

ROLE OF SELECTED PARENTAL CHARACTERISTICS ON LEVELS OF SELF-ESTEEM AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA

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for the Master of Education Degree in Guidance and Counselling of Egerton
University**

EGERTON UNIVERSITY

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DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Declaration

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any university and institutions of higher learning for any award.



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Recommendation

This research thesis has been prepared with our guidance and submitted with our approval and recommendation as the University supervisors

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DEDICATION

To my husband John, and children, Sarah, Maureen, Mark, Deyvey, Deborah and Max for their never ending support; and to my late parents, Rev. Jefthah and Hannah Michoro.

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I glorify God for his sufficient grace, guiding me and giving me the energy to come this far. My sincere gratitude goes to my supervisor: Dr. Catherine Mumiukha, who took her precious time, patience and understanding throughout the entire research to advise, encourage and direct me to move forward and also for being there for me as a true mentor in every sense of the word. Her thoughtful guidance and support have greatly contributed to my professional development. Her professional advice and constructive feedback which kept me going and thinking more were very instrumental in the realization of this work. May the good Lord reward you in abundance. Special thanks go to Egerton University Librarians (resource centre) who were always there for me and for their understanding and patience whenever I needed them. I would also like to thank my lecturers and friends notably: Prof. Ezra K. Maritim, Dr. Catherine Mumiukha, Prof. Mark Okere, the late Prof. A. M. Sindabi, Dr. Joel Ngeno, Dr. Boaz Kinzi, Dr. Fred Barasa, Dr. B.E Omulema and Mr. L. B. Ogola for the support you accorded me during my studies. May God bless you. My special thanks go to the management of University of Kabianga from Kericho County for their acceptance and cooperation during this study, not forgetting the students who gave me their time and space. To all who participated or helped me in one way or the other, though not mentioned by name, my indebtedness and deep felt gratitude to you. Special thanks to my family for being a source of strength and inspiration throughout the journey, May God richly bless you.

ABSTRACT

Kenyan universities have experienced a growing phenomenon of student's unrest, drug abuse, deaths, relationship break ups, exam malpractice among others, which pose serious challenges in the growth and development of the students. Feelings of self-worth develop very early in childhood, thus parents and guardians play a great role in determining what the child thinks about him or herself. A strong self-esteem will act as a weapon against the challenges in life, the student will face. The purpose of this study therefore was to establish the role of selected parental characteristics on levels of self-esteem among undergraduate students in public universities in Kenya. The researcher used a descriptive survey research design. The target population for this study was 840 students from the fourth year students of University of Kabianga, a location arrived at randomly to represent all public universities in Kenya. 540 male and 300 female students were proportionately distributed to include 174 male and 97 female students from which a sample of 271 students was obtained. Experts in guidance and counselling from the Department of Psychology Counseling and Educational Foundations assessed the content and face validity of the questionnaire. Reliability was estimated using Cronbach's alpha following pilot study. The yielded coefficient of 0.953 values was obtained. Data was analysed with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26, using percentages, frequencies and cross-tabulation. The study established that most of the respondents who had stayed in married parenthood were optimistic about life, full of confidence and were pleasant with discomfort having a response of 74.8% and 74.1% respectively. The study concludes that parental characteristics specifically parental marital status, parental education level and parental employment status play a significant role in enhancing undergraduates' student self-esteem in universities. The study recommends that Ministry of Higher Education should develop specific policies targeting undergraduate students' self-esteem in all Universities in Kenya to enhance their well-being.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANOVA:	Analysis of Variance
BD:	Behavioral Disorder
HSE:	High Self- Esteem
KUCCPS:	Kenya Universities and colleges Placement Service
LSE:	Low Self- Esteem
NACOSTI:	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
PC:	Parental Characteristics
PSE:	Positive Self- Esteem
SE:	Self- Esteem
SES:	Socio-Economic Status
SPSS:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UNESCO:	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UoK:	University of Kabianga

