K C S E performance in Nyahururu Division from the year 2002 to 2006. The mean performance for provincial public schools was a C+ and a C- for the district schools.

**Table 3**  
**Student Performance in 2008**

School/ class	Ndururi	Ndururumo	Igwamiti	Njonjo	Munyaka	Class Mean
Form 1	7.89 B-	11.7A	8.19B-	11.86A	10.51B+	10.03B+
Form 2	6.03 C	8.38B-	6.32C	8.84B	6.6C+	7.234C+
Form 3	4.58 C-	6.7C+	5.3C-	7.10C+	4.51C-	5.638C
Form 4	4.485 D+	6.714C+	4.41D+	7.43C+	4.08D+	5.422C-
Mean	5.745 C	8.37B-	6.055C	8.8075B	6.425C	7.081C+

Table 3 shows a class mean that is decreasing as the student approach the final examination. A closer look at the above data portrays an increasing number of students performing poorly, making it impossible for the goals of education to be achieved in the society. Education goals are all focused in preparing students for independent adult life and citizenship, meet the students developmental needs such as emotional, social, physical, mental and personality development. It is worth noting that performance in secondary schools is a surrogate measure of the extent to which the learners has mastered the life skills and knowledge in the secondary school curriculum.



Therefore the dismal performance at the KCSE has the implication that majority of students graduating from Secondary Schools in Kenya do not meet the expectations of the society. In other words the external efficiency of secondary education in Kenya appears to be low since inception of the 8-4-4 system of education

The degree to which students will master the curriculum is a function of several factors; Teacher-student's ratio, quality and quantity of learning facilities, student's home background and others. Thus, if the teacher-student's ratio is high, students are likely to master the curriculum. Similarly if the condition of learning materials is favourable in terms of quality and quantity, the learning is likely to be easily conceptualized by the learners. In addition, a conducive home background is more likely to promote learning among the learners as opposed to situations where there are no role models or learning facilities at home.

The dismal performance in secondary schools and at KCSE has been associated with comments like -the student's did not know the difference between one term and the other, had misspelt terms or poor drawings and lacked simple algorithm concepts . This portrays lack of knowledge in elementary techniques (Wasanga 2003).

Responding to the 2004 KCSE results, for instance, the print media indicated that the government was in the process of supplying laboratory equipments to 10 secondary schools in each district so as to improve performance in science subjects. This suggests that our schools are not fully equipped to support the teaching-learning process (Otieno, 2005). When announcing 2005 KCSE results, Dr. Noah Wekesa, the then Minister for Education, Science and Technology said that there was a drop in performance in 12 (37.5%) subjects. He asked his officers to work closely with the Council to find out factors that contributed to the drop in performance for the 12 subjects and address them accordingly (Wekesa, 2006).

Granted, each of the aforesaid factors may be contributing to the poor performance at the secondary schools and as such a negative personality. However, it needs to be realized that learners self esteem is a critical variable as far as performance and positive socialization is concerned. For students to succeed in education, they need to develop a positive self-concept, a variable that has been consistently known to be positively related to academic achievement. Muola (2000).

From the foregoing discussion, it can be argued that if the learner's self esteem is poor he/she is not likely to master the curriculum, however favourable the factors in the school may be. The converse holds if the student's self esteem is positive. This is in the light of the observation that such has confidence in him/herself and therefore is likely to interact more with the learning environment and therefore exploit the available opportunities.

In order to guide, counsel, get good grades and have an independent adult life, it is important to assess the factors that affect students' behavioral pattern of students' personality such as self esteem. There is also a need to investigate whether student self esteem is influenced by academic performance, age, gender, type of school, category of school and the year of study.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Education for all children has been the main goal of the Kenya government. It may be possible that partially this objective is achieved by meeting the needs of the students. However, there are doubts whether developmental needs- physical, social, emotional, mental and personality development are achieved to the societal satisfaction. Students who succeed in education, develop a strong personality aspect such as positive self esteem. Although studies have been carried out on how to improve performance secondary education and especially at KCSE level, little or no studies known to the researchers have been done on how factors such as academic performance, age, gender, and type of school and students' grade influence students self esteem. This prompted the researcher to investigate some of the factors that influence self esteem.



### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate some selected factors that influence student's self esteem in public secondary schools in Nyahururu Division in Laikipia District.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study was designed to determine some of the factors that influence student's self esteem in secondary education. The specific objectives included: -

- i) To determine whether students' self esteem is influenced by academic performance in public secondary schools in Nyahururu Division Laikipia west District.
- ii) To find out whether students' self esteem is affected by age in public secondary schools in Nyahururu Division Laikipia west District.
- iii) To find out whether type of school influences students' self esteem in public secondary schools in Nyahururu Division Laikipia west District.
- iv) To investigate whether students' self esteem is affected by category of schools in public secondary schools in Nyahururu Division Laikipia west District.
- v) To determine whether student's self esteem is influenced by student's gender in public secondary schools in Nyahururu Division Laikipia west District.
- vi) To find out whether grade influences students' self esteem in public secondary schools in Nyahururu Division Laikipia west District.

### **Research Questions**

The study was designed to determine some of the factors that influenced student's self esteem in secondary education. The research questions included: -

- i) Does academic performance influence students' self esteem?
- ii) How does students' age influence his/her self esteem?
- iii) How do types of schools influence student's self esteem?
- iv) Does category of schools influence student's self esteem?
- v) How does gender influence student's self esteem?
- vi) Does students' Grade influence his/her self esteem?

### **Significance of the Study**

The objective of this study was to ascertain the influence of students' self esteem on their personality development in secondary education. Secondary education determines whether a student will climb the educational ladder and move to institutions of higher learning and other tertiary institutions, other wise the journey to formal education comes to an end. There is need to investigate what causes student's to succeed or not to succeed in their secondary education in relation to their self esteem. If the students succeed, the external efficiency of education is realized. The findings from this study may be of importance in a number of ways.

Firstly, the Ministry of Education may benefit from the study in curriculum development and integrate guidance and counseling programs to enhance self esteem in secondary education. Secondly, the stakeholders- school administrators, teachers and parents may benefit from the study since they may promote positive self esteem so that students may have suitable learning interaction and learning environment that produce successful outcome. Thirdly, other stakeholders like KIE and KISE among others may benefit when developing the secondary school education policies thus promoting positive interaction with the learning environment that will enhance a total positively developed personality.

### **Assumptions of the Study**

The study was based on the following assumptions: -

- (i) The level of student's self esteem is largely influenced by their academic performance.
- (ii) The level at which a student interacts with the learning environment is largely determined by the student's level of self esteem.
- (iii) The student's self esteem is dependent on academic performance, age of the student, type and category of school, student's gender and student's grade.

## Scope of the Study

This study focused on the selected factors that influence student's self esteem in public secondary schools in Nyahururu Division, Laikipia District in Rift Valley province in Kenya.

## Limitations of the Study

This study may not be generalized but should be used with caution as stakeholders require students for secondary education nationwide. This is because the study limited itself to:-

- (i) Public secondary schools in Nyahururu Division, Laikipia West District which is a very small geographical area.
- (ii) Nyahururu Division is a rural area and therefore the study may not favor schools in the urban settlement.
- (iii) The extraneous factors that influence students' self esteem were not controlled in this study.



## Definition of Terms

Operational definitions of terms used in this study.

**Academic performance:** The outcome acquired by a student as a result of formal instructions during secondary education.

**Age:** How old a student is.

**Category of the school:** Means whether a school is boarding, day or day and boarding

**Dependent Variable:** the outcome or the resulting behaviour whose value depends on the independent variable.

**District School:** A secondary school, third in ranking that admits form one students who miss an opportunity in provincial schools.

