

**STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF CHARACTER EDUCATION INFLUENCE ON
MORAL BEHAVIOUR IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA**

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**A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial Fulfilment of the
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Egerton University**

EGERTON UNIVERSITY

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DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Declaration;

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented in this university or any other for the award of a degree.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my dear wife Grace for the invaluable time, emotional, material and spiritual support. To our beloved children: Lynette, Marvelyne, Innocent and Bryan for their encouragement towards the accomplishment of this work. To my late parents (Eligius and Pacifica) with great sanctity, humility and honour for sound upbringing.

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ABSTRACT

This study probed how public and private university students in Kenya perceive character education in the university and its possible role in influencing moral behaviour. Whereas students' perception of character education was examined as independent variable representing human virtues, the moral behaviour was examined as dependent variable representing universal moral principles of honesty, responsibility and self-discipline. The study sought to mitigate the risk of exclusive emphasis on mere academic prowess at the expense of ethical, emotional and interpersonal competencies. The problem was looking at a mismatch of students' intellectual character and moral behaviour. The research objectives were to compare students' perception of character education influence on moral behaviour in public and private universities in Kenya. A descriptive survey design was used for this study. The target population for the study was 54,864 undergraduate students, 49,750 from public and 5,114 from private universities. A sample size of 381 students was selected. A questionnaire was used to collect data on the study variables. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.813. The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (version 22). Descriptive statistics used included frequencies, percentages and means. Inferential statistics used was multiple regressions. The level of significance was alpha 0.05. The influence of students perception of character education on the moral behaviour was significant at $\beta=.909$, $p=.001$, regardless of academic levels and sex of the students. The study concluded that students' perception of character education influence on moral behaviour was significantly higher in private universities than in public universities. The major recommendation of the study is that Kenya public universities should introduce character education in their curricula. The aim is to promote moral behaviour and enhance quality of graduates by emphasizing on character qualities besides performance merit.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CE	- Character Education
CUE	- Commission for University Education
CUEA	- Catholic University of Eastern Africa
EU	- Egerton University
KABU	- Kabarak University
KIPPRA	- Kenya Institute for Public Policy, Research and Analysis
KUCCPS	- Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Services
MU	- Moi University
NACOSTI	- National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation
UK	- United Kingdom
USA	- United States of America
USCEPQ	- University Students Character Education Perception Questionnaire
SPSS	- Statistical Package for Social Sciences

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

University students will most likely enhance self-worth, respect other people and recognize the sanctity of life. This may be as a result of character education. Cheng and Lee (2007) observe that since the beginning of this century, scholars in the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and Japan found that the world's new crisis is the ignorance of "character education" at schools and universities. The United States Government in the year 2000 advocated a national character education programme to promote and fund character education in universities. Gusfield (1991) observes that American universities have performed functions for a select and specialized mission. However the function within the realm of public controversy without a clear definition of their mission posed difficulties in responding to student criticisms, demands, and actions.

Agboola and Tsai (2008) argue that the students of the past and that of the present generations would dive into some detrimental acts of substance abuse, stealing, and felony crimes. These behavioural irregularities in the past quickly brought about some concerns for the educators, parents, and government entities. Skaggs and Bodenshorn (2006) observe that character education was a major part of the USA public schools' mission until the 1950s, when it was phased out of public education. The reason for the decline was the fear that teaching morality would be equated to the teaching of religion. Character education made a comeback in the 1980s and 1990s as a result of perceptions of the decline in the quality of public education.

Lickona (2007) defines character education as the deliberate effort to develop virtues that are good for the individual and society. Character education has deep roots in the American public school system. In the 1990s, some educators prescribed character education once again as a response to a list of youth problems in society. A good description of contemporary character education includes: cultivation of core ethical values; definition of character to include thinking, feeling and behaviour; promoting campus life as a caring community; providing students with opportunities to practice morality; involve parent and community members in building character; evaluate character education based on the school, teacher and student's performance.

Watz (2011) writes that what is termed 'character education' in today's world has been called many things throughout the history of education. Character education has been both a formal and informal part of academic process. Much of character education in the United States

can be closely tied in its roots to the education of character in Europe, which laid the foundation for the formal American system of education. Through historical analysis, studies sought to uncover and reflect upon one pathway that brought character education to the shores of America. A variety of contributions from significant figures and organizations, from the 18th century through today, were highlighted in order to provide some understanding as to the complexity of the roots of character education in America. Relatively recent, executive action pertaining to character education has been on the rise as noted by a significant increase in funding.

President Reagan began the fiscal race to support character education when he emphasized the immediate need for character education in schools. President Clinton then acted with urgency when he tripled funding for character education. More recently, President George W. Bush also asked Congress to triple dollars allocated toward character education. It is difficult to estimate the amount of money that is spent each year on character education programmes because of the complex mix of funding that comes from federal, state, and local governments, and also from individual schools, businesses, and fundraising campaigns.

Syre, Pesa and Cockley (1999) write that alcohol abuse continued to be a serious problem during the 1997-1998 academic years for universities across the United States. Alcohol abuse led to deaths by overdose, arrests, violence, and campus riots. Proposed solutions to the problems vary. Some academics suggested that the answers lay with stronger educational programmes while other suggested campus-wide environment policy changes. Still, others preferred stronger campus and community law enforcement.

Park (2017) avers that one of the major policies from the Korean government was to reinforce character education across the national curriculum. On the other hand, local education authorities, generally having a more progressive political leaning started to introduce legislations to enhance democratic citizenship with the goal of fostering active citizenship. In 2015 the Korean government introduced a 'Promotion of Character Education Law', which was designed to strengthen human dignity, to secure the values stated in the Korean constitution, and to educate citizens to be better equipped in terms of their character in order that they may contribute to the development of the society and the nation.

Frecks (2015) notes that the present world is in a moral crisis as educational institutions experience behavioural problems. Statistics prove that there is a drastic decline in morals, values, standards, ethics, character and behaviour where colleges and universities seem to indulge in crisis after crisis. It is perceived that behavioural problems such as substance and drug abuse, violence, theft, vandalism, bullying, aggression, immorality, examination fraud,

amongst others, are increasing among students. Value and character education provides the building blocks for the inherent preservation of a healthy society. It is the art of life that keeps the environment friendly, free and safe living in unity and in peace. The influence of relevant role-players and institutions with regard to values and character-development should ensure the provision of a successful life.

Freeks (2015) continues to observe that schools, colleges and institutions of higher learning in South African have serious problems when it comes to the behaviour of students and the values that they espouse. However, these institutions impact remarkable influence on students' lives with regard to character-development and character-building. Crime, violence and the decay of values are serious problems in South African schools and have had enormous implications for the new democratic South Africa. Discipline was a serious problem in universities, and the instilling and developing of values did not seem to receive priority. However, it was believed that universities played significant influence in the lives of learners. South Africa's situation was made more difficult, among others, through the variety of population groups and concomitant cultural differences, which play an important role in the value systems established among students.

Kapner (2008) states that most widespread health problems on university campuses in the United States are high-risk alcohol and other drug use among students. Numerous campus riots point to alcohol as a key contributing factor. While students use illegal drugs at much lower rates than alcohol, illicit drug use has led to serious tragedies, including violence, sexual assault and rape, hospitalization for overdoses, and premature death. Institutions of higher education are increasingly implementing creative programmes and aggressive policies to curb alcohol/drug use and its associated negative consequences. Many had begun comprehensive prevention approaches that go beyond traditional educational programmes to emphasize strategies aimed at changing the physical, social, legal, and economic environment on campus. Recommendation for corrective measures include efforts to create safe institutions, respond to crises, prevent alcohol and other drug abuse, ensure the health and well-being of students, and teach students good character and citizenship.

Saidek, Islami and Abdoludin (2016) argue that character is defined as an education which aims to cultivate one's inner life for right and good and develop humane character for others, community and environment. Character education can be conceptualized through key virtues of character such wisdom, courage, integrity, temperance and filial piety, and some of the virtues came from moral and ethical backgrounds. Weak character education raises the problem of corruption. The emergence of character education is motivated by the growing erosion of

the character of the Indonesian nation, as well as human development efforts of Indonesia who have a certain noble and virtuous character.

Saidek, Islami and Abdoludin (2016) contend that character as a moral excellence or character built on various virtues which in turn only has meaning when it is based on the values prevailing in the culture. The issue of national character has become the public spotlight. Emerging problems in society such as corruption, violence, sex crimes, vandalism, fights mass, consumptive economic life, political life is not productive, and so become a topic of hot discussion on various occasions. Various alternative solutions to the issue of national character have been proposed such as regulation, legislation, as well as increased efforts to the implementation and application of the law stronger.

Suyitno, Zaenuri, Sugiharti, Suyitno and Baba (2019) postulate that through character education, students can be educated and formed for good sense of nationalism, honesty, discipline, and responsibility. Therefore, character values need to be given to students from an early age. Indonesia is one of the developing countries, obviously very interested to find out how to integrate the values of character into the learning process in the classroom. Japan is known to have the ability to provide character education through the learning process to its students. The integrity character is the underlying value of the behaviour that makes itself a trustworthy person in speech, action, occupation, commitment and loyalty to human values, and moral integrity. The character of integrity includes an attitude of responsibility as a citizen, actively involved in social life, through the consistency of actions and words based on truth. The sub-values are an honest attitude, love for truth, faithfulness, moral commitment, anti-corruption, justice, responsibility, exemplary, and respect for the dignity of the individual.

Ayish and Deveci (2019) theorize that while many young adults lack personal responsibility for learning, little empirical research exists that examines how university students perceive or operationalize this construct. Students perceive responsibility in terms of what responsibility means, the effect responsible behaviour has on their own and peers' learning. Results indicate that most students can recognize the benefits of being responsible for their own learning and for supporting their peers' learning, but do not always operationalize this understanding. If perceptions matter, then the way students perceive personal responsibility and its impact on learning is an area that deserves special attention. There is lack of research that explores students' responsible behaviours and the effect this behaviour has on peers. There is also relatively little analysis of students' responsible behaviours in learning environments. Many students readily acknowledge that they are responsible for their own learning and that such responsibility can lead to success in many aspects of their lives. If some assignments are not helping students develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning and need

to support the learning of their peers, then adjustments should be made to the way such assignments are structured, delivered, and assessed.

Hidayati, Budiyo, and Sugiman (2018) write that character of responsibility is an important character that Indonesian students must possess. The attempts to strengthen the character of student responsibilities require in-depth information about the actual state of student's responsibility. Indonesian National Education System strongly emphasizes education that is able to make Indonesian students not only have intellectual intelligence but also noble character with good personality and self-control of passion. Responsibility is defined as the behaviour of a person to carry out the duties and obligations that he should do to self, others and environment. Behaviours that reflect the responsibility character are: carrying out the individual's duties well, taking risks for any action taken, not accusing others without accurate evidence, returning borrowed items, acknowledge and apologize for the wrong doing and keep the promise. Based on the various opinions above, it can be concluded that the responsibility is the attitude of a person who is firm in making decisions and ready and dare to bear the risks or consequences for each decision.

Rafferty (2010) avers that although a university may not be responsible for the damage of personal property by students a certain form of monitoring must take place. Some universities actually have a policy that places the liability back in the campus responsibility if vandalism is a crime caused by stalking and requires the institution to handle the situation. Previously the only crimes required to be recorded through the crime statistics for the three most recent calendar years concerning the occurrence on campus were criminal homicide, murder and non negligent manslaughter, negligent manslaughter, sex offenses, forcible sex offenses, non forcible sex offenses, and robbery. Others were aggravated assault, burglary, motor vehicle theft, arson, arrests for liquor law violations, drug law violations, and illegal weapons possession. While these crimes were listed as major crimes, vandalism was not a major leap from these crimes. Acts of arson might in fact be considered vandalism, or vandalism might occur as a result of some of the crimes in the list. Vandalism is another common form of criminality in college settings tied to alcohol use and abuse. More than one out of every ten students who drink admits to damaging property while intoxicated.

Cheng and Lee (2007) note that character education promotes the universal value of hard work, responsibility, respect, honesty, justice, and self-control. China's Ministry of Education adopts various approaches in integrating character education into school curriculum. For instance, universities emphasize self-education, fairness, and integrity based on the different psychological and physical development of students. Universal Peace Federation in Canada describes character education as the deliberate effort to promote universally desirable qualities such as respect, responsibility, honesty and integrity. It is meant to instil positive qualities and encourage students to emulate good behaviours and become role-models for others. It also develops the interpersonal relationships within the university, minimizes behavioural

problems, and improves academic achievements. Students expect teachers and other relevant role players to engage in character development and values education; because they believe that the teacher can make a difference to their personal moral development. Students see them as their mentors and role models.

Malinda, Mwanja and Maithya (2017) postulate that character education helps young learners to develop important human qualities and virtues such as justice, diligence, compassion, respect, honesty, courage, and to understand why it is important to live by them. A holistic approach to character education development should seek to develop the cognitive, emotional, moral and behavioural dispositions required to do the right thing and do one's best work. As a result of this, learners grow to understand core values by studying and discussing them, observing behavioural models, and resolving problems involving the values.

Students learn to care about core values by developing empathy skills, forming caring relationships, developing good work habits, taking on meaningful responsibilities, helping to create community, hearing inspirational stories, and reflecting on life experiences. They learn to act upon core values by striving to do their best and be their best in all areas of academic life. This education is geared towards producing socially, morally and mentally developed persons. Learners are introduced to the sense of responsibility, ideas of right in relation to the surrounding world and are inculcated with skills necessary for life and service. Holistic education for character formation is the basic premise that education addresses the development of the intellectual, affective, aesthetic and spiritual aspects of a person helping learners to attain satisfactory social adjustment develop a responsible attitude towards life.