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Self-esteem is the value or worth that people connect with themselves, both positive and negative. According to Eromo and Levy (2017), self-esteem (SE) is the degree to which a person appreciates himself or herself, the total of conscious self-evaluative thoughts and feelings. Their research also claims that developing children's SE begins with the parents' lives. In accordance with (Gentina *et al.*, 2018), a crucial role on a child's SE is the general sense of support the youngster feels from the essential people in his or her life, primarily parents and peers. These findings are reinforced by Ferro and Boyle (2015), who discovered that parental functioning had a positive effect on their children's SE. Eromo and Levy (2017) discovered that one of the factors contributing to SE difficulties is the students' home environment, of which parents are a crucial component.

The function of parents in the upbringing of a child is critical. Farooq *et al.* (2011) state that, children look up to their parents for advice, protection, and encouragement to live a good life. According to Leary (1999) and Mu (2019) main determinants of self-esteem are perceived reactions of other people as self-judgments or qualities that the person believes are relevant to significant others. Failure, criticism, rejection, and other experiences that have negative consequences from relationship judgment frequently diminish self-esteem. Failure, rejection, and criticism by significant others, such as parents and members of the peer group, may impair the student's self-esteem for this study.

As a result, there is an urgent need to investigate the role of parental qualities and university students' self-esteem. This could be because some behaviors are ascribed to the parent-student relationship, which determines how they react to others and to themselves, as well as their academic success (Mahdavi *et al.*, 2013). The family is the primary agent of socialization, the setting in which children begin to acquire the beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors that society considers appropriate, preparing the child for economic self-sufficiency and encouraging the child to maximize other cultural values such as morality, religion, and achievement (Ogwo, 2013). As a result, it appears that individuals who perceive the existence of supportive family are more likely to have a stronger feeling of SE, which enhances the student's confidence and, as a result, their drive.

As previously said, the importance of healthy self-esteem among university students cannot be overstated. Self-esteem influences subsequent goal achievement and boosts an individual's ability to cope with adversity. A university student who has high self-esteem may perform better than one who has low self-esteem.

Tambelli *et al.* (2012) reported that "university students face many psychological problems in relation to SE and academic performance." As a result, they have underperformed in terms of completing assignment deadlines, developing relationship issues, and failing exams. As a result, the attributes exhibited by parents have a significant impact on their children's self-esteem, as well as molding their improvement in academic attainment and achievements, as well as their overall behavior and attendance. Because of the emotional and academic assistance they may provide to their children, the parental level of education may make a difference in deciding whether the parent was passionately concerned in their children's wellbeing.

These students gain confidence, increase their academic performance, and develop a sense of self-worth. The nature of parental occupation may also play a factor in determining whether parents will have enough time to focus on their children's work and give the necessary psychological support. Some jobs need parents to be present most of the time, while others may be so demanding that parents have little time to support their children. Students from such homes are prone to feel neglected and may be enticed to engage in activities that may badly impact their lives.

The marital status of the students' parents may have a significant impact on their self-esteem and academic performance. According to Van der Wal *et al.* (2019), children from single parent homes had higher levels of sadness and anxiety, as well as poorer levels of self-esteem, than children from married parent families. These findings are supported by the findings of Elfhag *et al.* (2010), who discovered that children raised by single parents had lower SE than those raised by both parents. According to Caldwell *et al.* (2017), custodial single parents may face issues such as shift in economic status, self-blame, loss of SE, and depression, role overload, social isolation, loneliness, interpersonal disputes, and modification of conventional living arrangements. As a result, the characteristics exhibited by parents play an important role in influencing their children's self-esteem and forming their character. These can have a negative

impact on kids' self-esteem and lead to indiscipline, drug misuse (Oladipo *et al.*, 2017), and poor academic performance. However, such difficulties can be extremely common among kids who have poor self-esteem. It is also crucial to note that low self-esteem is not limited to children from single parent families; children from married parent families face a similar difficulty. It is therefore critical to explore if parental qualities play a role in the development of student self-esteem in universities.