**Internal efficiency:** Process of positively producing a person who fits in the societal needs.

**Gender of the student:** Whether a student is a male or a female.

**High Self esteem level:** The greatest self esteem index according to the 5 point Likert type scale ranging from 4 and 5.

**Independent Variable:** The Variable that is manipulated by the researcher to determine its affection on the dependent variable (self esteem)

**Interaction:** Ability to utilize the available learning resources in school that are both human and physical.

**Learning environment:** Physical and human resources that influence the teaching

Learning process and affects a student's academically.

**Low Self esteem level:** The least self esteem index according to the 5 point Likert type scale ranging from 1 and 2.

**Moderate Self esteem level:** The average self esteem index according to the 5 point Likert type scale which is 3.

**Negative self esteem:** A mental state of a student in which he perceives himself Incapable of accomplishing a certain task.



Nyahururu Division:	Geographical boundaries that is the Nyahururu Divisional Educational boundaries that exempt Nyahururu High School.
Positive self esteem:	A mental state of a student in which he perceives himself capable of accomplishing a particular task.
Provincial school:	A secondary school, second in ranking that admits form one students who lack an opportunity in the top schools in the nation.
Public school:	A secondary school that is sponsored by the government.
Self esteem:	The way in which a student perceives <u>himself</u> capable or not in accomplishing a certain task.
Socialized personality:	One who is productive in the society
Students' Grade:	The year of study which ranges from form I to form IV.
Type of school:	Indicate whether a school is provincial or a district school.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 1 Introduction

This chapter entails the concept of self esteem and forms of self esteem. It also illustrates relationships between student's self esteem and academic performance, student age, type of school, category of school, gender and student grade. It incorporates a theoretical framework with two theories of self esteem. Lastly, it illustrates a conceptual framework.

#### 2 The Concept of Self Esteem

Self esteem is generalized feelings about self. Specifically, it is sum total of a set of judgments about one's values, worthiness and competence in various domains. It is thus the cumulative result of a set of judgment across a range of dimensions-intellectual competence, social skills, appearance, physical co-ordination and so on. (Emler, 2005). Emler in Muola (2000) states that self esteem can be thought of as an organized configuration of perceptions of self, which is admissible to awareness or consciousness. It is composed of one's characteristics, attitudes, preferences, ideas, feelings, abilities and concepts of the self in relation to others and to the environment.

Rosenberg in Ithinji (2003) conceives self esteem as positive or negative evaluation people make of and apply to themselves. It applies generally on feelings of worthiness. A person may have a good, average or bad opinion of himself. Rodewalt and Tragakis (2003) states that self esteem includes a person's subjective appraisal of him/herself as intrinsically positive or negative to some degree. It involves both self relevant beliefs. For example I am competent/ incompetent and is associated with self relevant emotions like triumph, despair, pride, shame and so on.

Neuman, Neil, Vasconcellos and Vasconcellos (1989) stipulates that self esteem finds expression in behaviour. For example, assertiveness, timorousness, confidence, caution and so on can be construed as enduring personality characteristics that is trait self esteem or a temporary physical condition. Locker and Crophey (2007) state that self esteem consist of beliefs, hypothesis and assumptions that the individual has about himself. It is the person's view of himself as conceived and organized from his inner vantage.



(1986) points out that what one thinks about his/her self is much more important than others think of you. Its range varies between individuals in that while some think the whole world is theirs for their taking, others feel they have no right to. Baumeister (2003) stipulates that self esteem includes people's feelings about lives, their attitudes about themselves, their view about their present status and prospects, their feelings about worthiness, pride and shame. It is comprised of convictions, values, ideals, aspiration and commitment.

(1989) points out that an example of new thinking about self is the concept of possible selves. Possible selves include our visions of the self, our dream of becoming-employed self, the alcoholic self, the academically failed self. Such selves motivate us by providing specific goals to pursue and energy to work towards them. Erikson (1965) conceives that self esteem largely depends on how one makes sense of relationship to the rest of the universe. This yields to a healthy, interpersonal relationship characterized by understanding of one self and other, refraining from unkind comments and outbursts and communicating accurately.

According to Maslow hierarchy of needs, Self esteem is ranked fourth in the five sets of Maslow's needs. According to Parke (1999) esteem needs include needs for competence, self respect and respect from others. The need for self esteem can be viewed as one of the social needs since a person's sense of self esteem depends on the feedback from other people.

(1950) a Psycho Analyst state that people have got two self images- the ideal self and the real self. To relieve anxiety people strive to make the real more like the ideal. Those whose ideal self is unrealistic are overly discrepant from their real self. They live through life with low self esteem and suffer from tyranny of the should. This is a constant anxious feeling that they should be doing things differently or better than they currently are. In contrast, psychologically health individuals have a close fit between the ideal and the real self. They feel good about themselves and their activities.



## Types of Self Esteem

(1986) points out that self esteem can be manifested in two ways: Positive or High self esteem and Negative or low self esteem. Kathleen (2005) refers to positive self esteem as healthy self esteem and negative self esteem as poor self esteem.

### High Self Esteem

(2002) states that High self esteem implies to the healthy authentic nature of self rather than just liking yourself a lot or feeling good about one self. It is the experience oneself as being competent to cope with the basic challenges of life and being worth of happiness. High self esteem is a feeling of self worth. Barbara (1994) indicates that a healthy self esteem is based on our ability to assess ourselves realistically (know ourselves) and still be able to accept and to value ourselves unconditionally. This is being able to realistically acknowledge our strengths and weaknesses (which is part of human being) and at the same time accepting ourselves as being worthwhile without conditions or reservations.

(1986) states that people who feel good about themselves tend to have:

- 1) Few ulcers and less insomnia.
- 2) Less prone to drug additions.
- 3) More independent of conformity pressures.
- 4) More persistent to difficult tasks.

(1994) States that a person with high self esteem perceives himself as important. He believes that others see him as important too. When esteem needs are met, this person tends to have a realistic self concept and to perceive people and society at large as being fair and accommodating. The person is then able to focus his mind and energy to achieve his goals and productive ideals. This helps produce something worthwhile for the benefit of himself and society.

(1999) states that positive self esteem is important to success and achievement especially to a student. A positive self-image is contributed by:-

- 1) Significance: - The extent to which a person feels loved by those who are important to them.
- 2) Competence: - ability to perform a task a person considers important.

Virtue: - Attainment of moral and ethical standards.

Power: - The extent to which a person influence his/her life and other people's lives.

(2000) states that a positive self esteem allows a person to:

Take risks.

Tolerate ambiguity.

Face fears.

Engages in many activities.

(1973) conceives that when a person has a positive attitude towards self, he/she is not afraid to take risk in-order to prove his/her mental abilities. Students with high self-esteem are high in curiosity. Crocker and Park points out that our sense of competence is grounded in the belief that we are capable of producing desired results. This arises from being secure in efficacy and our ability to think and to make appropriate choices and decisions.

(1971) stipulates that positive self esteem comes as a by-product to trusting others, living consciously, striving to be realistic in how we view others and ourselves and by taking pride in our accomplishments.

(1999) believes that having confidence in ourselves makes others less likely to be more tolerant and respectful of others, accountable, fair and open minded. Our sense of worthiness is tethered to our core beliefs about our nature and ourselves. To believe we are all worthy of love, life and liberty is to believe we are all deserving of respect, nurturance, and happiness. Authentic self-esteem is life affirming and is a by-product of taking pride in who we are and what we do.

and Tragakis (2003) points out that high self esteem is associated with:-

Analytical thinking which permits the individual to operate a problem into components parts.

It is associated with creative ability, ability to participate in discussions and express a point of view.

Persistence in performing tasks



Ability to maintain a constant perceptual framework in the face of confounding conditions.