Suhartini, Sekarningrum, Sulaeman and Gunawan (2019) describe character education as a way of adjusting the behaviours of students in order to become good citizens. Character education is a strategic choice in the effort to shape student character. In Taiwan character reforms focus on how to plan, implement and evaluate character-based academic culture to meet moral education needs. In moral behaviour; the students should be taught to make moral judgments, identify between the models of correct and incorrect behaviour.

Suhartini, Sekarningrum, Sulaeman and Gunawan (2019) continue to observe that in Indonesia, there are still various problems in education. The process and results of education still focus on cognitive, while the affective aspects have not been optimally developed, so character education is a necessity to be developed in learning institutions. Indonesia stipulates characters to include in the curriculum, namely: kindness, honesty, discipline, tolerance, hard work/persistence, creativity, independence, democracy, curiosity, patriotism, nationalism,

appreciation on achievement, friendliness/communicative competence, peace loving, literacy, care for environment, social responsibility.

According to Schaps and Bodenshorn (2001) character education is meant to complement academic knowledge by engaging and inspiring students' hearts and their minds. In Sweden, character education curriculum is developed to cover attributes such as trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, citizenship, honesty, courage, diligence, and integrity. Arthur (2015) argues that character is intimately linked to the ethos of society itself and shaped by public opinion. He describes character education as a way of educating the head, the heart and the hand. Secularization tends to favour power, material wealth and mere academic prowess at the expense of character.

Hadi (2015) states that character education practitioners are currently searching for a model for teaching character values to students. Previously, character education was considered the responsibility of teachers of religion or civic education, and guidance and counselling teachers. However, following the 2013 curriculum, lecturers are required to integrate character education into their teaching-learning processes. In this case, a model that promotes the integration of good values into classroom sessions is needed. Instructors are required to play the role of integrating good values suitable for their specific courses into their teaching. Identifying an appropriate model for teaching good character fits with the aims of national education as pointed out in Indonesia's Constitution of 2003. Character education efforts imparted greater confidence in the teaching of character values to students. Character education may be defined as a type of education that aims to nurture a child's behaviour and personality through moral and ethical education. The purpose of this kind of education is to cultivate the values of honesty, responsibility. Character does not form by itself. That is, although human beings have innate potential to develop good character, this potential will not develop properly if it is not nurtured through education. Both formal and informal education is involved in the formation of a character. Teachers were expected to be able to instil values inside their lecture theatres through the course contents delivery to students.

Character Creativity Initiative pilot study findings in 2013 by the Kenya Institute for Public Policy, Research and Analysis; the Ministry of Education and other partners revealed that nurturing character and creativity improves students' academic performance and reduced social problems such as violence. Chepchieng (2004) writes that the most serious problems facing education in Kenya's public universities have been persistent student disturbances.

The Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Education System of Kenya in 1999, asserts that excessive alcohol consumption; drug abuse and elements of anti-social practices

were major contributing factors to students' unrest in the universities. Some graduates did not reflect the kind of personalities and social behaviour that one would associate with university learners. The Government of Kenya through the National Youth Service Pre-University Programme in the 1980s was meant to address students' adverse conduct and improve discipline. Buckley (1972) emphasizes that the goal is not just control but self-control of the impulses.

The Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Education System of Kenya (1999), recommends that university students should receive preventive counselling as opposed to mere creation of offices where students with problems may wish to report. Guidance and counselling programmes, especially career guidance interventions, may likely consolidate and inform holistic education for adjusted human development. These programmes may articulate the validity of moral values which affirm human dignity. Such values promote human development and welfare of the individual person, serve the common good, and meet the classical tests of reversibility; that is, would you want to be treated in a like manner?, and universalizability; that is, would you want all persons to act in a like manner, in similar situations?

Gert (2005) argues that students who live by moral ideals are most likely to promote healthy and mutually beneficial interpersonal relationships. University students can form perceptions of character education by witnessing upright behaviours among their colleagues. Perception is the abstract activity of the mind trying to understand phenomena such as space, event, person or idea. Students' perception of character education is the mental image of abstract association of the two notions of 'character' and 'education'. This is based on observable behaviour of student colleagues.

Sherman (1989) writes that living with reasoned choices (critical thinking) informs a sense of self and purpose. University students' perception of character education may be informed by their understanding of moral values which are best transmitted through warm and caring interpersonal relationships. This may be enhanced through positive moral influence as students are treated with respect.

Otwori (2007) equates success to career. He asserts that students who pursue university degrees leading to various professional careers may feel deprived unless moral ideals are core in their study. Character education curriculum may provide systematic approach to students who seek careers for successful life. Students embrace the virtue of humility as necessary complementary attribute to intellectual prowess. This is essential to students' future success as well as to a healthy, prosperous and humane society. Many parents and educators mostly

attach a great deal of importance to their children (students) getting good grades and enjoying high self-esteem at the expense of ethical, emotional and interpersonal competencies.

Freeks (2015) states that values education and character education are forms of education that aims to surface the universal values and human behaviour. Thus, character education must be compatible with students' best insights about psychological functioning and learning. Character education has been cited by many scholars as an efficient and effective tool for teaching and learning, but academic achievement means nothing if character education is not integrated with academic prowess. Therefore mankind is essentially a creature of values. Thus, the definition of key terms values and values education. The English language word 'value' comes from the Latin word "valere" and shares this root with the French word "valour", meaning that which is truly valuable, worthy to be striven after, that makes life worth living. Values and education have been inseparable since ancient times, and are inseparably bound to one another, and the school (or college) as an educational institution has the task of providing values education. Thus, education cannot be seen separately from values.

The definition of character has been the focus of philosophical discourses for millennia, where one question of ethics has been: who is the good person? This kind of question draws the attention to the ethics of being, to those elements in the moral life that reside within a person. That is why the term character is derived from a Greek word that means to mark, for example, in the case of an engraving and it is described as the moral and mental qualities distinctive to the individual.

Freeks (2015) adds that defining character seems to be no straight forward matter however; character-development is nonetheless considered a traditional goal of formal education. Character development cannot be accomplished without developing students' capacity to think critically and thoughtfully. Character-building involves the development of habits and practices that are mostly needed to "live" and function well in a world of difference and it promotes the development of student character.

Arthur (2015) writes that character includes moral virtues such as honesty and kindness, civic virtues such as community service, intellectual virtues such as curiosity and creativity, and performance virtues such as diligence and perseverance. Cheng and Lee (2007) argue that character education enhances the awareness of ethical behaviour. Denise, White and Peterfreud (2002) affirm that honesty and self-discipline are character qualities which inspire mentally challenging but interesting tasks. The individual's character depends on the comparative development of reason, emotion and desire.

Kamau (2010) notes that the concept of character formation suggests that human persons are not born morally mature rather they are morally formed. University students are likely to form perception of character education by witnessing upright behaviours among their colleagues. This is based on observable behaviour of student colleagues. Students' perception of character education is the mental abstraction and association of two notions, 'character' and 'education'. Perception is the abstract activity of the mind trying to understand phenomena such as space, event or person. Students' perceptions of character education guided by conventional rules are likely to impact positively on interpersonal relationships and personal behaviour.

That character development is dependent on nurture. Students can learn moral ideals; emulate role models, identify similarities and differences of a given phenomenon through persistent exposure to academic disciplines such as visual history, literature and political philosophy. Students who live by moral ideals most likely promote healthy and mutually beneficial interpersonal relationships. University academic programmes on moral ethics are designed for learners to appreciate the significance of upright conduct for individual and social health. Character development is the dynamic interplay between internal determinants and external influences in order for positive growth to occur.

Skaggs and Bodenshorn (2006) observe that the trend of character education practice involves an emphasis on similarities rather than differences. It is a balance of moral reasoning skills and establishing behavioural habits, a balance of focus on the responsibilities of the individual and the community which includes cognitive, affective, and behavioural dimensions.

Davies, Stephen and Nick (2005) postulate that character education encompasses moral education and non-moral aspects such as civic or cultural qualities. Wime (2001) argues that the goal of university character education curriculum is to guide students in moral knowing, moral feeling and moral doing. Character education usually teaches character through literature and history.

Harrison, Burn and Moller (2018) write that there is increased interest in character education across the world while educators are seeking guidance for their practice. They seek if and how character can be taught by discussing the results a curriculum intervention is designed to enhance two components of character: virtue perception and virtue reasoning. The results should demonstrate how educating these components of character might be possible, providing evidence for a debate that goes back to Aristotle. Character education is keenly debated in

academic, policy and practice circles. Character should be taught through and within the programmes of study of existing curriculum courses.

The Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Education System of Kenya (1999) stated that in addition to fulfilling the academic requirements, universities should satisfy themselves that every applicant is of sound character. Admission and exclusion criteria including character assessment should be developed by the universities and other stakeholders. The Commission report emphasizes that guidance and counselling in all institutions of higher learning should be formally established and or strengthened in order to ensure that students do receive preventive counselling. Guidance and counselling activities at the universities boost a key component in personality development, namely, self-esteem. Low self-esteem can be predicted by high incidence of interpersonal conflict.

Cook (2018) explains that counsellors provide learning experiences designed to guide students in training through a process of developing knowledge and skills for effective practice. Guidance and counselling interventions aim at fostering a caring environment for the students. Students whose behaviours lead to social rejection often need to learn new interpersonal skills. When peer problems co-occur with serious academic problems students may need intensive academic counselling interventions. Therefore, guidance and counselling interventions may work on structures that give the learners explicit opportunities of social options and friendly environment.

Graves and Stephen (2008) aver that students who cultivate a cheating mentality in the academic arena will more than likely demonstrate the same behaviour in the workplace. The high correlation between cheating and workplace deviance has tremendous implications for both employers and academicians. They need to openly state that cheating is unacceptable and that violators will be punished. Since students' values and their concepts of what constitutes cheating may differ, it is helpful for academic institution have a written policy that outlines acceptable behaviour and the consequences for unacceptable behaviour.

Buckley (1992) writes that the purpose of *discipline* in a student builds up habits of *self-control*. The goal is not control but self-control of impulses. Students are expected to demonstrate self-control across a wide range of situations through interpersonal interactions by engaging in physical, emotional, and mental health practices. Self-disciplined students are those who postpone immediate needs or desires for long term benefits.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Destructive behaviour among university students in Kenya as a result of riot presupposes little or no appreciation of universal character education attributes such as responsibility, honesty

and self-discipline. Kenya universities teach academic courses such as philosophy, ethics and, guidance and counselling, to sharpen critical thinking skills and improve students' moral behaviour. However, incidences of violence, vandalism, alcoholism and examination cheating on university campuses seem to escalate unchecked. The study seeks to mitigate the risk of exclusive emphasis on mere academic prowess at the expense of ethical, emotional and interpersonal competencies which are complementary constructs for holistic education. The problem is a mismatch of students' intellectual character and moral behaviour. This study probed how students perceive character education in the university and its possible role in influencing positive behaviour. Character education is a process of teaching people how to behave morally for mutually beneficial good of the individual and society.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine university students' perception of character education influence on moral behaviour in selected public and private universities in Kenya.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

This study was guided by the following specific objectives:

- i) To compare students' perception of character education influence on moral behaviour between public and private universities in Kenya.
- ii) To compare differences in students' sex perception of character education influence on moral behaviour among them in public and private universities in Kenya.
- iii) To find out the influence levels of students' perception of character education on moral behaviour among them in public and private universities in Kenya.
- iv) To determine students' academic level differences in perception of character education influence on moral behaviour among them in public and private universities in Kenya.

1.5 Research Hypotheses

H0₁ There is no statistically significant difference in students' perception of character education influence on moral behaviour between public and private universities in Kenya.

H0₂ There is no statistically significant difference in students' sex perception of character education influence on moral behaviour among them in public and private universities in Kenya.

H0₃ There is no statistically significant relationship in students' moral behaviour influence among them in public and private universities in Kenya.

H0₄ There is no statistically significant relationship in academic levels of students' perception of character education influence on moral behaviour among them in private and public universities in Kenya.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study hopefully provides useful information to university staff and students on the role of character education in improving university students' behaviour. Public universities and government education sector may consider reviewing the nurturing process in learning environments to promote moral behaviour. The study may inspire students for enhanced mutually beneficial interpersonal relationships and a boost of public confidence in the quality of graduates. The researchers may be interested in the findings which provoke thought and further inquiry into character education process.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The study focused on students' perceptions of character education attributes such responsibility, self-discipline and honesty and their possible role in influencing moral behaviour. The study targeted year one through year four undergraduate degree students (54,864) in selected two public (Egerton and Moi) and two private (Kabarak and Catholic) universities in Kenya.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

Limitations of this study were as follows:

- i) Varied and subjective interpretation of universal character education attributes.
- ii) Sheer perception of character education not necessarily influencing moral behaviour.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

This study was conducted under the assumption that university students easily conceptualize the notion of 'character education' so as to provide appropriate responses to the research instrument.

1.10 Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as used in the context of the study.

Character Education: Learning process which promotes human virtues. It is teaching students how to behave morally guided by values that are good for the individual and society.

Honesty: State of being truthful, sincere, and authentic. It is students' attitude of moral behaviour by actively appreciating the value of telling the truth and acting with integrity in all situations.

Perception: Abstract activity of the mind trying to understand phenomena such as space, event or person. This is a mental image (idea) as a product of students' empirical or theoretical experience of what qualifies as a human virtue.