Harrison (2018) observed a favorable relationship between how people regard themselves and their level of academic attainment in a study. Erol and Orth (2011) discovered that students with high self-esteem are less depressed, more content with their lives, and score lower on psychological and psychosocial measures of anxiety, overt aggression, and irritability. Childhood experiences play a particularly important role in developing our basic SE. As a result, it is obvious that one's SE can be greatly impacted by their parents' fears and vulnerabilities. SE makes the world a more enjoyable place to visit; without it, life can be a struggle. Educators, counselors, and psychologists around the world are concerned about students' self-esteem (Eriş, 2018). Many educators and treatment professionals emphasize the importance of programs that foster kids' confidence and feelings of competence in their own skills as a vital component of successful learning and academic advancement (Cheow, 2018).

Researchers in numerous parts of the world have examined self-esteem, with findings indicating that diverse types of self-esteem exist frequently. According to Eris (2018), most students in the United Kingdom are unprepared for the challenges of university and are overwhelmed by issues such as adjustment to new life, homesickness, pressure of studies, cost of education, loneliness, housing problems, and time management, among others. According to Twenge *et al.* (2018), the most significant distractions for university students in America were alcoholism, engagement in premature sex, poor time management, multitasking, technology (smartphones and laptops), and parties. According to Hechinger (2018), such issues may foster a toxic culture in the classroom. Members of the Theta Tau engineering fraternity at Syracuse University broadcast tapes of themselves swearing "to always have hatred in my heart" (p. 21) for African Americans, demonstrating diversity in group dynamics and a symptom of low SE. During a multicultural weekend at California Polytechnic State University, white members of the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity dressed up as gang members. University students are among the demographics most afflicted by drugs, depression, and anxiety worldwide (Eris, 2018)

As noted by Chuks (2017), financial issues with regard to school fees, accommodation, and food are the most important challenges that students in universities frequently face, resulting in a lot of psychological sensations of stress and anxiety. According to Schiraldi (2016), the majority of University of Ghana students engage in drug misuse, infidelity, unrequited love, and unmet expectations, which leads to suicidal ideation and acute mental anguish. Universities in Kenya have also seen an increase in student unrest, drug usage, deaths, and relationship breakups, all of which pose severe difficulties to students' growth and development (Kinga *et al.*, 2019). Alcohol (Oladipo *et al.*, 2017), relationships, parties, students not reading their textbooks, student misconduct, smartphones, and students not paying attention in class, among other things, are the most common distractions for university students in Kenya, resulting to exam malpractice, anxiety, distress, and uncompleted tasks. Another concern with students is a lack of sleep, which is linked to not just failure to focus but also sadness, depression, mistrust and loneliness, lack of secrecy, and poor physical health.

It is therefore critical to evaluate the causes linked with poor self-esteem among Kenyan university students so that suitable preventive measures can be implemented. According to the Ministry of Education (2019), drugs and excessive violence have become a trend. For example, a 19-year-old university student apparently filmed herself committing suicide after a disagreement with her boyfriend, adding to the troubling numbers of university students committing suicide. In another case, a student was arrested for causing a disturbance and was later discovered to be in possession of 50 grams of bhang, which led to his detention. Another case stated that test stress and financial troubles were the causes of suicide, although the daily nation recounts several additional concerning cases.

Due to these obstacles and the student's lifestyle components of wellbeing, such as sleep, diet, excessive amounts of alcohol, mistrust in relationships, and nutrition, there is a high possibility of the students becoming sick and ill. Overwhelming, anxiety, despair, loneliness, unrest, and physical symptoms were reported to be highly common among students with poor self-esteem by Yadeta *et al.* (2013). This may result in students misbehaving at university, such as physical aggression, property damage, violations of others' rights and social norms, as well as a disregard for authority, peer groups that waste valuable class and study time, discontinuation of studies, suspension or even expulsion from the university due to exam malpractice and failure, among other things. Cohen (2014) noticed that university misbehavior can be harmful to individual students because it interferes with studying, diminishes the possibility of

graduating, or reduces the likelihood of finishing university education. Both types of SE are widely accepted among students all around the world.