Persons with high self esteem are likely to be leaders in the school groupings, more concerned about public affairs than personal problems, less sensitive and anxious.

They are generally more effective and in general achieve more at a given level of intelligence than do person who takes a more negative view of themselves.

Persons with high self esteem are generally more expressive and are less likely to be rated as unhappy, destructive, shy, embarrassed or retrieving.

They are less upset by criticism of others and are more inclined to accept their own views on what is correct and appropriate.

Gray (1994) explains that confidence, self respect, self love, self acceptance, happiness, high attitudes, good interpersonal relations and motivation to succeed are high self esteem. It gives assurance of confidence in coping, facing life, to meet life challenges and opportunities and to feel that life is meaningful. According to Gray (1994) a psychologically healthy person has a mature sense of his or her abilities and worth and can direct those abilities toward socially useful activities. He has got a close fit between their ideal and real self to feel good about themselves and their activities.

According to Sadakides and Gregg (2003) people with high self esteem are: -

Those who accepts others as they are.

Optimistic.

Looks at circumstance with acceptance.

Plans life positively around time and money.

Makes no guilt on self or others.

Never manipulates but persuades others.

Have high levels of independence.

Have developed rational characteristics guidelines.

Are self motivated and have control over their impulses.

Have self confidence.

Welcomes help from others.



... (1991) explains that people who feel they are falling short of what they hoped  
... low self esteem. They are people whose sense of personal worth is low or who  
... especially concerned about social relationships. They are more likely to conform  
... people with high self esteem. Ritzer, Brown and Mott (1991) quotes that low self  
... exacts costs. Such people are vulnerable to depression and more vulnerable to

... (2000) notes that a psychotherapist researcher once reflected that as soon  
... listens to a patient's story, he encounters unhappiness, frustration and despair.  
... finds expression in diverse forms of psychotherapy. These include psychosomatic  
... symptoms, neurotic symptoms and maladaptive character styles like drug addiction,  
... frequency and truancy. Basic to all these is the impairment in self acceptance and self

... and Gregg (2003) stipulate that people with poor self esteem often rely on  
... they are doing at the present determine how they feel about themselves. They need  
... external experiences to counteract the negative feelings and thoughts that  
... plague them. Even then, the good feeling, for example, getting a good grade  
... be temporary. Branden (1969) states that people who are about themselves tend to  
... negative about others. They are insecure and often excessively critical as if to  
... others with their own brilliance.

... (2002) points out that low self esteemed people are alienated. This is because  
... develop a life outlined and determined by others rather than a life based on ones  
... inner experiences. If we become alienated from ourselves, we doubt trust of our  
... feelings but respond automatically to others as we think they want us to respond.  
... result we live in a world devoid of excitement, risks and meaning.

... (2002) notes that characteristics such as conceit egotism, arrogance,  
... or a sense of superiority are more indicative pseudo or low self esteem.

... (2000) reasons that a person with low self esteem experience intense shyness  
... of adult and peers, over inflation of self, sarcasm and resistance to  
... It is associated with lack of self- confidence, value conformity, over

dependence on others and less creativity. Ithinji (2003) points out that low self esteem is characterized by depressive illness, poor interpersonal relationship, psychosomatic disorders, abuse and anxiety. James (1983) states that low self esteem expresses a feeling that one not cope, face life's problems and that he/she is not fit to function as a person. To such a person, life means pain and explains why most of the victims contemplate on destructive behaviour like committing suicide.

Huffman (2002) quotes that people with low self esteem feel as if no other human being has ever experienced what they are going through and they attempt insecurities behind false fronts, while trying to fool others. Students drop out of school and accept jobs far below their training and capacity. They tend to leave projects partly completed jumping from one task to the next. They lack confidence and cannot conceive of finishing anything successfully.

Baunister, Smart and Boden (1996) indicates that low self esteem is responsible for crime and delinquency including violent crime, racial prejudice and abuse of illegal drugs, under age tobacco use, alcohol abuse, risky sexual behaviour and teenage pregnancy, child maltreatment, educational under achievement, eating disorders, suicide and suicide attempts. Rodewalt and Tragakis (2003) concludes that low self esteem can have devastating consequences;-

- (i) It can cause problems with friendships and relationships.
- (ii) It can create anxiety, stress, loneliness and increase likelihood for depression
- (iii) It can seriously impair academic and job performance.
- (iv) It can lead to under achievement and increased vulnerability to drug and alcohol abuse.

Worst still, these consequences themselves reinforce a negative self image and can take a person into a down ward spiral and lower and lower self esteem to increasingly non-productive or even actively self destructive behaviour. Mecca, Neil, Vasconcellos and Vasconcellos (1989) notes that parents, educators and counselling professionals are continually being encouraged to establish conditions that foster healthy self esteem for several compelling reasons;

- (i) Low self esteem has been closely associated with so many problem behaviours especially among adolescents. Adolescents with low self esteem typically suffer from a crisis of self esteem confidence that manifests through a variety of



behaviours. They are easily influenced or manipulated by others through a variety of behaviours and are often subject to being scapegoats by their peers.

Low self esteem has been clearly identified as a major risk factor for a number of psychological conditions. It either causes or contributes to anxiety, drug abuse and alcoholism, depression, interpersonal problems as well as low academic achievement.

Self esteem is a primary factor in behaviour change. Individuals can not change themselves unless they first change how they see themselves. If a student accepts a position that he/ she does not have the capability to succeed in school, chances of academic success are obviously diminished regardless of intellectual ability.

Studies document that children who turn out to be highly successful contributing adults and who lead generally happy lives come from those families who establish conditions that foster high self esteem.

A low esteemed person is usually overwhelmed by a sense of inferiority complex. He/she goes through life feeling inadequate and dependent. Others develop a superiority complex, which is a mask for their sense of inferiority complex and attempts to overcome inferiority by trying to prove that they are better than other people (Gray 1994).

According to Mruk (2006), people with low self esteem are critical of others, pessimistic, complain about circumstances and are short-tempered. They carry heavy loads it on others, never have enough time, money etcetera. They also try to blame others, overly dependent on others and God, may be devoid of rational characteristics guideline and are easily addicted to alcohol, drugs, job and love. They lack adequate self confidence and reject help from others.

(2005) conceives that:

A person who can't read and write develop negative self esteem.

People with negative self esteem accept and believe the negative label placed on them by others especially authority and simply gives up.

No one wants to associate with people with negative self esteem, even classmates.

No employer will hire people with negative self esteem no matter how many qualifications they have. The learning process turns off such people.



### **Self-Esteem and Students' Academic Performance**

Relative to performance, Berger (2000) notes that competition gets worse as children grow older and become more self-conscious- painfully aware of how they compare to their peers and almost never happy with themselves. Failing students experience embarrassment along with low grades. According to Murk (2006), people with a high level of education also have a high level of self esteem. People with low self esteem try to avoid exposing their unfavourable characteristics by avoiding anything that may risk revealing their flaws. They do not take any challenges that may also bring rewards like performing their best to further their education.

Stinger (1994) state that we are motivated to maintain a stable view of our selves in order to give order to our lives and to do so we must accept that view. Self esteem improves impression, looking good to other people project friendliness so that others should be friendly to us, honest to trust us and competent to be admired by others. This also elicits favours or rewards from others. People are more likely to treat us well if they like us than if they do not. When the student's relationship is good with the teachers and other students the student's performance is enhanced. If other people's reaction to us is our looking glass we will want to project the most pleasing image to them.

Briner, Madaus, Chapman, Kellaghan and Wood (1978) states that our sense of competence is grounded in the belief that we are generally capable of producing desired results. It arises from being secure in the efficacy of our mind, our ability to think, to make appropriate choices and decisions. It comes as a by product of trusting ourselves, living consciously, striving to be realistic in how we view ourselves and others, and by taking pride in our accomplishments.