Personality: Unique and enduring behaviour pattern of human being. This refers to the student's distinctive qualities of talents, attitudes, values and habits shared within interpersonal competencies and social interaction.

Public University: Government institution of higher learning established and funded through public resources. It grants certificates, diplomas and degrees, and admits qualified students through a central placement board.

Private University: Institution of higher learning established and funded by non-government entity. However, it is regulated by government agency; grants certificates, diplomas and degrees. The institution admits qualified students independently.

Self-discipline: It is the strength of will power. This is the capability of students' appreciation of the value of self-control of their own emotions, actions and desires in all situations as probed in the research instrument.

Sex: Biological state of being female or male. This refers to innate disposition of individual student's sexual orientation and 'dexterity' to cope with eventualities such as students' riots.

Virtues or Values: Qualities that are cherished. This is what the student recognizes and embraces as habits that are good for the individual and society.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Review of literature in this chapter explores the meaning of character education, key concepts of perception and character education curriculum. Selected character traits are responsibility, honesty and, self-discipline. Theoretical and conceptual frameworks are presented towards the end of this chapter.

2.2 Definition and Meaning of Character Education

Character education broadly defined can include anything from values clarification, citizenship, to moral guidance. Character education addresses the cognitive, affective, and behavioural aspects of education. Lickona (2007) defines character education as the deliberate effort to develop virtues that are good for the individual and society.

Arthur (2015) writes that character includes moral virtues such as honesty and kindness, civic virtues such as community service, intellectual virtues such as curiosity and creativity, and performance virtues such as diligence and perseverance. Cheng and Lee (2007) argue that character education enhances the awareness of ethical behaviour. Denise, White and Peterfreud (2002) affirm that honesty and self-discipline are character qualities which inspire mentally challenging but interesting tasks. The individual's character depends on the comparative development of reason, emotion and desire.

2.3 Students' Perception of Character Education

University students are likely to form perception of character education by witnessing upright behaviours among their colleagues. Students' perception of character education is the mental abstraction and association of two notions, 'character' and 'education'. Perception is the abstract activity of the mind trying to understand phenomena such as space, event or person. Students' perceptions of character education guided by conventional rules are likely to impact positively on interpersonal relationships and personal behaviour. This is based on observable behaviour of student colleagues. Kamau (2010) notes that the concept of character formation suggests that human persons are not born morally mature rather they are morally formed.

That character development is dependent on nurture. Students can learn moral ideals; emulate role models, identify similarities and differences of a given phenomenon through persistent exposure to academic disciplines such as visual history, literature and political

philosophy. Gert (2005) argues that students who live by moral ideals most likely promote healthy and mutually beneficial interpersonal relationships. University academic programmes on moral ethics are designed for learners to appreciate the significance of upright conduct for individual and social health. Character development is the dynamic interplay between internal determinants and external influences in order for positive growth to occur.

2.4 University Character Education Curriculum

Park (2017) avers that one of the major policies from the Korean government is to reinforce character education across the national curriculum. On the other hand, local education authorities, generally having a more progressive political leaning started to introduce legislations to enhance democratic citizenship with the goal of fostering active citizenship. In 2015 the Korean government introduced a promotion of character education law, which was designed to strengthen human dignity, to secure the values stated in the Korean constitution, and to educate citizens to be better equipped in terms of their character on the basis of the Education Act in order that they may contribute to the development of the society and the nation. According to the character education promotion act, character education is defined as an education which aims to cultivate one's inner life for right and good and develop humane character for others, community and environment. Character education can be conceptualized through key virtues of character such wisdom, courage, integrity, temperance and filial piety, and some of the virtues came from moral and ethical backgrounds.

Agboola and Tsai (2008) contend that participants of character education programme claimed that the beneficial learning experience they obtained not only in developing ethical, experiential, and intellectual foundation of character, but also those experiences continue extending throughout their lives. The character education is more effective under the condition of encouraging students with good character traits which also are "legitimized, modelled, and reinforced by campus administration". The easiest way to promote character education is using history and literature studies, since the stories serve as role models that connect experiences and moral behaviour.

The attitudes of students toward moral education also play an imperative role in the process of implementation of moral education. That is, it should be part of the curriculum of moral education. Most important, they found the positive effect on later exercise because of opportunities of self-evaluation and of checking their assumption of character education. Character education seeks to cultivate good character as the true aim of education. Kohlberg's moral education focuses on promoting the development of students' moral judgment.

Skaggs and Bodenshorn (2006) observe that the trend of character education practice involves an emphasis on similarities rather than differences. It is a balance of moral reasoning skills and establishing behavioural habits, a balance of focus on the responsibilities of the individual and the community which includes cognitive, affective, and behavioural dimensions. Davies, Stephen and Nick (2005) postulate that character education encompasses moral education and non-moral aspects such as civic or cultural qualities. Wime (2001) argues that the goal of university character education curriculum is to guide students in moral knowing, moral feeling and moral doing. Character education usually teaches character through literature and history.

Lickona (2007) notes that university character education curriculum covers developmentally appropriate moral issues such as drugs, alcohol, smoking, violence, sexual activity, driving, handling money, ethics in the work place and academic honesty. It should also cover areas such as drug prevention, smoking prevention, environmental protection and conflict resolution strategies. To infuse character education into the regular academic curriculum is a particularly suitable approach for reinforcing good character among university students. It is not a separate subject but rather it can be taught through any discipline. A science lecturer, for instance, can emphasize the importance of precision and truthful reporting of data, while a social studies teacher can examine prejudice and discrimination. The curriculum can help students learn to love good people (role models) and being inspired by good ideals. The ultimate objective of character education curriculum is to enhance moral development. Chapman (2011) explains that the main idea of character education curriculum is to improve behaviour and attitudes of students at campus.

Harrison, Burn and Moller (2018) write that there is increased interest in character education across the world; educators are seeking guidance for their practice. They seek if and how character can be taught by discussing the results a curriculum intervention is designed to enhance two components of character: virtue perception and virtue reasoning. The results should demonstrate how educating these components of character might be possible, providing evidence for a debate that goes back to Aristotle. Character education is keenly debated in academic, policy and practice circles. Character should be taught through and within the programmes of study of existing curriculum courses.

2.5 Student Riots and Disturbances on University Campuses

Gusfield (1991) observes that American universities have performed functions for a select and specialized mission. However, the function within the realm of public controversy without a

clear definition of their mission poses difficulties in responding to student criticisms, demands, and actions. American universities, both public and private, are deeply implicated in the social institutions and public interests of American life.

Brown (1996) writes that student riots in England, influenced by German Cohn-Bendit, the American Adelstein, and the Pakistani Tariq Ali brigades, reached the flash point in 1965 at the London School of Economics. The radical students reacted to changes in leadership of the institution. There were sit-ins and brawls, in one of which a porter sustained a fatal heart-attack. The lack of speedy and effective external legal sanctions to restrain the disruptive tactics of student riots made more imperative the revision of the internal disciplinary measures. The need was felt to reformulate the code of behaviour expected of students joining the university.

Akintola (2010) believes that there are broadly two causes of student riots in Nigeria. The campus-based issues include dissatisfaction with provision of material resources and services; such as catering, accommodation, water and electricity supply, teaching and examinations management and, fees increment. The external cause could be reactions to government policies and actions. The protests are frequently unpredictable and can become highly confrontational, aggressive, and even violent, within and outside the campus. Looting and damaging of university property occur. Violent confrontations between students and the security agents result in bloodshed often leaving a considerable number of students wounded, raped, or dead.

There are many factors which contribute to student riots in university campuses. These include students' beliefs, expectations, campus policies and enforcement practices. Amutabi (2002) records that crises and disturbances in Kenyan universities receive a certain amount of attention in both the mainstream press and academic circles, yet the main emphasis had tended to be upon incidents involving physical violence. The lecture halls and libraries were not only congested but also run down. The hostels had become overcrowded, sanitary conditions worsened, and food quality had deteriorated. The libraries, which form the nerve centres of any learning institution, were inadequate. The aftermath of violent clashes in the 80's and 90's involved fatal incidents on campuses as follows: University of Nairobi in 1985; Moi University in 1987; Kenyatta University 1989 and, Egerton University 1996.

The report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Education System of Kenya (1999) indicates that excessive alcohol consumption; drug abuse and elements of anti-social practices were major contributing factors to students' unrest in the universities in the 1990s. Some graduates did not reflect the kind of personalities and social behaviour that one would associate with university learners. Public universities admit students through Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Services based on an agreed cut-off-points without consideration

of student's character background. This is because some character traits portrayed by university students were acquired long before they joined the university. However, some private universities do take students' character into consideration before admitting them.

Kamau (2010) avers that Kenya university education system hardly provides students with opportunities for personal discovery and problem solving skills which are informed by moral ideals. Many campuses and communities are concerned about the issue of riots and community disturbances. These disturbances often result in extensive property damage to university; danger to bystanders and safety to persons; tensions among local residents, students, police, campus administrators, and community leaders. Emphasizing solely on academic prowess at the expense of ethical, emotional and interpersonal competencies may adversely impact on social behaviour among university students.

2.6 Guidance and Counselling Interventions in the Universities

The Government of Kenya in the 1990s instituted a commission to investigate causes of frequent cases of university students' disturbances and come up with appropriate recommendations. The Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Education System of Kenya (1999) stated that in addition to fulfilling the academic requirements, universities should satisfy themselves that every applicant is of sound character. Admission and exclusion criteria including character assessment should be developed by the universities and other stakeholders.

The Commission report emphasizes that guidance and counselling in all institutions of higher learning should be formally established and or strengthened in order to ensure that students do receive preventive counselling. Guidance and counselling activities at the universities boost a key component in personality development, namely, self-esteem. Low self-esteem can be predicted by high incidence of interpersonal conflict. Guidance and counselling interventions aim at fostering a caring environment for the students. Students whose behaviours lead to social rejection often need to learn new interpersonal skills. When peer problems co-occur with serious academic problems students may need intensive academic counselling interventions.

Therefore, guidance and counselling interventions may work on structures that give the learners explicit opportunities of social options and friendly environment. Cook (2018) explains that counsellors provide learning experiences designed to guide students in training through a process of developing knowledge and skills for effective practice. Using fictional characters in counsellor education coursework can provide students opportunities to explore and practice their emerging counselling skills.

2.7 The Meaning of Character Compared to Personality

The word character in ancient Greek means “to engrave,” which emphasizes the engraved traits will affect us to behave in certain manners. Sojourner (2012) explains that the word character is derived from the Greek word –to mark-(as in engraving) and therefore, refers to an inclined disposition to behave in particular ways. Good character is associated with positive habits, or virtues, and bad character with negative habits, or vices. Sindabi and Omulema (2001) refer to personality as hypothetical construct which has been given different meanings by psychologists. They argue that personality is regarded as a person’s unique and enduring behaviour pattern which refers to the singular combination of talents, attitudes, values, hopes, love, hate and habits that mark each person as unique. In addition, many people confuse personality with character. If by saying someone has personality means that s/he is friendly, honest, open or loving; then this really refers to character. Kabiru and Njenga (2009) assert that personality is the total quality of an individual’s way of being including innate dispositions, traits, abilities, attitudes, emotional responses, aptitudes, tendencies, instincts, temperament, impulses, character and moral behaviour. The two scholars affirm that character can be formed through training, education, modelling, discipline and promotion of values. Character of a person reflects the real person whose inborn potentials have been modified through training and socialization.

2.8 Understanding Character as Moral Fibre

Kabiru and Njenga (2009) reiterate that values or virtues influence human behaviour, attitudes and relationships. Society may need to adopt the positive values and discourage negative habits. They affirm that values are qualities or good habits that are supported and believed in. Students ought to practice the following character traits; love, peace, truthfulness, honesty, responsibility, loyalty and patience. Other traits are respect, kindness, hard work, empathy, co-operation, happiness, tolerance, simplicity, love for personal freedom and unity. Oruka (1990) argues that whereas passion or emotion is the ultimate authority in ethical choices; reason is the authority in ethics. Ethics is a morality system of conventional rules that guide the conduct of people in society.

Marshall, Sarah and Jeanne (2011) aver that character within moral education concept refers to character education. This is often viewed as the process of establishing self-control within students to habituate them to prescribed behaviour. Character education promotes the core value of hard work, responsibility, love, caring, respect, honesty, justice, humour, and self-control through teaching. In addition, character education emphasizes the importance of the

moral environment, such as community, or family, or museums. Moral education should utilize the indirect approach to cultivate character. Character education should contribute to a new social order. Character education intends to provide a traditional and fixed definition to each virtue, which would tend to maintain the traditional social order.

Freeks (2015) asserts that mankind is essentially a creature of values. The word ‘value’ comes from the Latin word *valere* and shares this root with the French word *valour*, meaning “that which is truly valuable, worthy to striven for, that makes life worth living. Values and education have been inseparable since ancient times, and are inseparably bound to one another, and the campus as an educational institution has the task of providing character education. Thus, education cannot be seen separately from values. Character has been the focus of philosophical discourses for millennia, where one question of ethics has been: who is the good person? This kind of question draws the attention to the ethics of being, to those elements in the moral life that reside within a person. That is why the term character is derived from a Greek word that means to mark, for example, in the case of an engraving and it is described as the moral and mental qualities distinctive to the individual. Character development is considered a traditional goal of formal education and cannot be accomplished without developing students’ capacity to think critically and thoughtfully. Character-building involves the development of habits and practices that are mostly needed to “live” and function well in a world of difference and it promotes the development of student character.