As stated by Van der Wal (2019), parental conflict has an impact on adolescent self-esteem, whereas parental roles have significant impact on children's self-esteem. For example, Erol and Orth (2011) compared students with low self-esteem (LSE) to those with high self-esteem (HSE) and discovered that those with HSE are less depressed, more satisfied with life, and have lower levels of anxiety, overt aggression, and irritability. As a result, it has been seen that individuals who are confident in themselves achieve more, while those who are not confident in themselves achieve less. As a result, the purpose of this study is to investigate the role of parental marital status, parental education level and parental employment status on levels of self-esteem among undergraduate students.

Ryan and Deci (2017) state that self-esteem, is a critical component of a person's experience and quality of life. In other words, a person's unfavorable self-evaluation was found to cause psycho-social dangers. As a result, SE in a university student's life plays a key part in developing competency and proficiency, which can eventually lead to the development of his or her entire human potential. Benokraitis (2012) studied anxiety and SE in university students. Azhar *et al.* (2013) investigated the impact of parental education and SES on university students' academic achievement, whereas Saadat *et al.* (2012) investigated the relationship between SE and locus of control among Iranian university students.

Positive self-evaluation, according to the researchers, is an important predictor of one's general well-being and degree of adaption to the social situation, as well as a potent factor in protecting against psychosocial hazards (Voci *et al.*, 2019). As a result, a new study in a developing nation environment, such as Kenya, is being proposed to help establish the role of parental characteristics on university students' SE. This study looked into whether parental variables (marriage status, educational level, and employment status) played a vital role in the development of the students' self-esteem in universities, with an emphasis on the University of Kabianga in Kericho County.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

University students in Kenya face a myriad of problems, which include drug abuse, deaths, relationship break ups and exam malpractice among others, which pose serious challenges in growth and development of the student. Psychological problems such as overwhelming anxiety, depression, loneliness, unrest, and somatic symptoms are quite prevalent among students with low self-esteem. This may lead to student's violation of the rights of others and of social norms as well as a disregard for authority among others. Feelings of self-worth develop very early in childhood; thus parents play a great role in determining what the child thinks about him or herself. A strong SE will act as a weapon against the challenges in life, the student will face. A low level of SE will inhibit development while a high level of SE will enhance it. The role of the selected parental characteristics on SE is therefore an aspect of a person's environment interface that warrants attention and it is for this purpose that this study is designed. Given the challenges experienced by the university students, the researcher therefore, investigated the role of parental marital status, parental education level, and parental employment status on the levels of SE among undergraduate students in public universities. As such, the study aims at looking into the role of selected parental characteristics on levels of self-esteem among undergraduate students in Universities in Kenya.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The study sought to establish the role of parental marital status, parental education level and parental employment status on levels of self-esteem among undergraduate students in public universities in Kenya.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

- i. To determine the role of parental marital status on the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students in public universities in Kenya.
- ii. To determine the role of parental education level on the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students in Public Universities in Kenya.
- iii. To determine the role of parental employment status on the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students in Public Universities in Kenya.

1.5 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- i. What is the role of parental marital status on the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students in Public Universities in Kenya?
- ii. What is the role of parental education level on the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students in Public Universities in Kenya?
- iii. What is the role of parental employment status on the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students in Public Universities in Kenya?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study is critical, especially in understanding the role of SE; this may help improve the student's capacity to perform better in numerous professions. Furthermore, by understanding the role of PC on students' SE, educators and treatment providers can emphasize the importance of programs that promote confidence and competence in students' own skills as a vital component in successful learning and academic advancement. Educators, counselors, and even students may better comprehend others or themselves, make more reasoned decisions about their association with their parents, and realize the important role their parents play in developing the students' SE. The findings may be of great assistance to university administration in understanding SE as a factor that may be responsible for students' behavior in the university, and thus find intervention aimed at helping students develop positive SE, as well as consider when designing university policy to improve student welfare. Student counselors may be able to develop new tactics and approaches (enhancing or establishing interventions that meet the requirements of students with low self-esteem) for strengthening guidance and counseling programs.