Pharis (1999) maintains that student respond to a task that is challenging in two ways. Those that are mastery oriented maintain or even improve their level of performance despite failure on some problems even when learning is not rewarding. They express neutral or even positive emotions at failure and attribute their failure to insufficient effort rather than lack of ability. On the other hand, helpless children tend to give up easily or show marked performance deterioration when working on challenging

problems. They express negative emotions like frustrations and blame their own lack of ability for the performance and express low expectations for future performances.

Locker and Crophey (2007) note that teenagers' self-consciousness makes them highly sensitive to actual or anticipated criticism. The combination of openness and criticism puts them in emotional bind such that they are eager for lively intellectual interaction but highly vulnerable to self-doubt. Ruggiero (2000) stipulates that relating self-attitude to academic performances leads us to the view that positive attitude represent a self-fulfilling prophesy of success. Negative attitudes eventuate in anticipation of failure and perceived lack of ability, which eventuate performance.

Marie and Ndambuki (1999) maintain that a positive attitude to learning and proper understanding is a major step to make remembering concepts easy. Once a fact has been internalized, the next step is to build on framework. Learning is internalized if the learner is actively involved. Huffman (2002) advises learners to get to know their instructors. It is up to the learner to seek out instructor's help during their scheduled office hours in order to improve his/her performance. This requires a highly self esteemed person.

Fuller (1987) found that self-esteem is positively related to patterns of successful achievement in spelling, arithmetic and written language. His studies support the importance of positive self esteem as a possible course of academic achievement. Baumister, Smart and Boden (1996) concludes that students with higher levels of self esteem are likely to go on to further levels of formal education than those with lower levels of self esteem.

## **2.5 Self-esteem and students' Age**

According to Gray(1994) there is a relationship between age and self esteem. Older people tend to have high levels of self esteem than do younger people. Age plays an important part in the understanding of concepts taught in every level of learning. Brimer, Madaus, Chapman, Kellaghan and Wood (1978) states that those students who are older than their peers perform much better because their mental age is more developed than the younger ones. He postulates that academic performance and self esteem are correlated with age.



Students in secondary school are in adolescent stage. This is the stage of growth that mediates between childhood and adulthood and it is from 10 to 20 years. Myers(1986) state that adolescent period is divided into three overlapping periods namely : pre-adolescent-10 to 15years, middle adolescent- 16 to 18 years and late adolescent- 18 to 20 years. In pre-adolescent and middle adolescent, peer influence is dominant and the urge of independences profound. It is a stage that the adolescent try to answer questions like "Whom am I?", "How do I relate to others?". In the late adolescent, "What should I believe?" In the attempt to answer these questions, they struggle with feelings of inner emptiness, confusion and interpersonal tension.

### **2.6 Students' Self Esteem and Type of Schools**

This entails National, Provincial and District secondary schools. Berger (2000) states that students' study and how much they learn is clearly affected by their attitude about school. This attitude helps student to interact with learning environment much better if he/she has a positive attitude. Polydore (2001) found that intelligence caused achievement and explains that entrance score to secondary school played an important role in academic achievement. Placement in Provincial and District schools is done according to KCPE scores. According to MoE Laikipia District, Provincial schools admit students with higher scores than those in District Schools. This is directly related to better learning interaction with the learning environment. Academic ability promotes a positive self. (Fuller 1987)

Rutter, Maugan, Mortimer, Dustin and Smiths(1979) investigated the effects of an intellectual ability and selectivity of admission of students to schools and found out that intellectual ability is positively related to academic achievement. Wangai (2001), reports that there are three types of secondary schools in Kenya. - National, Provincial and District schools. The divisions are used for the purpose of Form One admission but have continued to give the impression that some schools are more superior to others. This indicates that students in national schools feel more superior to students in either provincial or district schools. Such positive feelings in either national or provincial schools gives the students more confidence to interact with learning environment than the students in district schools.



Brimer, Madaus, Chapman, Kellaghan and Wood (1978) notes that schools differ significantly on the valuables of mental ability and common entrance scores. Very rare will the results of provincial schools be outdone by those in district schools. Otieno (2000) notes that there is a big disparity in the provision and maintenance of facilities between schools and currently facilities exist in limited national and provincial schools.

Wangai (2001) agrees that resources are provided differently in schools in one region and yet when it comes to examinations the yard stick for measurement of success is national and does not vary. A student gains entrance to either provincial or district school through a common entrance. Rutter, Maugan, Mortimer, Dustin and Smiths(1979)demonstrates that the effect of an intellectual ability is related to the selective admission of the schools. Locke and Crophey (2007) notes there are differences between schools of differing design and status and that change occurred in anxiety and affect self esteem in secondary schools students as they approached important examinations.

### **2.7 Students' Self Esteem and Category of Schools**

This involves boarding, day or mixed day and boarding schools. Ruzicka (2005) notes that boarding schools have better opportunities for interaction between students and the facilities that takes after classes. This does a better job in preparing the student for their lives as adults who have a positive self. Fuller (1987) conceives that students indicate higher levels of satisfaction with their academic experience at boarding schools than their peers at day schools. Boarders reported that they found their schools academically challenging and were more motivated than their counter parts in day schools. The quality of teaching is also high in boarding schools.

Foon (1988) stipulates that students earn a degree of independence and freedom of self-discovery as a personal benefit of attending boarding schools. Students' experiences in school help them to be more willing to try things not normally comfortable doing. Rutter, Maugan, Mortimer, Dustin and Smiths(1979)notes that students work with faculty outside the classroom during evening library hours or for some last minute coaching on the morning before examinations. They also find time to participate with in clubs. Aspen (2007) quotes that many parents find that boarding schools give their daughters more positive set of peers, so that peer pressure work for girls instead of



against them. Instead of peer pressure to experiment with sex and drugs, girls feel challenged to be the best they can be. Kleinfield (2007) notes that boarding schools help students to develop self-discipline, maturity and the ability to think critically and hence develop a positive self-esteem.

Feltham(2002) quotes that boarding schools emphasis on honor, getting along with others, developing an understanding for what it takes to be a good leader and learning to work independently. The kind of structure indicates that they are surrounded with positive guidance from adults and such promotes positive self-esteem. Ruzicka (2005) conceives that learning in day schools is interrupted because one is living into two environments, home and school. Television and video games may negatively influence the student and may lead to him/her not relating well with the learning interaction which may promote a negative self esteem. In a mixed day and boarding school, students form a truly integrated group.

## **2.8 Self Esteem and Students' Gender**

This refers to schools that are purely boys, girls or mixed. Haag (1998) states that studies indicated high self esteem for girls in single sex schools as compared to mixed sex schools. Research done on self esteem and locus on control, indicated that an individual's sense of worth on environment hinders or facilitates his goals in secondary education Foon(1998) found out that girls in North Ireland in single sex schools were less critical of their own behavioural conduct than girls in mixed schools. This lack of criticism was the single best predictor of global self worth in all girls' schools. For a girl in mixed schools, the physical appearance was the single best predictor of global self worth.

Ettinger (1994) argues that teachers' responses to their students are often guided by their own stereotypes about males and females. It is common for instructors to expect girls to excel in subjects like English and Literature whereas boys are often believed to be more proficient in mathematics and science. Guided by such assumptions, teachers may differently encourage and reward boys' and girls' performance in those particular subjects. Girls often learn to hang around their teachers and also work depending on their teachers. Boys on the other hand learn that independent or aggressive behaviors



works better. In elementary schools boys are much likely to receive praise, criticism and remedial help from their teachers than their elementary school girls

Berger (2000) states that in overly competitive conditions, many students especially girls find it easier and psychologically safe not to try thus avoid pain either for success or failure, a situation common in mixed schools. Girls especially, like to disguise their achievements by striving to appear super feminine- trying not to be super career women, super wives, super mothers, and super volunteers. This disguise of girls shuns them from striving to do their best in their performances. One wonders what boy or man would try to hide his ambition and accomplishments from others.