Watz (2011) writes that what is termed ‘character education’ in today’s world has been called many things throughout the history of education in United States. Character education has been both a formal and informal part of schools. Much of character education in the United States can be closely tied in its roots to the education of character in Europe, which laid the foundation for the formal American system of education. Through historical analysis, studies seek to uncover and reflect upon one pathway that brought character education to the shores of America. A variety of contributions from significant figures and organizations since the 18th century through today was highlighted in order to provide some understanding as to the complexity of the roots of character education in America. Relatively recent, United States government action pertaining to character education has been on the rise as noted by a significant increase in funding. President Reagan began the fiscal race to support character education when he noted the immediate need for character education in schools.

2.9 Selected Attributes of Character Education Traits

Neill (2007) defines *responsibility* as a duty to satisfactory performance of a task. Responsibility is fundamental to success in the students’ future career. Responsible students

think before acting, accept the consequences of their actions, keep promises and are dependable. Students' career success and retention may be evaluated on character traits not necessarily levels of knowledge. Responsible students are ethical persons who model moral concern and moral reasoning through interpersonal interactions. In caring relationships students foster the desire to learn moral ideals, the desire to be good persons.

Thompson (2002) maintains that responsible students are committed to consistent moral behaviour and respect the rights of others. They learn to be generous and share resources with other people. Students graduating from universities should learn to complete projects, respect authority, solve problems, exercise punctuality and be able to work with others. Responsibility in interpersonal interactions is greatly enhanced by feelings of congruence. Students make responsible personal choices which contribute to continuous self-development and healthy lifestyles.

Ayish and Deveci (2019) theorize that while many students lack personal responsibility for learning, little empirical research exists that examines how university students perceive this construct. Students perceive responsibility in terms of what responsibility means and the effect responsible behaviour has upon them. Studies indicate that most students can recognize the benefits of being responsible from their own learning processes and for supporting their peers' learning. If perceptions matter, then the way students perceive personal responsibility and its impact on learning is an area that deserves special attention.

Research is scarce that explores students' responsible behaviours and the effect this behaviour has on them. There is also relatively little analysis of students' responsible behaviours in learning environments. Many students readily acknowledge that they are responsible for their own learning and that such responsibility can lead to success in many aspects of their lives. If some assignments are not helping students develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning and need to support the learning of their peers, then adjustments should be made to the way such assignments are structured, delivered, and assessed.

Rafferty (2010) avers that although a university may not be responsible for the damage of personal property of students a certain form of monitoring must take place. Some universities actually have a policy that places the liability back in the campus responsibility if vandalism is a crime caused by stalking and requires the institution to handle the situation. Previously the only crimes required to be recorded through the crime statistics for the three most recent calendar years concerning the occurrence on campus, in or on non-campus buildings or property, and on public property.

Suyitno, Zaenuri, Sugiharti, Suyitno and Baba (2019) postulate that students can be educated through character education, and formed for good sense of nationalism, honesty, discipline, and responsibility. Therefore, character values need to be given to students from an early age. Indonesia as one of the developing countries, obviously very interested to find out how to integrate the values of character into the learning process in the classroom. Japan is known to have the ability to provide character education through the learning process to its students. The integrity character is the underlying value of the behaviour that makes itself a trustworthy person in speech, action, occupation, commitment and loyalty to human values, and moral integrity. The character of integrity includes an attitude of responsibility as a citizen, actively involved in social life, through the consistency of actions and words based on truth. The sub-values are an honest attitude, love for truth, faithfulness, moral commitment, anti-corruption, justice, responsibility, exemplary, and respect for the dignity of the individual.

According Malinda, Mwanja and Maithya (2017) character education helps students to develop important human qualities and virtues such as justice, diligence, compassion, respect, honest courage, and to understand why it is important to live by them. To us, any quality education should create an integrated culture of character that supports and challenges learners to strive for excellence. A holistic approach to character education development should seek to develop the cognitive, emotional, moral and behavioural dispositions required to do the right thing and do one's best work. As a result of this, learners grow to understand core values by studying and discussing them, observing behavioural models, and resolving problems involving the values. Students learn to care about core values by developing empathy skills, forming caring relationships, developing good work habits, taking on meaningful responsibilities, helping to create community, hearing inspirational stories, and reflecting on life experiences. They learn to act upon core values by striving to do their best and be their best in all areas of academic life.

Malinda, Mwanja and Maithya (2017) add that character education is geared towards producing socially, morally and mentally developed persons. Learners are introduced to the sense of responsibility, ideas of right in relation to the surrounding world and are inculcated with skills necessary for life and service. Holistic education for character formation is the basic premise that education addresses the development of the intellectual, affective, aesthetic and spiritual aspects of a person helping learners to attain satisfactory social adjustment and develop a responsible attitude towards life.

Hidayati, Budiyo and Sugiman (2018) write that Indonesian national education system strongly emphasizes education that makes students not only able to have intellectual character but also moral

character with good personality and self-control of passion. Responsibility, therefore, is an important character trait for all students must possess. The attempts to strengthen the character of student responsibilities require in-depth information about the actual inner disposition of the student's aptitude. A responsible student will always be ready to bear responsibilities or in other words dare to answer the consequences. The responsibilities are outlined as follows: fulfilling the duties, self-controlling, persistent, and working hard. Responsibility is defined as the behaviour of a person to carry out the duties and obligations that should be done to self, others and environment. Behaviours that reflect the responsibility character include carrying out the individual's duties well, taking risks for any action taken and not accusing others without accurate evidence. Other behaviours are returning borrowed items, acknowledge and apologize for the wrong doing and keep the promise. Going by the listed behaviours, it can be concluded that the responsibility is the attitude of a person who is firm in making decisions and ready to bear the risks or consequences for each decision. Based on this definition, it can be operationally defined that responsibility is the behaviour to carry out the duties and obligations as they should be with wholeheartedness (commitment to task). It is being ready to assume any risks or consequences (gentlemanliness), and acknowledge errors and being able to complete the task until finality (discipline).

Robinson (1991) asserts that *honesty* is going out of one's way to bring dishonest people to justice. It is speaking one's mind truthfully without fear or favour. In authentic interactions between two students, honesty requires that either student should never be cheating nor having anything to do with cheating situations even where it involves a friend. Students are expected to act with integrity, trustworthiness and should be incorruptible. Learners should always identify integrity as synonymous to authenticity in interpersonal interaction by making sound judgments and act accordingly.

Sally and McCabe (1996) explain that much has been written about the problem of *academic integrity*, but people's knowledge and perceptions have come from a variety of sources. Significant research on a national scale began in the early 1960s when a researcher, Bowers, surveyed more than 5,000 students and his findings documented high levels of student dishonesty in examinations. Prevention initiatives on university campuses take a variety of forms. Some are basically mechanical: make sure that there are alternate seats in exams rooms, do not recycle exam questions unless the previous exams are available to all, make sure that guidelines concerning collaboration are very clear and expressed both verbally and in writing, require drafts of research projects and do not allow last minute topic changes, and so on. There are many examples, from a variety of campuses, of steps that instructors can reasonably take to reduce the likelihood of cheating in their classes.

McCabe (2003) asserts that academic integrity is an issue of critical importance to academic institutions and has been gaining increasing interest among scholars in the United States and Canada. While documenting that cheating on tests and exams and plagiarism are significant issues on university campuses, it also offers some thoughts on possible strategies to encourage greater levels of academic integrity among students. Although there clearly is a place for prevention and detection in any such strategies, the primary emphasis is on ways in which campuses can promote integrity among students. Students learn to accept responsibility not only for their own behaviour, but also the well-being of the entire campus community.

Methods useful in preventing or deterring dishonest behaviours among students include early integrity training complemented with course-level reinforcement, faculty role-modelling, and the application of selected testing/assignment preventive strategies, including honour pledges and honesty declarations. The preventive value underlying integrity training is well stated by the United States Military Academy Cadet Honour Committee, “the more we educate, the less we investigate.” Alternatively, moral development can be integrated into the curriculum via required professional ethics courses that include academic integrity.

Graves and Stephen (2008) aver that students who cultivate a cheating mentality in the academic arena will more than likely demonstrate the same behaviour in the workplace. The high correlation between cheating and workplace deviance has tremendous implications for both employers and academicians. They need to openly state that cheating is unacceptable and that violators will be punished. Since students’ values and their concepts of what constitutes cheating may differ, it is helpful for academic institutions have a written policy that outlines acceptable behaviour and the consequences for unacceptable behaviour.

Scanlan (2006) writes that student academic misconduct is a growing problem for universities, including those responsible for preparing health professionals. Although the implementation of honour codes has had a positive impact on this problem, further reduction in student cheating and plagiarism can be achieved only via a comprehensive strategy that promotes an institutional culture of academic integrity. Such a strategy must combine efforts both to deter and detect academic misconduct, along with fair but rigorous application of sanctions against such behaviours. Giving students more responsibility for oversight of academic integrity also may help address this problem and better promote the culture needed to uphold its principles. Successful enforcement requires that academic administration provide strong and visible support for upholding academic integrity standards, including the provision of a clear and fair process.

Buckley (1992) writes that the purpose of *discipline* in a student builds up habits of *self-control*. The goal is not control but self-control of impulses. No doubt external excessive control may easily build over submissiveness. It may also be the foundation for authoritarian personality, that is, one who unquestionably obeys a moral imperative simply because it is a command. Students are expected to demonstrate self-control across a wide range of situations through interpersonal interactions by engaging in physical, emotional, and mental health practices. Self-disciplined students are those who postpone immediate needs or desires for long term benefits.

Kapner (2008) states that most widespread health problems on university campuses in the United States are high-risk alcohol and other drug use among students. Numerous campus riots point to alcohol as a key contributing factor. Student drinking is widespread at Southern Illinois University. While students use illegal drugs at much lower rates than alcohol, illicit drug use has led to serious tragedies, including violence, sexual assault and rape, hospitalization for overdoses, and premature death. Institutions of higher education are increasingly implementing creative programmes and aggressive policies to curb alcohol/drug use and its associated negative consequences. Many had begun comprehensive prevention approaches that go beyond traditional educational programmes to emphasize strategies aimed at changing the physical, social, legal, and economic environment on campus. Recommendation for corrective measures include efforts to create safe schools, respond to crises, prevent alcohol and other drug abuse, ensure the health and well-being of students, and teach students good character and citizenship.

The following incidences are reported to law enforcement agencies; criminal homicide, murder and non-negligent manslaughter, negligent manslaughter, sex offenses, forcible sex offenses, non-forcible sex offenses, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, motor vehicle theft, arson, arrests for liquor law violations, drug law violations, and illegal weapons possession. These crimes are major crimes, but vandalism is not a major leap from these crimes. Acts of arson might in fact be considered vandalism, or vandalism might occur as a result of some of the crimes in the list which one researcher found out, "Vandalism is another common form of criminality in college settings during the 1997-1998 academic year for universities across the United States. Alcohol abuse led to deaths by overdose, arrests, violence, and campus riots. Proposed solutions to the problems vary. Some academics are suggesting the answers lie with stronger educational programmes while others are suggesting campus-wide environment policy changes. Still others are suggesting strong campus and community law enforcement.

Agboola and Tsai (2008) write that character education is a growing discipline with the deliberate attempt to optimize students' ethical behaviour. The promotion of character

education should not just be a leap service but has an action plan for practice. In other words, education policy should take the lead to actualize moral education. It is believed that whatever the children become in the future has to do with the level of character imbedded in him, or her, through education. The belief systems in different parts of the worlds and the inability to maintain a standard accepted ways of instilling this concept of education have made the programme of character education even subtle. However, as “ethical thinking” is progressively being incorporated into various levels of education or training, the world is gradually embracing the values that come with character education. The common belief of character education is from psychological and philosophical perspective that virtues can be taught and learned through the proper pedagogy.

The period between 1917 and 1930 brought a lot of unwarranted behavioural problems. These problems range from the students showing defiance to the necessary authorities, stubbornly refusing, or rejecting the prescribed behavioural lessons of that period. The behavioural declining mode of this period was due to World War I, which was fought between the years 1914-1919. The aftermath of the war has brought with it a disparaging behavioural dilemma which called for gradual, but effective attitude or behavioural adjustments. Their efforts amongst other things, would bring about the renewed, or the rebirth of character education, and convert the “topic into emerging educational mainstream”.

2.10 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by Kohlberg’s Theory of Moral Development. The theory relates to the moral dimension of character as a moral judgment. This is as a result of a reasoning process that resembles Piaget’s stages of intellectual development. The theory proposes that children form ways of thinking through their experiences which include understandings of moral concepts such as justice, rights, equality and human welfare. University students may embrace good habits by continuous and repeated training of moral values. Lickona (2007) asserts that the development of moral judgment goes beyond the ages studied by Piaget, and determined that the process of attaining moral maturity took longer and was more gradual than Piaget had proposed.

Following Jean Piaget’s cognitive development approach, Kohlberg believed that the aim of moral education was to stimulate students’ development of moral judgment. Kohlberg defined six moral development stages based on his empirical research. He criticized traditional character education which only focused on training of good “habits” of honesty and responsibility. Consistent with his moral philosophy, Kohlberg proposed dilemma discussion

as an effective approach to moral education. Kohlberg's dilemma discussion encouraged students toward a higher stage of moral reasoning through peer discussion and the interactive exchange of ideas.

Kohlberg's theory hypothesized six different stages or moral philosophies which people can pass as they develop. The six stages emphasize on morality where obedience yields to authority by avoiding punishment; instrumental morality that seeks personal benefits with little concern for the needs of others; morality that seeks to maximize others' approval; compliance to the law and order which leads to social contract and; finally, morality that uses abstract universal ethical principles to decide what is the moral act. Reasoning at this stage respects all people without regard to their ethnicity, age, class or other personal characteristics. Therefore, moral education in academic institutions should aim not only to develop a morally good person, a high moral "stage" person, but a person who pursues a new and modern social order through moral inquiry and moral deliberation as a good for the individual and society.