Therefore, the findings from this study may benefit university student academic advisors, dean of students' office, students' welfare and student counselors. This may enable them to build up an understanding, on the role parents play in developing the self-esteem of their students. Then have consideration in improving and introducing interventions that suit student SE needs, concerning the students and also change of strategies when it comes to guiding and counseling of these students, on interventions that aim at enhancing parent-child relationship, which will go a long way in developing HSE among the students'. The students also may benefit from change of strategies, interventions and develop HSE necessary for personal growth (meaning

the approaches were more effective and hence better student welfare services and conducive atmosphere for learning). It may benefit the university management and other departments that deal with students understand how SE affects behavior and development hence assist in structuring programs to fit students with esteem issues. This will go along with finding ways to rise SE and to also motivate students as well as avoid behavior issues.

It further throws light on the critical link between parental traits and students' self-esteem, providing vital insights into how parental support, communication, and involvement might affect undergraduate students' self-esteem. Students can obtain a better awareness of the numerous impacts on their self-esteem and potentially use this information to improve their self-confidence and overall well-being by studying this purpose. Furthermore, the findings of this study may help universities and parents create an environment that fosters students' self-esteem, thereby boosting their academic and personal development. Moreover, the findings from the study may add in generation of knowledge and form a basis for further research.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study focused on undergraduate students in Public Universities in Kenya. The study focused on only three of the five parental characteristics that affect self-esteem as suggested by Young (2018). The study focused on the role of parental employment status, parent's education level, parental marital status and the high, moderate and low levels of SE among undergraduate students in Public Universities in Kenya. The study focused on; the Year Four undergraduate students because of the experiences the students have had in the university and the ability to understand trends of challenges in their growth and development, depending on how the students are negotiating the sixth life stage, according to Erikson's developmental stage (Young Adulthood 19-40 years) as stated by Kendra (2020) which is Intimacy vs Isolation, with relationship being the important event. The outcome in this stage is that the young adults need to form intimate loving relationships with other people. Success leads to strong relationships, while failure results in loneliness and isolation.

1.8 Assumptions of the Study

The study was based on the following assumptions;

- i) That respondent's gave honest information about their parents as solicited through the study instrument.

- ii) That the selected parental characteristics motivate the self-esteem of the university students.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

- i) The study was restricted to generalizations of the findings of the study to Private Universities, as they do not have similar characteristics as those in Public Universities.

1.10 Definition of Key Terms

Parental Characteristics: Features of parents that have been identified as explanatory variables in a wide range of settings (Rossi & Rossi, 2018). In this study it will refer to status of the parents or guardians of students which was featured as marital status, occupation and educational level of the parents.

Parental Education: Possession of education by a parent, the quality or state of being literate especially ability to read and write (Coleman, 2018). For this study, it refers to the total number of years of formal education of a parent or a guardian of a student. It was measured as no schooling, primary, secondary and post-secondary level of education.

Parental Marital Status: This refers to the fact of someone being married or not (Morley & Moran, 2011). In this study, it will mean single or married.

Parental Occupation: This is any activity that serves as one's regular source of livelihood such as employed and self-employed (Mkenda & Alkaeli, 2019). For this study it refers to an income generating activity of the student's parent which was measured as employed, self-employed or unemployed.

Self-esteem: This relates to how a person perceives his or her characteristics, attitudes, preferences, ideas, feelings, ability percepts and concepts in relation to others and the environment (Eriş, 2018). In this study, it will refer to the thoughts and feelings a student has about himself or herself which was measured as high, moderate or low self-esteem.