Emler (2005) quotes that gender is related to self esteem. Females on average have slightly lower self esteem than males with the gap being the widest in their late teens. Polydore (2000) states that males generally have greater self esteem than females. Males have greater self confidence. Females with a positive academic self concept are likely to achieve. Parke (1999) in a research study reports that teachers interrupted girls more frequently than boys during conversations and paid more attention to boy's assertive behaviour than to girls pushing and shoving.

## **2.9 Self Esteem and Students' Grade**

According to Mruk (2006) people with higher level of education have a high level of self esteem. People with low self esteem try to avoid exposing their unfavorable characteristics by avoiding anything that may risk revealing their flairs. They do not take any challenges that may also bring rewards such as furthering their education. James (1993) state that form III and IV boys interact more with their teachers than that form I and form II boys. In case of girls, the early maturers were more confident in form III and form IV than the late maturers.



## 2.10 Theoretical Framework

This study is based on two theories, Alfred Adler's theory of self esteem and Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory of self esteem.

### 2.10.1 Theory of Self Esteem

According to Ettinger (1994), the theory of Self esteem is based on Alfred Adler (1870-1937). Adler was a post Freudian Psychodynamic theorist and a close associate of Sigmund Freud. He later split with Freud and developed a theory centering on people's sense of competence or incompetence. Although his theory differs from Freud's, he retains core Freudian ideas that mark Alder's theory as Psychodynamic theorist. His theory is unique in that he emphasizes strongly on social needs, the need for self esteem and the value of psychological wholeness.

In Gray (1994), Adler argues that people's beliefs about their own ability influence their effort and achievements. He believes that a person is motivated socially through socially acquired drives especially to do with personal achievement. He states that one owns abilities and that people have differences in feeling of superiority and inferiority. This comes due the interaction between the child's achievements and responses of the society.

In Mruk (2006), Adler in 1930 argued that the need for self esteem can be thought as one of the social needs since a person's sense of self esteem depends very much on feedback from other people. Adler states that everyone begins life with a feeling of inferiority that stems from the helpless and dependent nature of early childhood. The manner in which people learn to cope or to overcome this feeling provides the basis for their lifelong personality.

Parke (1999) stipulates that in Adler's theory, some people are overwhelmed by their sense of inferiority and develop inferiority complex- they go through life feeling inadequate and dependent. Others develop superiority complex, which is a mask for their sense of inferiority. Their attempt to overcome inferiority complex centers on trying to prove that they are better than other people. Baumeister (2003) states that a person's overall performance is related to self esteem. Superiority and inferiority complexes describes kinds of students with negative or low self esteem. Instead of



interacting well with the learning environment, they feel inadequate to ask or answer questions due to fear of adults and peers. They suffer over inflation of self, sarcasm, and resistance to experimentation and are less creative making them perform poorly academically. Adler proposed that the psychologically healthy person has neither superiority nor inferiority complexes. He/ she have a mature sense of his own abilities and worth and can direct those abilities toward socially useful achievements. In this study, such a person is one with a positive or high self esteem.

Muola (2000) indicates that a student with a positive self esteem is associated with analytical thinking, creative ability, ability to participate in discussions and express a point of view and persistence in performing tasks. This enables the student to positively interact with the learning environment and is well socialized hence building a positively socialized personality. Therefore there is need to cultivate and enhance positive self esteem in our secondary schools if external efficiency is to be realized in our society.

#### **2.10.2 Hierarchy of Needs Theory of Self Esteem**

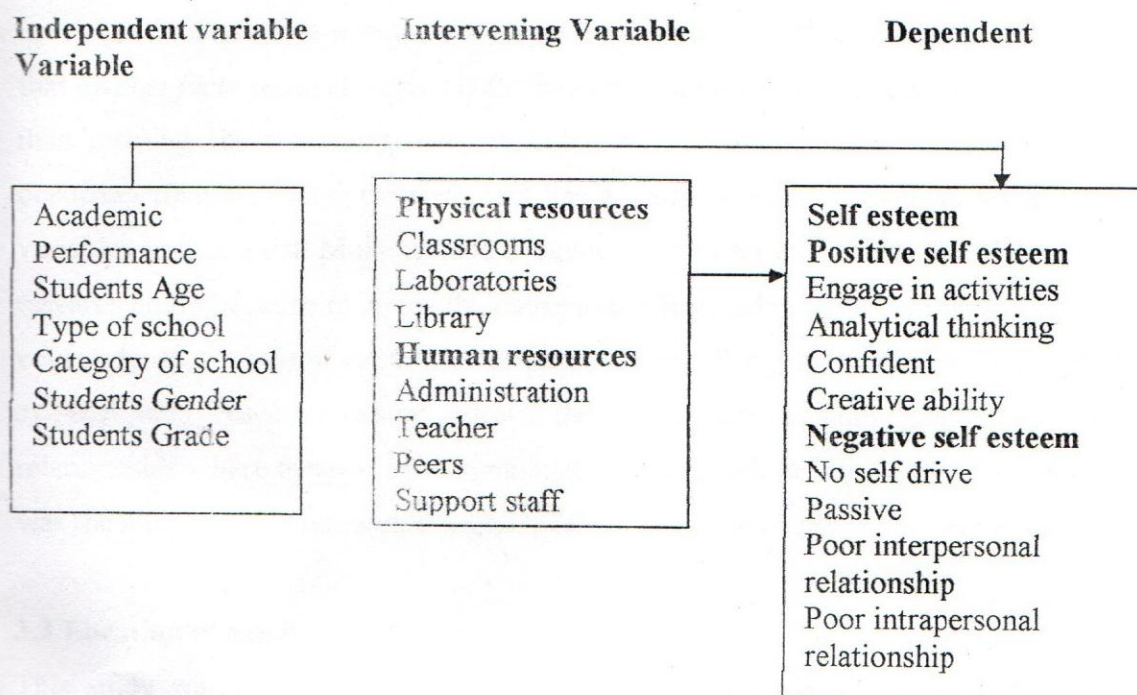
Ettinger (1994) stipulates that the hierarchy of needs theory was developed by Abraham Maslow (1908-1970). Maslow constructed a pyramid that has five levels of needs namely: physiological level, safety and security level, love and belonging level of needs, self esteem level of needs and self actualization level of needs. Maslow understood self esteem as the fourth level in his hierarchy of needs and stipulated it as strength, competency and mastery, confidence in the face of the world, desire for reputation, prestige, status, fame and glory, dominance and recognition.

According to Laird (1985) Maslow believed that self esteem could be summed up as judgments we pass on ourselves. It is one's self evaluation and it is the basic context in which we act and react, choose values, set our goals and meet the challenges that confront us. He argues that responses to events are shaped in part by whom and what we are. It is an experience of being competent to cope with the basic challenges of life and being worth of happiness. He sums up self esteem as pillars that include living consciously, self acceptance, self responsibility and self improvement. From the foregoing discussion it can be argued that one's self esteem is wholly responsible for academic excellence and a positively socialized personality that will fit in the society. Converse holds if the self esteem is low.



## 2.11 Conceptual Framework

Self esteem of secondary school students' is influenced by a number of independent variables namely: student's academic performance, student's age, type and category of school, gender and student's grade. This study assumes that if self esteem is high, the student interacts well with the learning environment and is able to perform better academically and hence developing a positive personality. If the self esteem is low, the student interaction with the learning environment is poor. This leads to poor performance academically and the student may be negatively socialized. The interrelationship of variables is expounded in the figure below.