Lickona (2007) contends that comprehension of the various stages is gradually developed provided one has appropriate experience. *Stage five* involves using principles to think about relationships among people rather than rigid laws given by authority (stage four). What is moral is what advances implementation of a principle. Most people including university students primarily use the moral reasoning of conventional *stages three and four*. *Stages one and two* are thus known as pre – conventional and *five and six* as post – conventional. Many people never develop the capacity for substantive post – conventional reasoning.

This theory represents a fundamental shift in the social moral perspective of the individual. The first level of moral thought is found at the elementary school level where people behave according to socially acceptable norms because they are told to do so by some authority figure. The most important value is obedience to authority in order to avoid punishment. Instrumental, pragmatic value of an action triggers early emergence of moral reciprocity. What is right is what's fair in the sense of an equal exchange, a deal, an agreement. Students at this stage believe that it is good to help others but only because one day they may get favour in return.

Kamau (2010) observes that within *level two*, individuals now at stage three are aware of shared feelings, agreements, and expectations which take primacy over individual interests. Upright students are those who keep mutual relationships, such as trust, loyalty, respect, and gratitude. Students are persuaded to accept the notion that one should be a good person so that others will think one is good. *Stage four* marks the shift from defining what is right in terms of local norms and role expectations to defining right in terms of the laws and norms established

by the larger social systems. Obeying the law is seen as necessary in order to maintain the system of laws which protect everyone.

Kamau (2010) concludes that the final post-conventional level is characterized by reasoning based on principles, using a “prior to society” perspective. The emphasis is on moral principle. Now at stage five students recognize the value of social contract. The rules of society exist for the good of all and are established by mutual agreement. *Stage six* remains as a theoretical endpoint exercising universal principles. The right thing to do is to adhere to the highest principles such as justice and respect for human life even if those principles conflict with the law.

2.11 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework was formulated on the basis of independent and dependent variables as illustrated on figure 1.

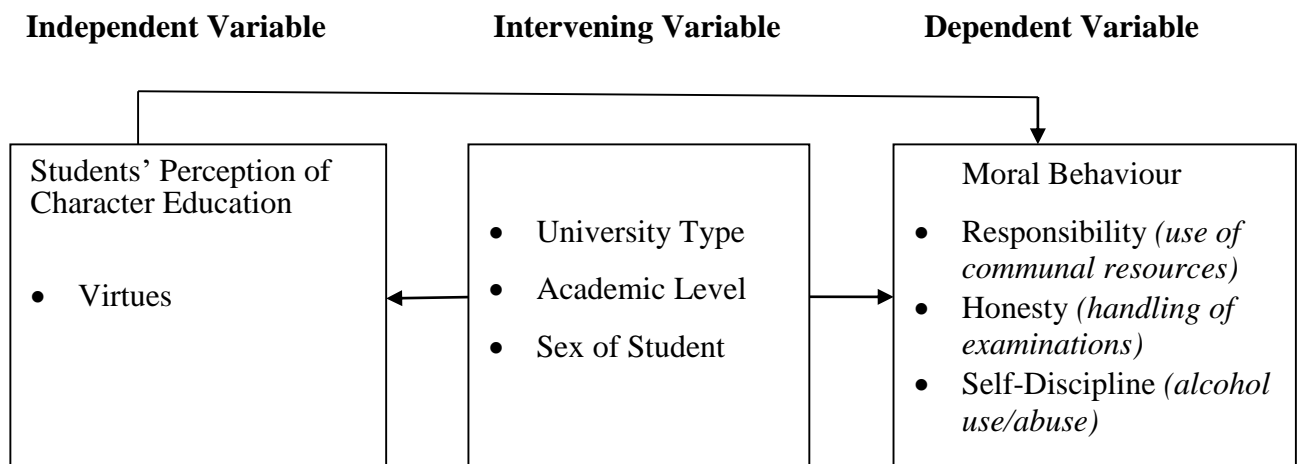


Figure 1: *Conceptual framework of students' perception of character education influence on moral behaviour.*

Figure 1 indicates variables in determining students' perception of character education influence on moral behaviour in selected public and private universities in Kenya. The independent variable is stated thus; 'students' perception of character education' whereas the dependent variable 'moral behaviour' is described using three indicators; responsibility, honesty and self-discipline. Handling of examinations, use of university resources and use/abuse of alcohol are identified as resultant behaviour actions in the instrument. The intervening variable measures are level of study, type of university and sex of student. The intervening variable can exert pressure either on the independent variable or on the dependent variable. For example, academic level based on year of study can affect the extent of student's perception of character education and in turn this shapes one's moral behaviour in handling examinations or use of communal resources.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the techniques and procedures used in this study which include research design, location of the study, population of the study, sampling procedure and sample size, instrumentation, validity and reliability of the research instruments. The chapter also includes data collection procedure and analysis.

3.2 Research Design

A descriptive survey design was used for the study. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) observe that the research design describes in quantitative terms the degree to which variables are related. It involves collected data in order to determine whether, and to what degree a relationship exists between two or more quantifiable variables. The degree of relationship is expressed as a correlation coefficient(r). A correlation coefficient is an index and therefore any two variables will always show a relationship even if common sense dictates that such variables are not related and finally a coefficient is sensitive to the size of the sample. Kerlinger (2000) asserts that this design is most appropriate in the study where independent variable cannot be directly manipulated because its manifestations have already occurred.

3.3 Location of the Study

The study was carried out in selected universities (two public and two private) namely; Egerton, Moi, Kabarak and Catholic universities. Egerton University enjoys rural ambience 27kms South of Nakuru Town. Moi University is located about 10kms South of Eldoret Town. Kabarak University is located about 18kms West of Nakuru Town. Catholic University of Eastern Africa is situated 15kms from Nairobi City Centre off Lang'ata Road.

3.4 Population of the Study

The target population 54,864 undergraduate students were drawn from year-one through year-four classes in the selected two public and two private universities. The sample population of 381 was obtained through random sampling from the participating universities; Egerton (18,498), Moi (31,252), Catholic (3,964) and Kabarak (1,150). Distribution of population by sex and type of universities is analyzed on Table 1:

Table 1: Distribution of population by sex and type of universities 2014

Type of University	Sex		Total
	Female	Male	
Public			
Moi	15,230	16,022	31,252
Egerton	8,478	10,020	18,498
Sub-total	23,708	26,042	49,750
Private			
Catholic	1,750	2,214	3,964
Kabarak	510	640	1,150
Sub-total	2,260	2,854	5,114
Grand total	25,968	28,896	54,864

Source: From each university web site

3.5 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

Two public and two private universities were selected through purposive sampling. The choice of the universities was informed by their respective visions; Egerton vision - A world class university for the advancement of humanity, Moi vision - Nurturing innovation and talent in science, technology and development, Kabarak vision - Centre of academic excellence founded on Christian values, Catholic vision - A world class university for transformative leadership. Simple random sampling and systematic sampling were used to identify undergraduate respondents from programmes of any first four odd numbers of departments in each of the four (4) universities participating in the study. According to Kathuri and Pals (1993), a recommended chosen sample (381) corresponding to the population (54,864) was conveniently applied to this study to obtain equal sample size from each university. Distribution of sample size from each university was proportionately calculated for each sex of student and academic level as analyzed on Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of sample from each university by student sex and academic level

Type of university	Female (<i>level 1-4</i>)	Male (<i>level 1-4</i>)	Total
Public			
Moi	46 (<i>11*4</i>)	49 (<i>12*4</i>)	95
Egerton	44 (<i>11*4</i>)	52 (<i>13*4</i>)	96
Sub-total	90	101	191
Private			
Catholic	42 (<i>11*4</i>)	53 (<i>13*4</i>)	95
Kabarak	42 (<i>11*4</i>)	53 (<i>13*4</i>)	95
Sub-total	84	106	190
Grand total	174	207	381

The sample size required was selected using the formula described by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) and Kathuri and Pals (1993):

$$n = \frac{\chi^2 * N * P(1 - P)}{(ME^2 * (N - 1)) + (\chi^2 * P(1 - P))}$$

Where:

n = The required sample size, given by the following:

χ^2 = The table value of chi square for one degree of freedom relative to the desired level of confidence which was 0.95. [The chi-square value used was 3.841].

N = The population within the study area [54,864]

P = The population proportion [assumed to be 0.50], as this magnitude yields the maximum possible sample size required.

ME = desired margin of error (expressed as a proportion). This is the degree of accuracy as reflected by the amount of error that can be tolerated in the fluctuation of a sample proportion about the population P. The value of d was taken as 0.05, which is equal to plus or minus 1.96 σ_p . ME²=[0.05² =0.0025]

Based on the population (54,864) and the above formula, the required sample size was 381 from Table 2. Having determined the total sample size on the basis of the target population, the numbers of respondents interviewed in each of the four universities (Egerton, Moi, Catholic and Kabarak) were selected equally to avoid bias in large universities that have more students than the smaller ones. The primary objective was to compare students' perception of character education and not comparison between public and private universities themselves.

3.6 Instrumentation

University Students Character Education Perception Questionnaire was used as the main instrument for sampled respondents of this study. The questionnaire was split into three sections: (i) Demographic Information, (ii) Students' perceptions of character education attributes, (iii) Perceptions of character education on behaviour. The instrument sourced demographic information on gender, university type and year of study according to study objectives numbers 1, 2 and 3. Section Two of the instrument collected information on character education attributes such as responsibility, honesty and self-discipline in line with purpose of the study. Finally, Section three of the instrument collected information on students' perception of character education on behaviour in response to study objective No. 4, and as per dependent variables contained in the conceptual frame work of this study.

3.6.1 Validity of the Instrument

The study used content validity. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) content validity must demonstrate that the instrument fairly and comprehensively covers the domains of items that it purports to cover. It is unlikely that each issue will be able to be addressed in its entirety simply because of the time available or respondents' motivation to complete, for example, a long questionnaire. The instrument was reviewed by research experts from the Department of Psychology, Counselling and Educational Foundations, who ascertained the validity of the questions contained in it.

3.6.2 Reliability of the Instrument

The researcher pilot tested the research questionnaire in two university campuses in Nakuru County. One public; Kenyatta University Nakuru Campus (population: 700) and one private; Kenya Methodist University Nakuru Campus (population: 500). The two were not included in the main study. Kathuri and Pals (1993) recommend a pilot test of 30 respondents. The Cronbach's alpha was used to determine internal consistency of instrument. The Cronbach's alpha provides a coefficient of inter-item correlations, that is, the correlation of each item with the sum of all the other relevant items, and is useful for multi-item scales. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) assert that the instruments will be considered sufficiently reliable at Alpha $\alpha \geq 0.70$.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher presented the study proposal to the Faculty of Education and Community Studies and later to the Board of Post Graduate Studies. The researcher then applied for research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation before proceeding to the field for data collection. The researcher then visited the sampled universities and familiarized himself with the respective institutions and obtained permission to collect data from the authorities of the said institutions. Later on, the researcher administered the research questionnaire to the sampled respondents. The respondents were given a day to turn in duly completed questionnaires.

3.8 Data Analysis

Data was edited and coded based on the objectives of the study. The quantitative data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 computer software was used. The descriptive statistics involved means, modes, percentages, and standard deviations. The inferential statistics used included mean comparisons using *t*-test and chi-square while regression analysis was used to determine the existing relationships between the dependent and independent variables used in the study. Multiple regression analysis was conducted so as to determine whether there existed significant relationships among the independent and dependent variables, Table 3.

Table 3: Study hypothesis, independent variable, dependent variable and statistic

Study Hypothesis	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Statistic
H0 ₁ There is no statistically significant difference in students' perception of character education influence on moral behaviour between public and private universities in Kenya.	Students perception of character education	Moral behaviour	t-test, chi-square
H0 ₂ There is no statistically significant difference in students' sex perception of character education influence on moral behaviour among them in public and private universities in Kenya.			t-test
H0 ₃ There is no statistically significant relationship in students' moral behaviour influence among them in public and private universities in Kenya.			Linear regression
H0 ₄ There is no statistically significant relationship in academic levels of students' perception of character education influence on moral behaviour among them in private and public universities in Kenya.			Regression analysis

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the results of the study based on the formulated objectives and hypotheses as presented in Chapter One. The study investigated the influence of character education on the moral behaviour of university students. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used in analyzing the data in this study.

4.2 Demographics of Students in Public and Private Universities in Kenya

Four attributes of the university students, which were considered important to this study are discussed in this section, they include: Sex of the respondents, year of study (time period one has stayed in the university), type of university attended by the student (whether private or public), and the courses taken at university.

4.2.1 Sex of the Respondents

Sex of the respondents was one of the intervening variables identified in this study as it does affect the behaviour of students. The respondents were asked to state their sex. The frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents by sex is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents by sex

Sex	Frequency of the students	Percent of the students
Male	181	53.7
Female	156	46.3
Total	337	100.0

The results of table 4 show that out of 337 students interviewed 53.7 percent were male and 46.3 percent were female. This sample population distribution agrees with the situation in Kenya universities, where the male students tend to be more than the female students according to studies by Migosi (2018). Studies by Kibui and Mwaniki (2014) indicate that women enrolment declined from 40.1 per cent in 2008-2009 to 37.9 per cent in 2009-2010 even with an affirmative policy of admitting female students with a point lower than their male counterparts. Sex of students in universities is vital as it affects their behaviour depending on stereotype beliefs, attitudes and treatment from the opposite sex.