Student: For this study it refers to the fourth year undergraduate female and male students enrolled in University of Kabianga since they have gone through a myriad of challenges and are better placed to bring out self-esteem challenges.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the related literature that supports the title of the research. Major sub-topics explored in this chapter include the importance of self-esteem, self-esteem and student behavior and development, parental characteristics such as marital status, education and occupation and students' self-esteem. Also included are theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

2.2 Meaning and Importance of Self-esteem

One of the primary variables in this study is self-esteem. A review of the literature reveals that there is no general definition of self-esteem. As a result, different scholars and schools of thought have provided diverse definitions. Tian *et al.* (2015) define SE as an individual's overall appraisal, whether high or low, based on all of the positive and negative self-perceptions that comprise that individual's self-concept. Its application usually involves thoughts of worthiness. According to Slavin (2019), the value of individuals is reflected in the eyes of society, a process that begins in childhood. To some extent, our self-esteem is generated from a comparison with other people. A surprising point about self-esteem according to Slavin (2019) is the enormous range of variation between individuals. While some people think the whole world is theirs for the taking and asking, others feel they have no right to exist.

In some cultures, self-esteem is heavily influenced by family, social groupings, tribes, or nations. If a youngster is not appreciated, his or her self-esteem suffers. According to Ahmad *et al.* (2013), a youngster might have strong negative feelings long before he or she is developed enough to think logically or form logical conclusions. This suggests that a child, for example, may have been the result of an unplanned pregnancy and, despite the parents' efforts to disguise this, may have felt the underlying rejection extremely strongly. All of these things would help a person's self-esteem develop. As a result, an individual's SE can be either low or high depending on how one assesses his or her worth.

Voci *et al.* (2019) raises the concern of child therapists that many parents do not help their children to perceive themselves positively and instead concentrate too much on their weaknesses. Whenever these parents talk, they dwell on what the children cannot do. Children

reared in this way have high chances of developing poor self-esteem. A child who has been the mothers' favorite will forever keep the feeling that he or she is a conqueror while another, even within the same family grows up with the feeling that their very existence is a terrible mistake. According to Ahmad *et al.* (2013), self-esteem is heavily influenced by how one perceives his relationship to the rest of the universe. This results in good interpersonal relationships, which are defined by understanding of one another, the avoidance of unpleasant words or emotional outbursts, and correct communication. In the multi model counseling approach, Mu (2019) sees interpersonal relationships as one of the seven key areas of functioning within the complex of human personality.

Overall, available evidence indicates that strong self-esteem may have good effects for an individual's well-being and achievement, whereas low self-esteem may be a risk factor for poor outcomes. As a result, it is critical to explore the impact of PC in determining the degree of SE of Kenyan university students. Neither extreme of SE, however, is good. Furthermore, Tian *et al.* (2013) argued that when parents fail to fulfill their basic responsibilities, their children are likely to experience the repercussions. According to the study, adolescents who do not have parental participation have almost no chance of graduating from high school. The current study will only look at a few of these elements affecting students' self-esteem, which are, parent's educational level, marital status and occupational level of the parent.

2.3 Self-esteem on Student Behaviour and Development

Low self-esteem can lead to behaviour problems and to increased aggression in some children (Guerra *et al.*, 2017). Low self-esteem is an enormous public health problem and people who report low self-esteem usually say that it has been present since early childhood or at least adolescence. Low self-esteem results from one having a poor self-image caused by his or her negative attitudes, about the self, performance in class and his purpose in life. High self-esteem is the opposite of low self-esteem. It is a very important aspect of one's life. In American culture for instance, high esteem is viewed as the basis for good relationships with other people and academic success. Harrison (2018) observes that high esteem forms the cornerstone of interpersonal relationships and positive attitudes towards living. High self-esteem in this regard refers to desirable levels of esteem, which are not too high or too low majorly referred by scholars as positive self-esteem or middle ground.