**Fig 1: Factors that influence Students' Self Esteem in Secondary Schools**

The conceptual framework indicates that students' self esteem is influenced by six independent variables. However, the inter play between self esteem and the independent variable is influenced by extraneous factors such as the physical facilities and the human resources.



## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology that was used in this study. It comprised of research design, target population, sample and sampling procedure, instrumentation, validity and reliability of the research instrument, data collection procedure and data analysis.

#### 3.2 Research Design.

This study utilized *ex-post facto* research design. The research design was intended to investigate factors that influence students' self esteem. Kathuri and Pals (1993) state that *ex-post facto* research design is the most appropriate research design because rather than creating the treatment, the researcher examines the effects of naturalistically occurring treatment after the treatment has already occurred. it describes the state of variables as they exist. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) states that it is the most effective research study because many of the cause and effects relationship we wish to study in education do not permit experimental manipulation. Borg and Gall (1989) argues that *ex-post facto* research design allows the researcher to study cause and effects relationships where experimental manipulation is difficult or impossible. Therefore this was the most suitable research design chosen to determine variables in this study.

#### 3.3 Location of Study

This study was conducted in the only five Public secondary schools in Nyahururu Division, Laikipia West District. The area covered by Nyahururu Division is 435.8 Km<sup>2</sup>. The Secondary schools included: Njonjo Girls High School (Girls' Boarding), Ndururumo High School (Girls' and boys' Boarding), Ndururi Secondary School (Boys' day and girls' boarding), Munyaka Secondary School (Boys' and girls' day) and Igwariti Secondary School (Boys' and girls' day). The public secondary schools in Nyahururu Division are a representative of all other public secondary schools in the nation. This is because the variables being studied by the researcher were available.

### 3.4 Population of the study

The target population was from form one to form four students in the five public secondary schools Nyahururu Division. As per the records held by Divisional Educational office, the number of students' in November 2007 was 2340. Two secondary schools were provincial schools with one being a single sex school and the other a mixed sex school. Both were boarding schools. The other three schools were district schools. Two of them were mixed day schools while one was a mixed school girls boarding and boy day scholars. This information was illustrated in table 4.

Table 4

Population of the Study

Schools	Boys	Girls	Total
Ndururi	162	181	343
Ndururumo	402	368	870
Njonjo	-	540	540
Igwamiti	124	130	254
Munyaka	179	154	333
<b>Total</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>1373</b>	<b>2340</b>

### 3.5 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

According to Kathuri and Pals (1993), a population of 2340 subjects requires a sample of 330 subjects to be the representative of the target population. To calculate the sample size, the following formula was used: (See Appendix B)

$$S = \frac{X^2 NP (1-P)}{d^2 (N-1) + X^2 P (1-P)}$$

S= required sample size

N= the given sample size

P= population construction taken as 0.5 as this magnitude yields maximum possible size required.

d= the degree of accuracy as reflected by the amount of error that can be tolerated taken as 0.05

X<sup>2</sup>= table value of chi square for 1 degree of freedom relative to the desired level of confidence which is 3.841 for 0.95



### Calculations

The population N from the available data is 2340

$$P= 0.5$$

$$d= 0.05$$

$$X^2= 3.841$$

Substituting in the above equation S is calculated to 330.

To achieve this sample size a combination of Stratified sampling and systemic random sampling technique was used since the population being studied was not homogenous. The sample for each school was obtained through proportionate sampling within the school. In each school, the students' grade and gender will comprise the strata. The starting point for each stratum was randomly selected using the random numbers.

Table 5

#### The Sample Population

Schools	Boys	Girls	Total
Ndururi	25	27	52
Ndururumo	54	51	105
Njonjo	-	75	75
Igwamiti	23	24	47
Munyaka	27	24	51
Total	129	201	330

### 3.6 Instrumentation

Data was collected using self-administered questionnaires that were prepared by the researcher. The questionnaire had two sections. Section A dealt with the students' background information on age, gender, grade, type of school and category of school. Section B entailed self esteem questions that are standardized (Gray, 1994). The questionnaire was rated on a 5 point Likert-type scale.



### **3.6.1 Validity of the instrument**

In order to test the validity of the questionnaire a pilot study was conducted in Nyahururu Boys' High school. Also the questionnaire was given to three experts in the Department of Psychology, Counseling and Educational Foundations. On the basis of the response from the pilot study, the items that appeared to be unclear were rephrased to ensure that the instrument was valid. The pilot study also determined the time needed to complete the items.

### **3.6.2 Reliability of the instrument**

The use of a reliable instruments meant that accurate data was obtained. A pilot study was conducted in Nyahururu Boys' High school and presented 10% of the total sample. The purpose of the pilot study was to establish the clarity and comprehensibility of each item in the questionnaire. Similarly, the data from the pilot questionnaire was used to measure the instrument reliability. The reliability co-efficient was estimated using Cronbach Alpha method and 0.7 was obtained. The results of the pilot study indicated that the reliability was 70%. The pilot questionnaire was clear and was completed in good time.

### **3.7 Data Collection Procedures**

The researcher after satisfying the requirements of the Department of Psychology, Counseling and Educational Foundations sought the authority to carry out the research from the Ministry of Education. A courtesy call was made on Nyahururu Division Educational Officer before proceeding to collect data. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to the subject in the five schools. The procedure took four weeks. At the time of questionnaires' administration, the teacher counselor of every school was requested by the researcher to assist in randomly selecting a proportionate number of samples per grade and gender. The subjects were briefed on how to fill the questionnaire and then given 30 minutes to respond to the items in the questionnaire.

### 3.8 Data Analysis

All the data collected was interpreted in the light of the research questions to describe the factors that influence students' self esteem in secondary education. These included students' academic performance, age of the student, type and category of school, students' gender and students' grade. The researcher utilized Descriptive Statistics with the aid of Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS).



## CHAPTER FOUR RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, research data obtained are presented using descriptive statistics. The findings are presented in the form of tables and are followed by discussions for each research question that guided the study. The findings fall under two sub topics namely Characteristics of the respondents and factors influencing students' self esteem.

### 4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

This section represents the distribution of the respondents by academic performance, age, type of school, gender, category of school, year of study and the students' levels of self esteem.

#### 4.2.1 Distribution of students by Academic Performance

Table 6

Students' Academic Performance

Performance	N	%
Poor	57	18
Below Average	95	31
Average	71	22
Good	64	20
Very Good	33	19
Total	319	100

Table 6 presents the distribution of students by academic performance. A closer analysis of the data in table 6 shows that the majority of students, 31% were performing below average, while the lowest proportion was 9% of the students who were in the very good category. Those who were in poor category were 18%, average category were 22%, while those who were in the good category were 20%.

#### 4.2.2 Distribution of the Students by Age

Table 7

Students' Age

Age	N	%
Below 15	44	12
15-16	111	36
17-18	120	40
19-20	44	12
Total	319	100

Table 7 shows distribution of students by age. Table 7 indicates that majority of the students with 40% were in 17-18 age category. 36% was the 15-16 age category. The age category of below 15 and 19-20 had a 12% each. This intimates that most of secondary school students were in the age of 15-18 years. This is quite ordinary because the extremes- that is below 15 and above 19 are few since some could have started schooling earlier or on the other hand they had repeated some classes.

#### 4.2.3 Distribution of Students by Type of School

Table 8

Students' Type of School

Type of school	N	%
Provincial	189	61
District	130	39
Total	319	100

Table 8 shows the distribution of students by type of school. A closer examination of the data displayed in Table 8 shows that 61% of the students in the study sample were from provincial schools. District schools comprised of 39% of the sample. The large number of students was from provincial schools. This is because the schools had three to four streams while districts schools were either single or double streamed.