4.2.2 Time Period of stay at university

The period of stay at the university was deemed important for this study as it can affect the behaviour of the students and the students' character education. The variable was operationalized as the year and semester the respondent was currently undergoing (academic level). The frequency and percentage distribution of the student's year of study and period taken at the university are given in Table 5.

Table 5: Period and time of stay at the University

Year and Semester	Stay duration(Months)	Frequency	Percent
Level 1, 1	Less than 4	68	20.2
Level 1, 2	4 - 12	18	5.3
Level 2, 1	13 - 17	37	11.0
Level 2, 2	18 - 24	37	11.0
Level 3, 1	25 - 29	63	18.7
Level 3, 2	30 - 36	23	6.8
Level 4, 1	37 - 40	33	9.8
Level 4, 2	41 - 48	58	17.2
Total		337	100.0

The students who had stayed the longest at the university (37-48 months) formed 27 % of the study population, while the ones who had stayed between 25 and 36 months were 25.5 %, the ones with between 13 and 24 months were 22 % of the population and the ones with less than 12 months were 25.8 %. The percentage findings of the study show that duration of stay in the university does not significantly affect students' perception of character education.

4.2.3 Type of University

The type of University the students were attending was important to this study, in that the level of students' character education perception can be enhanced by the type of University one was attending, whether private or public. The frequency and percentage distribution of the students by the type of university is given in Table 6.

Table 6: Type of University attended by the Respondents

University	Type of University				Total	
	Public		Private			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Egerton	88	26.1			88	26.1
Moi	80	23.7			80	23.7
Kabarak			87	25.8	87	25.8
Catholic			82	24.3	82	24.3
Total	168	50.1	169	49.9	337	100.0

Four universities were involved in this study, two public (Egerton and Moi) and two private (Catholic and Kabarak). The public universities formed 50.1 % of the sample, while the private universities formed the remaining 49.9 % of the sample. The respondents interviewed in each of the four universities were selected on equal numbers to avoid bias in large universities that have more students than the smaller ones. This explains the sample percentage outcomes. Private (Christian) universities tend to emphasize on the candidate's character as admission criterion besides academic merit while public universities admit purely on academic performance merit.

4.2.4 Courses taken by the University Students

Twenty-five different courses at the universities were identified being taken by the interviewed students. Courses taken by numerical students between 18 and 47 represent 72% sample respondents. The courses taken are Computer Science (14%), Law (13%), Commerce (12%), Pharmacy (8%), Ecotourism and Hospitality (7%), Engineering (7%), Agricultural Education (6%), Economics and Statistics (5%) as shown on figure 2.

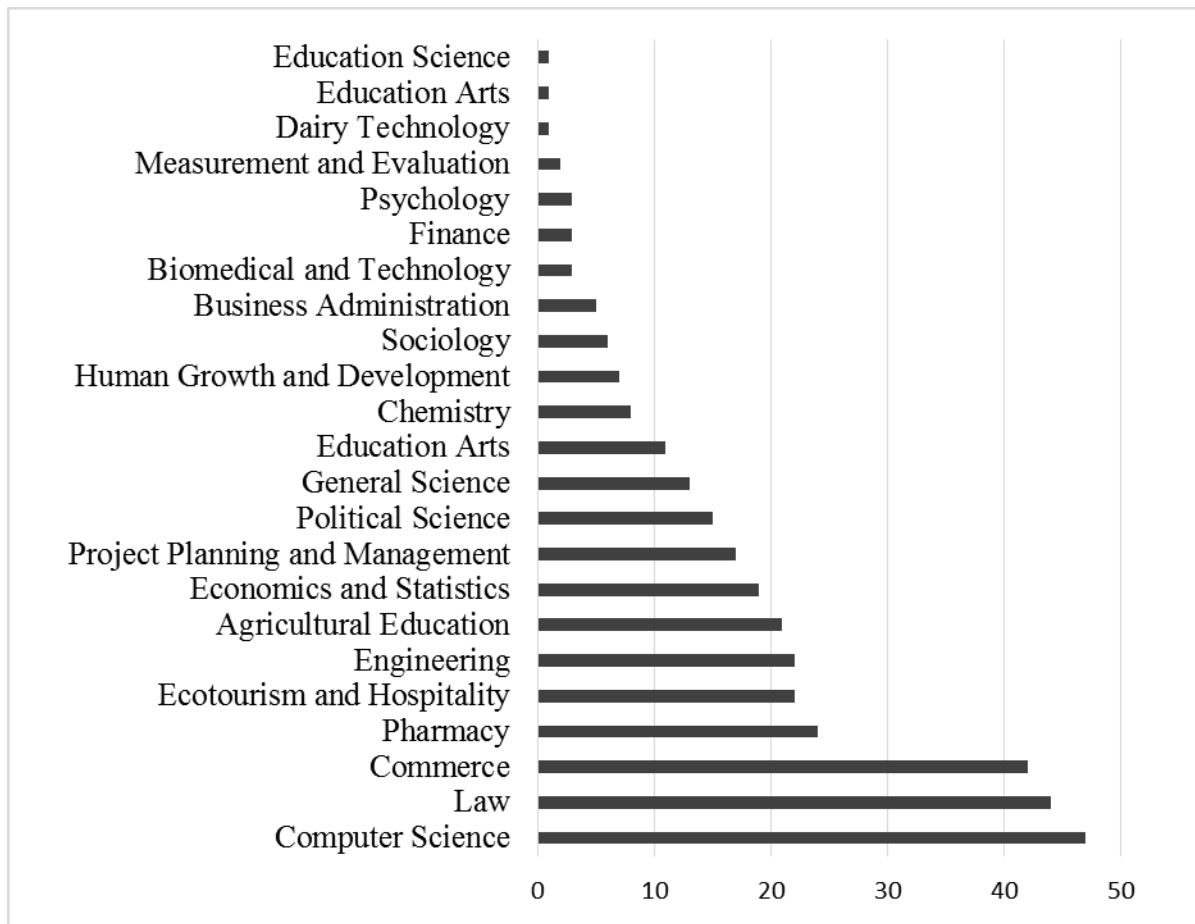


Figure 2: Courses taken by sample percentage of university students

4.3 Students' Character Education Perception

The independent variable of this study was the level of students' character education as perceived in selected public and private Universities in Kenya. The variable was operationalized as an index involving eleven different indicators. This variable was then used in testing of the study hypotheses.

4.3.1 Level of Students' Character Education in Public and Private Universities

The level of students' perception of character education influence on behaviour in selected public and private universities in Kenya was defined as the deliberate effort taken to develop virtues that are good for the individual and society; they include *moral virtues* such as honesty, good character, kindness, and self-discipline; *civic virtues* such as community service, and responsibility; *intellectual virtues* such as curiosity, creativity, and mental challenge; and *performance virtues* such as diligence, and perseverance (Lickona, 2007; Arthur, 2015).

These four virtues (moral, civic, intellectual, and performance) formed the variables that were combined to create the index of students' character education with eleven indicators,

which included; honesty, responsibility, integrity, self-discipline, kindness, curiosity, creativity, mental challenge, diligence, perseverance, and community service. The student respondents were asked to rate how they perceived efforts to deliberately develop student character education using a 5-point rating scale, with 1 to signify Very Low efforts, 2 Low efforts, 3 Medium efforts, 4 High and 5 Very High efforts. The scores were then added to form the resulting index of students' character education. The descriptive statistic for the eleven indicators and the resulting index of student character education are given in Table 7.

Table 7: Frequency distributions and descriptive statistics of indicators of students' character education in public and private universities

Virtue Indicators	Frequency					Total	
	VL	L	M	H	VH	Score	Mean
Honesty	3	20	23	74	217	1476	4.37
Responsibility	5	12	5	42	273	1570	4.65
Integrity	3	11	9	42	271	1611	4.78
Self-discipline	3	15	15	50	254	1536	4.55
Kindness	7	11	13	51	255	1543	4.57
Curiosity	8	15	27	84	203	1463	4.34
Creativity	8	28	17	72	212	1443	4.28
Mental challenge	3	15	14	44	261	1544	4.58
Diligence	7	17	10	56	247	1520	4.51
Perseverance	27	42	28	97	143	1283	3.80
Community serv.	28	19	33	87	170	1372	4.07

VL=Very Low Effort, L=Low Effort, M=Medium Effort, H=High Effort, VH= Very High

The results of Table 7 show that the highly rated indicator was integrity with a mean of 4.78 and the lowly rated indicator was perseverance with a mean of 3.80. The scores from the eleven indicators were combined to form an index of the level students' character education in private and public universities. The maximum possible score from the eleven indicators was 55, and the lowest possible score was 11. The index was further classified into five categories. The range between 11 and 20 meant very low levels of students' character education, the range between 20 and 29 meant low levels, the range between 29 and 38 meant moderate levels, and the range between 38 and 47 meant high levels, while the range between 47 and 55 meant very

high levels of students' character education. The levels of the students' character education in private and public universities in Kenya are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Frequency distributions and descriptive statistics for the index of students' character education

Scores	Description	Frequency	Percent
11 – 20	Very Low	88	26
20 – 29	Low	72	21
29 – 38	Medium	13	4
38 – 47	High	31	9
47 - 55	Very High	133	40
Total		337	100.0

Mean 34.7, median 34, mode 55, standard deviation 16.280

The results of Table 8 show that the mean of the level of students' character education in private and public universities was 34.7 and the highest number of the respondents (40 %) were in the category of Very High falling within the score range of 47 – 55.

Table 9: Frequency distributions and chi-square test for the categories of students' character education

Scores	Ob N	Exp N	Residue	Chi-square
11 – 20	88	67.4	20.6	χ^2 134.024, df 4, p =.001
20 – 29	72	67.4	4.6	
29 – 38	13	67.4	-54.4	
38 – 47	31	67.4	-36.4	
47 - 55	133	67.4	65.6	
Total	337	337	100.0	

. Ob N= observed N, Exp N=expected N

These results were significant statistically ($p > .05$). The results show that there was a high variation in the distribution of the variable (high standard deviation 16.280) as the respondents with very low were reasonably high (26 %) of the total students. These results were similar to the studies by Skaggs and Bodenshorn (2006) indicating that over a 4-year period, researchers measured several outcomes in 5 school districts initiating or enhancing character education

programmes. As expected, schools with more fully-implemented programmes experienced a greater improvement in perceived character-driven behaviour and lower suspension rates than schools with less well-implemented programmes.

4.3.2 Levels of Students' Character Education in Public and Private Universities

The first objective of this study was: To compare the levels of students' character education perception on behaviour of university students in selected public and private universities in Kenya.

The mean comparisons for the public and private universities were conducted using the independent *t*-test at .05 significant level and the results are given in Table 10.

Table 10: Mean comparison of the index of student character education in public and private universities using *t*-test

Type of University	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	<i>p</i>
Public	168	19.410	5.903	.455	-50.056	0.000
Private	169	49.946	5.279	.406		

Significant ($p > .05$) statistical differences were found between public and private universities level of student character education. The private universities had higher levels of student character education than the public universities. This can be attributed to the fact that private universities in the study are Christian based and tend to put more emphasis on character upon admission as observed in the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Education System of Kenya (1999).

4.4 Sex Differences of Character Education in both Public and Private Universities.

The second objective of this study was: To compare sex differences in the levels of students' character education perception on behaviour in selected public and private universities in Kenya. The index of students' character education perception in public and private universities was used to compare the sex differences in the levels of their character education. The *t*-test was used in this comparison and the results are presented in Table 11.

Table 11: Mean differences in student character education perception based on sex

Type of University	Sex	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	<i>P</i>
Public	Male	94	19.6596	5.82275	.615	.540
	Female	74	19.0946	6.02999		
Private	Male	87	49.5402	5.38906	-1.033	.304
	Female	82	50.3780	5.15833		

The results of Table 11 show that no significant differences existed between the sexes both in public and private universities. This can be explained by the fact that all the sexes are impacted the same by their respective universities. Studies carried out at the University of Queensland (1995) on the effects of mixed gender and ability compositions on students' behaviours, indicate that contrary to expectations and the findings of other researchers, the effect of the different ability and gender compositions in the groups on the members' behaviours and interactions was minimal.

Harsh Ron and Theodore (1997) in a case study avers that attitudes and perceptions of gender was found to be correlated to perceptions of "what the ethical climate should be" with female subjects showing significantly more favourable attitude towards ethical behaviours than males. In this study female students in private universities attested to the affirmative when probed whether their campus environment was conducive for students to embrace virtuous life and civility. They also concurred that their university ethos modelled learners to attain personal responsibility and respect.

4.5 Influence of Students' Character Education Perception on Moral Behaviour.

The third objective of this study was: To determine the influence of students' character education on moral behaviour in private and public universities in Kenya.

4.5.1 Moral Behaviour in Public and Private Universities

In this study moral behaviour was operationalized as an index involving 33 items (questions) divided into 3 main indicators related to moral behaviour, which included: responsibility in use of resources, honesty in writing exams, and self-discipline in the use/abuse of drugs. The students were asked to rate themselves on a 5point scale on these behaviour related indicators. The students rating of the behavioural indicators were then added together to form the index of

moral behaviour. The index of student’s moral behaviour was divided into five categories as follows: Very low levels = 82 -100; Low levels =101-119; Medium levels= 120-138; High levels = 139-157; Very High levels 158-172. The descriptive statistics of the index is given in Table 12.