Students with strong self-esteem will exhibit traits such as good interpersonal relationships, confidence, self-respect, and assertiveness, among others. These attributes are derived from the two components of self-esteem, namely awareness of one's own worth and a sense of one's own capacity. Positive self-esteem is one technique to help students develop life skills. SE appears to have an impact on a child's ability to study and behave in school. SE appears to have an effect on motivation as well. Unfortunately, there is evidence that students with special needs are more likely to acquire low self-esteem (Tian *et al.*, 2013).

Low self-esteem is characterized by depressive illness, prejudice, poor interpersonal relationships, psychosomatic disorders, abuse and anxiety (Schiraldi, 2016). Low self-esteem expresses a feeling that one cannot cope, face life's challenges and that he/she is not fit to function as a person. To a person with low esteem life means pain, under performance, complains, have no control over their impulses, and this explains why most of the victims contemplate committing suicide. As Morley and Moran (2011) states, after recognizing the undesirability of too high or too low self-esteem, therapists try for a middle ground." While not all students with LSE will do poorly in school, research done by Sowislo and Orth (2013) indicates that LSE can lead to aggression and being pessimistic. It is therefore important to understand how SE affects behavior and development for university students in Kenya. It is also important to find a way, or ways, to raise SE and to also motivate students and find ways to avoid behavior issues and give students skills to improve SE and gain insight on their parental guidelines.

Fatemi and Asghari (2016), reported that self-esteem cannot be taught; rather it is developed through individual's life experiences. Guerra *et al.* (2017) linked lower SE to both bullying and being the victim of bullying. According to Caldwell *et al.* (2017), a large percentage of university students with a behavioral disorder (BD) are labeled as bullies. However, LSE seems to affect behavior, but how a person behaves towards others may also play a role in aggression. According to Sa *et al.* (2019) aggressive students that have LSE bully as a means of spreading LSE, although not all bullies have LSE. Students in universities with LSE are unable to let go their mistakes, they wallow in self-pity and blame themselves, which leads them to have personal and social problems. Guerra *et al.* (2017) also reported that university students with BD are not readily accepted by their classmates which may affect how they are treated as well as how they behave. Eriş (2013) found a correlation between SE and behaviours. While there is much information linking low self-esteem to behaviours, there is a limited number of studies

or amount of research that link lowered SE to PC which this study seeks to fill this knowledge gap.

Wakeman *et al.* (2019) found that students with different levels of successes normally involve self-esteem protection mechanisms, that are activated when a person's SE is threatened. Self-directed school experiences, like democratic patterns of parental control, may foster internally motivated behaviour. Self-esteem can impact on students' abilities to make and keep friends, which also can have an impact on educational achievement due to behavioral problems. Due to the natural tendencies that children have to compare themselves with others, those with exceptionalities may have low self-esteem from lack of success in school, sports, and friendships (Lyons *et al.*, 2012). Self-esteem building forms the basis of an individual's re-invention and getting back to the road towards success. The above arguments therefore, underscore the importance of launching self-esteem building programmes in any institution whose aim is to succeed.

2.4 Parental Characteristics on Student Self-esteem

A major influence on a child's self-esteem is the overall sense of support the child feels from the important people around, particularly parents and peers (Gentina *et al.*, 2018). Psychologist Carl Rogers as quoted by Millings *et al.* (2012) once said that God gave children to parents expecting them to be raised as princes and princesses, but parents have turned many of them into frogs. Ogwo (2013) points out that, the family is the primary agent of socialization, the setting in which children begin to acquire the beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviours considered appropriate in the society, preparing the child for economic self-sufficiency and encouraging the child to maximize other cultural values such as morality, religion and achievement. Unfortunately, today, the society is characterized by a social structure that is rocked by instability in families leading to divorce, domestic violence and child abuse. Love that cements family relationships are becoming increasingly elusive among parents and children as well.