#### 4.2.4 Distribution of Students by School Category

Table 9

##### Students' School Category

Category	N	%
Boarding	183	61
Day and Boarding	49	13
Day	87	26
Total	319	100

Table 9 presents the distribution of students by category of school. The table indicates that majority of students who were 183 represented by 61% were in boarding schools. Day schools had 26% while Day and Boarding schools had 13%. The students who were in boarding category were more because they were from provincial schools which had three to four streams. The day and boarding category and day schools category were less because the schools were single or double streamed.

#### 4.2.5 Distribution of Students by Gender

Table 10

##### Students' Gender

Gender	N	%
Male	124	37
Female	195	63
Total	319	100

Table 10 shows the distribution of student by gender. The table indicates that majority of the students sample were females taking 63% as compared to males who comprised of 37% of the sample. The female category was larger than the male category because one of the provincial schools was a girls' school and all the other schools were mixed sex schools.

**4.2.6 Distribution of Students by Grade**  
**Table 11 Students' Grade**

Grade	N	%
Form 1	83	26
Form 2	82	26
Form 3	89	28
Form 4	65	20
Total	319	100

Table 12 presents the distribution of students by grade. The table presents the distribution of students by grade. A closer examination of the data displayed in Table 12 shows that the Form 3 class had the highest number of students with 28% of the sample. The Form 1 and form 2 followed with a 26% and the Form 4 class had 20% students in the sample. The largest population was from Form 3 with 89 students and the Form 4 were the least with 65 students.

**4.2.7 Distribution of Students by Self Esteem Levels**

**Table: 12**  
**Students' Self Esteem Levels**

Levels	N	%
Low	70	20
Moderate	193	64
High	56	16
Total	319	100

Table 12 shows the distribution of students by their levels of self esteem. The table indicates that 64% of the students had moderate levels of self esteem. Low self esteem category had 20% while high self esteem had 16%. This entails that the largest population of students were average in terms of self esteem. Such indicates a normal population with a normal distribution curve.



### 4.3 Factors influencing Self Esteem among Secondary School Students

This study was carried out to establish factors that influence students' self esteem in secondary schools. The factors under study included academic performance, students' age, and type of school, category of school, gender and students' grade. This analysis forms the core of discussion in the succeeding sectors.

#### 4.3.1 Self Esteem and Academic Performance

The first objective sought to establish whether self esteem is influenced by academic performance among secondary schools students.

**Table 13**  
**Self Esteem and Academic Performance**

Academic Performance	N	Self esteem		
		High	Moderate	Low
Very Good	33	64%	36%	0%
Good	64	18%	77%	5%
Average	71	10%	78%	12%
Below Average	94	12%	65%	23%
Poor	57	0%	47%	53%
Total	319			

Table 13 presents the effect of academic performance on student self esteem. A close inspection of the data indicates that the students in 'Very Good' category had 64% level of high self esteem and 36% had moderate level of self esteem. The data also indicates that none in the 'Poor' academic performance had high self esteem and 53% of them had low self esteem. These results concur with earlier findings of Fuller (1987) who state that high self esteem is positively related to pattern of successful achievements in spelling, arithmetic and written language. High self esteem is a possible course of academic achievement.

### 4.3.2 Influence of Self Esteem on Students' Age

The second objective sought to establish whether students' age influences their self esteem. Table 14 presents the influence of self esteem in secondary schools students' age

**Table 14**

#### **Self Esteem and Students' Age**

Self Esteem					
Age	N	High	Moderate	Low	Mean
Below 15	44	20%	68%	12%	2.09
15-16	111	13%	63%	24%	1.89
17-18	120	13%	64%	23%	1.89
19-20	44	23%	68%	9%	2.15
Total	319				

The data in table 14 shows that the age '19-20' had the highest self esteem of 23% and the lowest level of self esteem was in the age '19-20' with 68%. The age '15-16' had a low self esteem level of 24%. The mean of age '19-20' was 2.15 and 'below 15' had a mean of 2.09. The age between '15-16' and '17-18' had a similar mean of 1.89. Therefore this intimates that older people tend to have high level of Self Esteem than do young people (Gray 1994).

### 4.3.3 Influence Self Esteem and Type of School

The third objective sought to determine whether self esteem is influenced by type of school. Table 15 presents the influence of type of school on students' self esteem.

**Table 15**

#### **Self Esteem and Type of School**

Self Esteem					
School	N	High	Moderate	Low	Mean
Provincial	189	13%	63%	24%	1.9
District	130	18%	67%	15%	2.04
Total	319				



A close analysis of table 15 indicates that students in district schools had high self high esteem of 18% while provincial schools had 13%. District schools had a moderate self esteem level of 67% as compared to provincial schools, which had 63%. The provincial schools had 24% of students with low level self esteem while district schools had 15%. The students' self esteem mean of district schools was 2.02 while provincial schools had a mean of 1.9. These findings contradict Fuller (1987) who stipulates that academic ability promotes a positive self.

#### 4.3.4 Influence of Category of Schools on Self Esteem.

The fourth objective sought to determine whether students' self esteem is influenced by category of school. Table 16 presents the influence of category of schools on students' self esteem.

**Table 16**  
**Students' Self Esteem and Category of schools**

Self Esteem Category	N	High	Moderate	Low	Mean
Boarding	183	13%	63%	24%	1.9
Day & Boarding	48	17%	71%	12%	2.1
Day	88	19%	64%	17%	2.03
Total	319				

The data in Table 16 shows that the 'Day' category had a high level of self esteem of 19%. 'Day and Boarding' had 17% while 'Boarding' had 13%. The 'Boarding' had the highest percentage of low self esteem of 24% and 'Day' had a low self esteem level of 12%. 'Day and Boarding' category had a highest mean of 2.1, 'Day' had a mean of 2.03 while 'Boarding' had a mean of 1.9. The findings of this data contradict with Feltham (2002) and Kleinflied (2007) who stated that boarding schools help student develop self discipline, maturity and the ability to think critically hence promote a positive self esteem.

### 4.3.5 Influence of Students' Gender on Self Esteem .

The fifth objective sought to determine whether students' self esteem is influenced by the students' gender. Table 17 presents the influence of gender on students self esteem.

**Table 17**

#### **Self Esteem and Gender**

Self esteem				
Sex	N	High	Moderate	Low
Male	124	19%	64%	17%
Female	195	14%	65%	21%
Total	319			

The data in Table 17 was used to analyze whether students self esteem is influenced by gender. Results of the analysis indicate that 'Males' had a higher self esteem of 19% while 'Females' had 14%. The 'Females' had a low self esteem level of 21% while 'Males' had 17%. The findings concur with Emler (2005) who states that females on average have a slightly lower self esteem than males.

### 4.3.6 Influence of Students' grade on Self Esteem.

The sixth objective sought to determine whether students' self esteem is influenced by the students' grade. Table 18 presents the influence of grades on students' self esteem.

**Table 18**

#### **Self esteem and students' grade**

Grade	N	Self esteem			mean
		High	Moderate	low	
Form 1	83	12%	71%	17%	1.95
Form 2	82	14%	64%	22%	1.91
Form 3	89	16%	61%	23%	1.86
Form 4	65	23%	62%	15%	2.09
Total	319				



The data in Table 18 revealed that Form 4 had the highest level of self esteem of 23% followed by Form 4 with 16%. The Form 2 class had 14% and the Form 1 had 12% of high self esteem. The table further shows that Form 3 had 23% of low self esteem and Form 4 had a low level of self esteem of 15%. A closer analysis of the data shows that Form 4 had the highest mean of 2.09 while Form 3 had the lowest mean of 1.86. This information concurs with Mruk (2006) who states that people with higher level of education have high level of self esteem.