Table 12: The descriptive statistics describing the index of student’s moral behaviour

Categories of the Level of			
Moral Behaviour	Levels	Frequency	Percent
82-100	Very Low	29	8.6
101-119	Low	92	27.3
120-138	Medium	65	19.3
139-157	High	84	24.9
158-172	Very High	67	19.9
Total		337	100.0

Mean 133.5 ± 1.31, median 128, mode 115, std dev 24.07, minimum 82, maximum 172

The index had a mean of 133.5 and ranged between 82 and 172, with a median of 128 and a mode of 115. This result compares with studies by Larson (2007) where students’ perceptions of caring teaching were examined. Critical incident forms eliciting descriptions of caring teaching were administered to 518 United States elementary and secondary students. The forms were content analyzed and coded inductively to reveal 11 items of perceived caring teaching as a positive behavioural action

4.5.2 Character Education Influence on Student Behaviour in Universities

The linear regression analysis was used to determine the influence of student character education on the moral behaviour of students in public and private universities. The index of student perception of character education formed the independent variable, while the index of moral behaviour formed the dependent variable. The results of the regression model are presented in Table 13.

Table 13: Regression model summary for influence of student perception of character education on moral behaviour

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Standard error of the estimate
1	.909 ^a	.827	.826	10.029

^a predictors: (constant), index of students' character education

The model indicates an adjusted R² value of 0.826; this means that the independent variable student's character education explained approximately 82.6 percent of the variation in dependent variable student behaviour. The regression coefficients of the model showing the beta, and *p* value are given in Table 14.

Table 14: Regression coefficients for influence of students character education on the university students' moral behaviour

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>p</i>	VIF
	β	Std. error	Beta		
(Constant)	86.820	1.289		.001	
	1.344	.034	.909	.001	1.000

Dependent Variable: index of Student Moral Behaviour

The regression analysis indicates that the students character education has a positive and significant influence with $\beta = 0.909$ and $p=0.001$ on the students moral behaviour in Kenyan universities. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the study concludes that the student character education significantly influences university student behaviour. These results are in line with a study by William (2002) on the effects of character education on behaviour suggesting a positive influence on students' moral behaviour.

4.5.3 Sex differences in the influence of character education on behaviour

The sex difference in the influence of character education on the university student's behaviour was determined using the t-test and the results are given in Table 15.

Table 15: Sex differences in students' moral behaviour

Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	<i>p</i>
Male	181	116.66	13.061	1.000	.318
Female	156	115.34	10.765		
Total	337				

No statistically significant sex differences in student moral behaviour were found to exist between the males and the female university students.

4.5.4 Sex differences in the influence of character education on moral behaviour

The study hypothesis tested was: H0₂: There is no statistically significant sex differences in the influence of students' character education on the moral behaviour of university students in private and public universities. The indices of student character education and student behaviour were used in testing the sex differences in the relationship between student character education and student behaviour. Simple linear regression analysis was used to determine the influence of student character education on student moral behaviour. The index of student behaviour formed the dependent variable, while the index of student character education formed the independent variable. The results of the regression model are presented in Table 16.

Table 16: Regression model summary for male and female relationships

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Standard error of the estimate
Male	.896 ^a	.803	.802	11.036
Female	.930 ^a	.864	.864	8.503

Predictors: (Constant), Student Character Education

The model indicates an adjusted R² value of 0.802 for the male relationship and 0.864 for the female relationship; this means that student character education explained approximately 80.3% for the male students and 86.4% for the female students' variation in university student moral behaviour. The regression coefficients of the model showing the beta, and p value are given in Table 17.

Table 17: Regression coefficients for male and female student's relationship

	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		P	VIF
	B	Std. error	Beta			
(Constant)	84.097	1.933			.000	
Male	1.390	.051	.896		.000	1.000
(Constant)	90.182	1.610			.000	
Female	1.288	.041	.930		.000	1.000

Dependent Variable: index of students' moral behaviour

The regression analysis indicated that the student character education had positive and significant influence for both the male and female students with $\beta=0.896$, $p=0.000$ for the male students and $\beta=0.930$, $p=0.000$ for the female students. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. From the study it is concluded that student character education influences university student behaviour for both male and female students. These results are in line with studies by Dawson, Schneider, Fletcher and Bryden (2007) who assert that gender studies among Canadian university students; males and females differed significantly in their lifestyle choices which include engaging in social activities, amount of alcohol health consumed, total number of sexual partners, and screening for sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Generally, males engaged in more risky health behaviours than females. This study probed students whether by chance or design would indulge in self-destructive behaviours such as drug or substance abuse.

4.6 Year of study differences of character education influence on behaviour

The fourth objective was: To determine year of study differences of in the influence of student character education on the university student behaviour.

The year of study of the student was used to indicate the number of years the student has been in the university. This would reflect the period of contact in terms of character education of the student, meaning that the fourth year students had higher opportunity of learning character in the university compared with the first year students. Simple linear regression analysis was used to determine the influence of student character education on the university student behaviour. The index of student character education formed the independent variable, while the index of university student behaviour formed the dependent variable. The results of the regression model are presented in Table 18.

Table 18: Regression model summary of year of study differences in behaviour relationship

Year of Study	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Level 1, 1	.938 ^a	.879	.878	8.01029
Level 1, 2	.617 ^a	.381	.342	7.80464
Level 2, 1	.908 ^a	.825	.820	11.80736
Level 2, 2	.927 ^a	.859	.855	8.59651
Level 3, 1	.926 ^a	.857	.854	8.84742
Level 3, 2	.655 ^a	.429	.402	10.65444
Level 4, 1	.833 ^a	.694	.684	14.13079
Level 3, 2	.899 ^a	.809	.805	9.40470

The model indicates an adjusted R^2 value for all academic levels of study ranged between 0.342 and of 0.878; this means that the independent variable student character education explained between 34% and 88% of the variation in dependent variable university student behaviour. The regression coefficients of the model showing the beta and the p are shown in Table 19.

Table 19: Regression coefficients for the influence of student character education and university student moral behaviour

Study	of					
Level	β	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	VIF
Level 1, 1	88.303	2.789		31.661	.001	1.000
	1.389	.063	.938	21.945	.001	
Level 1, 2	84.957	9.842		8.632	.001	1.000
	1.375	.438	.617	3.136	.006	
Level 2, 1	80.612	4.130		19.519	.001	1.000
	1.517	.118	.908	12.829	.001	
Level 2, 2	96.188	3.235		29.738	.001	1.000
	1.157	.079	.927	14.612	.001	
Level 3, 1	87.018	2.772		31.390	.001	1.000
	1.309	.069	.926	19.085	.001	
Level 3, 2	88.970	7.558		11.771	.001	1.000
	1.344	.338	.655	3.970	.001	
Level 4, 1	85.133	5.165		16.481	.001	1.000
	1.285	.153	.833	8.377	.001	
Level 4, 2	86.361	3.425		25.216	.001	1.000
	1.298	.084	.899	15.388	.001	

Dependent Variable: index of University Student Moral Behaviour

The regression analysis results indicate that student character education has a positive and significant influence on the university student moral behaviour for all the study levels of the students (year of study the student is in) with β ranging between .617 to .938 and $p=0.001$. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and from the study it is concluded that student character education influences university student moral behaviour significantly regardless of the study levels of the student. This result compares with studies on the development of socially appropriate behaviour which is increasingly seen as an important part of a student's education. Armstrong (2011) reiterates that hierarchical regression found that students' prosocial behaviour increased more over the course of the school year when self-perception of their prosocial behaviour more closely matched the perceptions of their class-peers. Similarly, students' antisocial behaviour decreased more over the school year when their self and peer perceptions of their antisocial behaviour were more closely aligned.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of the Study Findings

This chapter presents a summary of the study, findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study. The first section of the chapter presents the summary of major findings of the study. It is followed by the conclusions organized in sequence of the objectives of the study. Specific recommendations are drawn from the conclusions of the study. The recommendations are made for both policy and further research. Four important demographic features of students in both public and private universities in Kenya were discussed in this study. They include: Sex of the respondents, study levels (time period one has stayed in the university), type of university attended by the student (whether private or public), and the academic courses taken at university.

The study investigated the students' perception of character education influence on moral behaviour in public and private universities in Kenya guided by the following objectives of the study:

- i) To compare students' perception of character education influence on moral behaviour between public and private universities in Kenya.
- ii) To compare differences in students' sex perception of character education influence on moral behaviour among them in public and private universities in Kenya.
- iii) To find out the influence levels of student's perception of character education on moral behaviour between public and private universities in Kenya.
- iv) To determine students' academic level differences in perception of character education influence on moral behaviour among them in public and private universities in Kenya.

The study focused on character education attributes such as responsibility, self-discipline and honesty and their possible influence on moral behaviour. The study targeted level one through level four undergraduate degree students. A descriptive survey design was used for this study. Target population for the study was 54,864 students. Accessible population consisted of 381 university students. Random and systematic sampling method was used to select 381 students from two public and two private universities in Kenya. They were Egerton, Moi, Catholic and Kabarak Universities. A questionnaire was used to collect data. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.813. The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were frequencies, percentages and means. Inferential statistics used was

multiple regressions. The level of significance was alpha 0.05. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 22).

5.2 Major Findings of the Study

The major findings of the study were:

- (i) The mean comparisons for the public and private universities were conducted using the independent t-test at .05 significant level where significant ($p > .05$) statistical differences were found between public and private universities. The level of students' character education perception was significantly higher in private universities than in public universities.
- (ii) The t-test was used to compare the sex differences in the levels of students' perception of character education. The results show that no significant differences existed between the sexes both in public and private universities.
- (iii) The linear regression analysis indicated that the students character education perception had a positive and significant influence with $\beta = 0.909$ and $p = 0.001$ on the students' moral behaviour in Kenyan universities. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the study concluded that the students' character education significantly influences the moral behaviour of university students in both public and private universities in Kenya.
- (iv) The regression analysis results indicated that student character education had a positive and significant influence on the university students' moral behaviour for all academic levels of the students, with β ranging between .617 to .938 and $p = 0.001$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the study concluded that students' character education perception influences university student moral behaviour significantly regardless of the years of study.

5.2.1 Conclusions of the Study

The researcher believes that various stages of Kohlberg's moral development theory are necessary pre-requisites for character formation. This theory informs the study that since students will recognize the value of social order for the good of all and aspire to develop the capacity for substantive post-conventional reasoning. The students will develop a storehouse of moral example to guide them to responsible behaviour or character they cut for themselves. The students will variously develop as moral beings and become what they want to be. Furthermore, Kohlberg's moral development theory informs the study by emphasizing that

character impacts on behaviour and can be perfected at various stages of educational development.

Conclusions from findings of the study are:

- i) The level of students' perception of character education was significantly higher in private universities than in public universities. This can be attributed to the fact that private universities tend to emphasize on character qualities besides performance merit during the admission of new students. Public universities insist on mere academic performance merit.
- ii) Study objective two results show that no significant sex differences of students' perception of character education influence on moral behaviour existed between them in both public and private universities. This can be explained by the fact that all the sexes are impacted the same by their respective universities due to prevailing nurturing environment.
- iii) Students' perception of character education influence on moral behaviour was significantly higher in private universities than in public universities. Character education attributes such as responsibility, honesty and self-discipline have positive influence on university students' moral behaviour in Kenya.
- iv) The students' academic levels in the university had equal significant impact of perception of character education on moral behaviour. This probably confirms the notion that student's character is formed long before joining university and the prevailing campus ethos.

5.2.2 Recommendations of the Study

The major recommendation based on the study findings is that public universities should introduce character education in their curricula to inspire moral reasoning aimed at promoting moral (action) behaviour.

Recommendations of the study drawn from the conclusions are:

- i) Public universities in Kenya should re-asses campus ethos so as to improve students' perception of character education influence on moral behaviour.
- ii) Kenya universities should consider enhancing the nurturing environment for positive behaviour to cushion vulnerable students from sex stereotypes, biases and discrimination.

- iii) Public universities should introduce character education in their curricula with the aim of promoting students' moral behaviour and improve quality of the graduates.
- iv) Self-assessment of character qualities should be considered in the admission details of new students joining public universities to determine the notion that their character is formed long before they join university.

5.2.3 Recommendation for Further Research

The field of character education in Kenya offers vast potential for further research in the following areas:

- (i) National Values, Cohesion and Integration.
- (ii) Citizenship and Patriotism.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: University Students' Character Education Perception Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

I am John Ibwago Mokera, a postgraduate student pursuing a Master of Arts Degree in Guidance and Counselling at Egerton University. The area of interest is to research on students' perception of character education influence on moral behaviour in public and private universities in Kenya. The study hopes to provide relevant information on character education for necessary curriculum design and development. Kindly, give honest and precise responses. Your responses will be treated with strict confidentiality. Thank you for your co-operation.

SECTION 1. Demographic Information: Please answer all questions by ticking (✓) in the appropriate box.

1. Sex: Female
Male

2. Type of University: Public
Private

3. Level of Study: (Level 1, 1) (Level 1, 2)
(Level 2, 1) (Level 2, 2)
(Level 3, 1) (Level 3, 2)
(Level 4, 1) (Level 4, 2)

4. Programme of Study (e.g. Psychology) _____

SECTION 2. Students perception of character education attributes on moral behaviour: Please answer all questions by ticking (✓) in the appropriate box.