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary and conclusion of the study. It also gives recommendations of the study. Areas for further research are also suggested.

#### 5.2 Summary of the findings

This section presents a summary of the major findings.

- (i) From the findings of the study, there were 319 out of 330 students who were used as a sample study to represent 2340 students. 11 students that were part of the sample did not respond to the questionnaire. Of these, 124 were boys and 195 girls. Majority of the students, 180 out of 319 were boarders, 98 from day schools and 52 from day and boarding schools. According to grades, the Form threes were the most with a number of 89, and the least number of subjects were Form fours who were 65.
- (ii) According to the results, students with high and moderate self esteem were very good or good academically.
- (iii) Students who were poor academically lacked in the high self esteem level.
- (iv) Age of students influenced their self esteem. The student between the 19-20 years had the highest level of self esteem followed by those below 15 years.
- (v) Students from District schools had higher mean of self esteem than those from provincial schools.
- (vi) Day schools students revealed higher levels of self esteem than either Boarding or Day and Boarding schools.
- (vii) The study also revealed that Form fours had the highest percent of high self esteem while the form ones had the lowest percent of self esteem.
- (viii) The finding also revealed that boys had a higher self esteem than girls.
- (ix) According to the study, Good or Very Good academic performance was achieved with high or moderate self esteem.
- (x) Older students had high level of self esteem than younger students.
- (xi) Gender of students affects their self esteem.
- (xii) Grade affected the students' self esteem. Form fours had the highest mean, Form ones followed while form twos and threes had the lowest mean of self esteem.



### 5.3 Conclusions of the study

The following are the conclusions of the study.

- (i) Student with high self esteem and moderate self esteem perform well academically.
- (ii) Students with low self esteem either perform below average or poor academically.
- (iii) The older students have higher self esteem than all others.
- (iv) The age between 15-16 and 17-18 had a low mean of self esteem.
- (v) Boys have a high self esteem than girls.
- (vi) Students in district schools had a high self esteem than in provincial schools

### 5.4 Recommendations

This study makes the following recommendations

- (i) A lot of effort should be made to improve students' self esteem by imparting them with decision making skills, stress management skills, assertive skills, time management skills in guidance and counseling.
- (ii) More Day, Day and Boarding schools should be encouraged since this seemed to create an environments conducive for high self esteem.
- (iii) The teachers, students and parents should work together to enhance positive self esteem which seemed to improve the overall performance of the students.
- (iv) Life skills such as assertive skills, self awareness skills in guidance and counseling that enhance positive self esteem should allocated time in the time table.
- (v) Extra attention should be given to students in form two and three who portrayed moderate or low self esteem in order to improve their self esteem levels.

### 5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

The scope of this study was limited. Therefore, the following areas for further research could be explored:

- (i) This study can be replicated in a different district other than Laikipia West District or an urban area for comparison purposes.
- (ii) A study can be carried out to establish the influence of secondary teachers' self esteem on students' performance.
- (iii) A study can also be carried out to ascertain the influence of teachers as role model on secondary school students.



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## APPENDIX A

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The researcher is a student at Egerton University Laikipia Campus undertaking a M.Ed degree program in Guidance and Counselling.

This questionnaire intends to solicit views on the influence of self-esteem on students' academic performance in Nyahururu Division.

The information you provide in the questionnaire will be used for research purpose only. Therefore do not write your name or that of your school on the questionnaire.

Please use a tick or fill in your responses in the spaces provided.

#### SECTION A

1. What is your sex?

Male

Female

2. What is your age in years? \_\_\_\_\_

3. In which class are you in?

Form 1

Form 2

Form 3

Form 4

4. Is your school a Provincial school or District School? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What Category is your School? Girls Boarding ( ) Boys Boarding ( )

Mixed Boys and Girls Boarding ( )

Girls Boarding and Boys Day ( )

Mixed Boys and Girls Day ( )

6. Since you joined this School, is your academic performance?

A-Very Good, B-Good, C-Average, D - Below Average, E - Poor

Very Good ( )

Good ( )

Average ( )

Below average ( )

Poor ( )

## SECTION B

The following statements refer to the way a student feel about him/herself. Using the word or words given below, tick the choice that fits you best

Strongly Agree (SA)

Agree (A)

Not Sure (U)

Disagree (D)

Strongly Disagree (SD)

1. Do you have a hard time nurturing yourself?

SA                      A                      U                      D                      SD

2. Have you ever turned down an invitation to a school function because of the way you felt about yourself?

SA                      A                      U                      D                      SD

3. Do you get your sense of self-worth from the approval of others?

SA                      A                      U                      D                      SD

4. Are you supportive of others but underrate yourself?

SA                      A                      U                      D                      SD

5. Whenever things go wrong in life do you blame others?

SA                      A                      U                      D                      SD

6. Do you react to disappointment by blaming others?

SA                      A                      U                      D                      SD

7. Do you begin each day with a negative attitude towards schoolwork?

SA                      A                      U                      D                      SD

8. Do you feel undeserving ever in your class?

SA                      A                      U                      D                      SD

9. Do you ever feel like an impostor and that soon deficiencies will be exposed?

SA                      A                      U                      D                      SD

10. Do you worry about what others think of your views?

SA                      A                      U                      D                      SD

11. Do you believe that being hard on yourself is the best motivation for change?

SA                      A                      U                      D                      SD

12. Do your good points seem ordinary and your failing's points all -important?

SA                      A                      U                      D                      SD



13. Do you sometimes feel unattractive?  
SA                    A                    U                    D                    SD
14. Have you ever felt your accomplishments are due to luck, but your failures due to incompetence or inadequacy?  
SA                    A                    U                    D                    SD
15. Have you ever felt that if you are not a total success, then you are a failure?  
SA                    A                    U                    D                    SD
16. Do you sometimes feel unappreciated?  
SA                    A                    U                    D                    SD
17. Do you sometimes feel lonely?  
SA                    A                    U                    D                    SD
18. Do you struggle with feelings of inferiority?  
SA                    A                    U                    D                    SD
19. Do other people's opinions count more to you than your own?  
SA                    A                    U                    D                    SD
20. Do you criticize yourself often?  
SA                    A                    U                    D                    SD
21. Do you hesitate to answer questions because of what others might think?  
SA                    A                    U                    D                    SD

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO OPERATION**

**APPENDIX B  
RANDOMLY CHOSEN SAMPLE**

N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	241	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

N= Population size  
S= Sample size



**APPENDIX C  
KNEC GRADING SYSTEM**

<b>Marks</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Points</b>
		12
80-100	A	
		11
75-80	A-	
		10
70-74	B+	
		9
67-69	B	
		8
62-66	B-	
		7
57-61	C+	
		6
52-56	C	
		5
45-51	C-	
		4
39-44	D+	
		3
31-38	D	
		2
22-30	D-	
		1
1-22	E	

SALLY G. THIONGO,  
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NYAHURURU.

14<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2008.

THE DEO,  
NYAHURURU DIVISION,  
P.O. BOX 141,  
NYAHURURU.

*Permission Granted*  
EDUCATION OFFICER *14/10/08*  
NYAHURURU

Dear Sir/Madam,

REF: DATA COLLECTION IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN  
NYAHURURU DIVISION

I am a student in Laikipia Campus, Egerton University undertaking a Masters Degree in Education (Guidance and Counseling).

Am writing to request your office to allow me to collect data in the schools stipulated above in order to finish my report.

Thank you in advance.

Yours sincerely,

*Sally*

SALLY THIONG'O

EGERTON UNIVERSITY LIBRARY