A =Agree (Very High), **SA** = Somewhat Agree (High) **SD** = Somewhat Disagree (Medium) **D** =Disagree (Low), **U** = Undecided (Very Low)

	U	D	SD	SA	A
1. It is <i>curious</i> that character education is transmitting universal moral principles, values and ideals.	1	2	3	4	5
2. <i>Honesty</i> is a character trait about telling the truth and admitting wrongdoing.	1	2	3	4	5
3. <i>Responsibility</i> is a about being accountable for one’s own word and deed.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Self-discipline is <i>self-control</i> of own emotions, words, actions, impulses and desires in all situations.	1	2	3	4	5
5. <i>Integrity</i> is a character trait about being honest, trustworthy and incorruptible.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Virtue is synonymous with <i>kindness</i> and goodness in moral character.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Life <i>performance</i> which is full of virtue, happiness, achievement or success is of higher quality than the one characterized by vice, misery and failures.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Morality means making <i>creative</i> ethical choices between what is right or wrong, good or bad.	1	2	3	4	5
9. A person of good character <i>mentally</i> seeks to develop virtues that are good for the individual and good for the society.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Your campus environment is conducive for students to embrace a virtuous life and civility in <i>servng the community</i> .	1	2	3	4	5
11. The university ethos model learners to <i>diligently</i> attain personal responsibility and respect.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION 3. Character Education Perceptions Influence on Moral Behaviour (items)

Please answer all questions by ticking (√) in the appropriate box.

a) Responsibility (*Selected indicator for moral behaviour*)

NV= *Never (Very Low)*, **Ra**=*Rarely (Low)*, **SM**= *Somewhat (Medium)*, **Re**= *Regularly (High)*
AL= *Always (Very High)*

1. How often do you own up to your actions towards other people?
- 2 Do you identify with instances of emotional need by expressing compassion and empathy for others?
3. Do you complete tasks promptly, efficiently and effectively; example, turning in assignments on time?
- 4.Do you identify with instances of emotional need by expressing compassion and empathy for others?
5. Do you feel like if you risk to getting into trouble that is your own business and nobody else?
6. Do you extend yourself and become resourceful in reaching a goal by improving yourself and significant others?
7. Are you considerate to those who deserve your attention?
8. Do you usually know how your behaviour impacts on other people?
9. Do you encourage your classmates to follow the established written or oral rules?
10. Do you accept defeat in a competition with a positive stride?
11. Do you complete tasks on schedule?

NV	Ra	SM	Re	AL
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

12. When you experience a problem, do you actively seek to resolve it?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

13. Do you turn in your academic assignments on time?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

b) Honesty(Selected indicator for moral behaviour)

NV= *Never (Very Low)*, **Ra**=*Rarely (Low)*,
SM= *Somewhat (Medium)*, **Re**= *Regularly (High)*
AL= *Always (Very High)*

NV	Ra	SM	Re	AL
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------

14. Do you believe it is usually best to cover up your mistakes?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

15. Do you ever think cheating is a virtue?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

16. Have you ever cheated in an exam before?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

17. Would you ever cheat if you were sure you wouldn't get caught

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

18. Have you ever cheated in a test or major Assignment before?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

19. Do you uphold same acts in various situations at all times?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

20. Do you often mislead or fabricate facts for self-gain?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

21. How often do you lie to escape from a situation?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

c) Self-discipline:*(Selected indicator for moral behaviour*

NV= *Never (Very Low)*, **Ra**=*Rarely (Low)*,
SM= *Somewhat (Medium)*, **Re**= *Regularly (High)*
AL= *Always (Very High)*

22. Do you easily give up practicing boring tasks at a slighted challenge or failure?

24. Do you keep trying after a failure or mistake?

25. Do you easily join in acts of vandalism, violence and hooliganism?

26 Do you resist temptations for immediate self-gratification such as masturbation?

27. You wouldn't resist temptations for immediate gratification such as unsafe sex?

28. Do you remain focused, determined and work hard towards your goals despite obstacles?

29. By chance or design would you indulge in self-destructive behaviours such as drug / substance abuse?

30. Are you considerate when using learning resources such as library, computer labs?

31. Do you apologize after doing something to hurt another person?

32. Do you use fights, insults or threats to resolve conflicts among colleagues?

33. Do you engage in active critical thinking before preferred action?

NV	Ra	SM	Re	AL
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION AND PASSION

Appendix C: Nacosti Research Authorization



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,
2241349,3310571,2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245,318249
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
when replying please quote

9th Floor, Utalii House
Uhuru Highway
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No. **NACOSTI/P/17/33423/16652**

Date **3rd May, 2017**

John Ibwago Mokera
Egerton University
P.O. Box 536-20115
EGERTON.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Students' character education perception on behaviour in selected public and private universities in Kenya,*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nairobi, Nakuru and Uasin-gishu Counties** for the period ending **28th April, 2018.**

You are advised to report to the **Vice Chancellors selected Universities, the County Commissioners and the County Directors of Education, Nairobi, Nakuru and Uasin-gishu Counties** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.

**GODFREY P. KALERWA MSc., MBA, MKIM
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO**

Copy to:

The Vice Chancellors
Selected Universities.

The County Commissioner
Nairobi County.

Appendix D: Research Authorization Nairobi Region



Republic of Kenya
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
STATE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

Telegrams: "SCHOOLING", Nairobi
Telephone: Nairobi 020 2453699
Email: ecenairobi@gmail.com
edenairobi@gmail.com

REGIONAL COORDINATOR OF EDUCATION
NAIROBI REGION
NYAYO HOUSE
P.O. Box 74629 – 00200
NAIROBI

When replying please quote

Ref: RCE/NRB/GEN/1/VOL. 1

DATE: 9th June, 2017

John Ibwago Mokera
Egerton University
P O Box 536-20115
EGERTON

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

We are in receipt of a letter from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation regarding research authorization in Nairobi County on "**Students' character education perception on behavior in selected public and private universities in Kenya**".

This office has no objection and authority is hereby granted for a period ending **28th April, 2018** as indicated in the request letter.

Kindly inform the Sub-County Director of Education of the Sub County you intend to visit.



JAMES KIMOTHO
FOR: REGIONAL COORDINATOR OF EDUCATION
NAIROBI

c.c

Director General/CEO
Nation Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NAIROBI

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
State Department of Basic Education

Telegrams: "EDUCATION",
Telephone: 051-2216917
Fax: 051-2217308
Email: cdenakurucounty@yahoo.com
When replying please quote
Ref. NO.
CDE/NKU/GEN//4/1/21/VOL.V/68



COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
NAKURU COUNTY
P. O. BOX 259,
NAKURU.

30TH May, 2017

Sub-county Directors of Education
NJORO AND RONGAI

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION – JOHN IBWAGO MOKERA
PERMIT NO. NACOSTI/P/17/33423/16652

Reference is made to letter NACOSTI/P/17/33423/16652
dated 3rd May, 2017.

Authority is hereby granted to the above named to carry out
research on **“Students’ character education perception on behavior
in selected public and private universities in Kenya”** for a period
ending 28th May, 2018.

Kindly accord him the necessary assistance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'George M. Ontiri'.

GEORGE M. ONTIRI
FOR: COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
NAKURU COUNTY

Copy to:

Egerton University
P. O. Box 536-20115
EGERTON

JOHN IBWAGO MOKERA

Appendix F: Research Authorization Uasin Gishu County

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
STATE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

Telegrams: "EDUCATION", Eldoret
Telephone: 053-2063342 or 2031421/2
Mobile : 0719 12 72 12/0732 260 280
Email: cdeuasingishucounty@yahoo.com
: cdeuasingishucounty@gmail.com
When replying please quote:

Office of The County Director of Education,
Uasin Gishu County,
P.O. Box 9843-30100,
ELDORET.

Ref: No. MOE/UGC/TRN/9/VOL.III/17

6th June, 2017

John Imbwago Mokera,
Egerton University,
P.O. Box 536-20115,
EGERTON.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

This office has received your request for authority to carry out research on "*Students' character education perception on behavior in selected public and private universities in Kenya.*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Uasin Gishu County for the period ending 28th May, 2018.

The authorities concerned are requested to give you maximum support.

I wish you well during your research.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Simeon Kemei'.

SIMEON KEMEI
FOR: COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
UASIN GISHU.



Appendix G: Authorization to Collect Data at Egerton University

EGERTON

P.O. Box 536 -20115
Egerton, Kenya



UNIVERSITY

Tel: +254-51-2217801/808
+254-51-2217891/2
Cell: 0708489256
0775015388
Fax: +254-51-2217942
E-mail: dvcre@egerton.ac.ke

**OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY VICE - CHANCELLOR
RESEARCH AND EXTENSION**

EU/DVCRE/108

12th June, 2017

John I. Mokera
Department of Psychology, Counselling & Educ. Foundations
Egerton University

RE: AUTHORITY TO COLLECT DATA AT EGERTON UNIVERSITY

Reference is made to your letter dated 12th June, 2017 requesting for authority to collect data at Egerton University for an MA study titled: *'Students' Character Education Perception on Behavior in Selected Public and Private Universities in Kenya.'*

Authority is hereby granted for you to collect data from students at Egerton University.

It is noted that this research is purely for academic purposes and will not be used otherwise. Upon completion of the study please ensure that you provide a copy of the report for our retention.


Prof. Alfred C. Kibor, PhD
Ag. Deputy Vice-Chancellor [Research & Extension]



cc. DVC/AA
Dean of Students

ACK/po

'Transforming Lives through Quality Education'
Egerton University is ISO 9001:2008 Certified

Appendix H: Authorization to Collect Data at Moi University



MOI UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY VICE CHANCELLOR
ACADEMICS, RESEARCH AND EXTENSION

Tel: (053) 43355
(053) 43620
Fax: (053) 43412
Email: dvc_are@mu.ac.ke or dveresearchmu@gmail.com

P.O. Box 3900
Eldoret - 30100
Kenya

REF: MU/DVC/REP/27B

Date: 7th June, 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH – JOHN IBWAGO MOKEIRA

The above subject matter refers.

Mr. John Ibwago Mokeira who is a post graduate Student pursuing a Master of Arts Degree in Guidance and Counseling at Egerton University, has applied for authority to collect data within Moi University. We would be grateful if he is permitted to collect his data.

By copy of this letter authority is hereby granted to him to collect the data.

After the completion of the research, a complete report both on hard and soft copy will be handed over to the office of Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academics, Research & Extension.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

PROF. I. N. KIMENGI, Ph.D.
DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR
(ACADEMICS, RESEARCH & EXTENSION)

SKM/SP



(ISO 9001: 2008 Certified Institution)

Appendix I: Authorization to Collect Data at Kabarak University



Office of the Registrar (Administration & Human Resources)

Private Bag - 20157
KABARAK, KENYA
Email: Registrar@kabarak.ac.ke

Tel: 254-51-343509
Fax: 254-51-343529
www.kabarak.ac.ke

18th May 2017

Mr. John I. Mokera
Department of Psychology, Counselling
& Educational Foundations
P.O. Box 536,
EGERTON

Dear Mr. Mokera,

RE: AUTHORITY TO COLLECT RESEARCH DATA

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 11th May 2017 on the above subject.

I am pleased to inform you that your request to collect data from our University on "*Student's character education perception on behaviour in selected public and private universities in Kenya*" has been approved. We would also appreciate if you would share with us your research findings.

Thank you for choosing to undertake your research thesis at Kabarak University.

Yours sincerely,

PROF. RONALD K. CHEPKILOT
REGISTRAR (ADMIN & HR)

C.C. Deputy Vice Chancellor (A & R)
Registrar (A & R)

RKC/mjb

Kabarak University Moral Code

As members of Kabarak University family, we purpose at all times and in all places, to set apart in one's heart, Jesus as Lord. 1 Peter 3:15



THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND RESEARCH

Our Ref: DVC/ACAD&RE/203/2017

Date: 13th June 2017

John Ibwago Mokera
Department of Psychology
Counselling and Educational Foundation
P.O. Box 536
EGERTON

Dear Mokera,

Ref: Request to conduct Research in CUEA

I acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 7th June 2017 requesting that you be authorized to conduct research at The Catholic University of Eastern Africa.

I am glad to inform you that permission has been granted to conduct research on the topic "*Character education influence on students' behaviour in selected public and private universities in Kenya*", provided you observe the normal ethical cautions and discretions.

I wish you well in your study and I look forward to your sharing the findings with the Catholic University of Eastern Africa.

Sincerely yours,

Prof. Kaku Sagary Nokoe
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs & Research)



KENYA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' CHARACTER EDUCATION PERCEPTION ON BEHAVIOUR

1*John Ibwago Mokera

Post Graduate Student: Department of Psychology, Counselling and Educational Foundations
Egerton University

*Corresponding Author's Email: jmokera@gmail.com

2*Prof. Aggrey M. Sindabi

Professor, Department of Psychology, Counselling and Educational Foundations
Egerton University

3*Dr. Briston E.E. Omulema

Senior Lecturer, Department of Psychology, Counselling and Educational Foundations
Egerton University

Abstract

Purpose: Character education is a process of teaching people how to behave morally. This study probed how public and private university students in Kenya perceive character education in the university and its possible role in influencing positive behaviour. The examined student character education attributes included universal moral principles of honesty, responsibility and self-discipline; whereas student behaviour was described by property use, examination writing and substance use.

Methodology: A descriptive survey design was used for the target population (54,864) of undergraduate students. A sample size of 381 students was randomly selected and information on the study variables obtained using a questionnaire. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.813. The level of significance was alpha 0.05.

Findings: The findings of the study were that students' character education perception was significantly higher in private universities compared to public universities. The influence of student character education on the university students' behaviour was significantly positive ($\beta=.909$, $p=.000$) regardless of year of study and gender of the students.

Recommendations: The major recommendation of the study is that Kenya universities should introduce character education in the curriculum with the aim of improving students' behaviour and quality of graduates.

Keywords: *Universal Values; Character Education; Student Behaviour; Campus Environment.*