Ferro and Boyle (2015) found that parental functioning has been shown to have a positive effect on SE. Among the contributing factor to SE problems, is the students' home environment of which parents are major component. Therefore, it would seem that individuals who perceived the presence of supportive family are more likely to feel a greater sense of SE. Besides, parental

support can come from either the father or mother, however if this child comes from a single parent family they might lack parental support from one parent. Conversely, broken homes and dysfunctional families will hardly produce whole people. Children reared by parents and relatives who subject them to demeaning and negative comments, make them feel inferior and valueless, and are prone to developing low self-esteem. In society, wealthy parents are regarded as successful and superior. As a result, pupils from wealthy families feel superior to students from financially disadvantaged families. Among other things, the parent's educational level may influence the family's socioeconomic situation. The higher the parent's degree of education, the higher the paying job and hence the higher the family income. These educated parents lead and support their children, increasing their sense of authority and worth. These parents also use isolation, guilt appeals, and other kinds of discipline with the threat of love, lowering their children's SE (Kutob *et al.*, 2010).

Students from humble families may compare themselves with others from affluent families and condemn themselves to be of lesser value. Stanley Coopersmitt as quoted by Langer and Ngnoumen (2017) did extensive survey on self-esteem and found out the following:

- i) That when the father had regular work and enjoyed his work, 97% of his children had high self-esteem.
- ii) When the father was out of work often and away from home often, 20% of his children had high self-esteem.
- iii) When the mother had regular work and enjoyed her work, 72% of her children had high self-esteem.
- iv) When the mother had high self-esteem 72% of her children had high self-esteem.
- v) When there was no conflict between the parents, 88% of the children had high self-esteem.
- vi) When the children were held to high standards, 80% had high self-esteem.

The above findings show that parents play a vital role in helping the children to acquire sound self-esteem. Most low self-esteem stems out from unfortunate childhood experiences. According to Sowislo and Orth (2013) parents who have definite values, who have a clear idea of what they regard as appropriate behaviour and who are able and willing to present and enforce their beliefs, are more likely to rear children who value themselves highly.

Smokowski *et al.* (2015) investigated the typical behavior of the boys' parents in his study. He discovered that specific child-rearing approaches were associated to parents' high self-esteem. Such parents were more welcoming and affectionate toward their children; they were interested in their children's interests and friends, and they were more attentive to their children in general (Eriş, 2013). However, these attributes may be lacking in certain parenting, where the parent has a poor self-image and numerous anxieties about their lives, and so does not positively affect their children's self-esteem.

Secondly, the parents who had child-rearing practices related to high self-esteem were strict, setting clear limits on behaviour; parents of HSE boys enforced them in a firm decisive manner. Even though they were strict, they did not use coercive kinds of discipline to enforce their rules. They were more likely to punish their children by denying privileges than by using physical punishment and withdrawal of affection to control their children. Another characteristic of parents of high self-esteem boys is that they allowed their children greater individual expression (Kinga *et al.*, 2019).

Maag (2016) indicated the following as possible PC that have a link with SE: Parents' 'insecurities, frequently injected into the life of their children therefore, becoming the children's own set of insecurities. Parents' vulnerabilities commonly become those of their children and lastly parents' strengths and optimism, which can be an asset for their children. Ultimately, children are a mirrored reflection of the life lived by their parents. If parents' have a particular set of perceived vulnerabilities, limitations, negative self-talk, weaknesses, or negative habitual acts, then the propensity that their children will develop such negative behaviours are increased. Likewise, if parents have developed positive habits, self-talk, and perceivable strengths; their children are placed in an advantageous position to develop a PSE.

To zero down to the PC in this study, which include parental marital status, occupation and education, this was equated to parental modeling. It is in this that their children model from and acts. Hence Parental modeling is as important as any words that can be spoken. Therefore, it begins with positive modeling behaviours and positive self-talk. Children adapt the behaviours, attitudes, percepts, and self-talk that parents instill in them. Maag (2016) argue that, parents who have developed a belief system that equate the worth of their person to their behaviours, have a skewed view of themselves and most likely their children may copy after them.

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA, 2011) concludes that, it begins with the parents, and those who are in direct daily contact with the children (i.e. teachers, coaches). If parents declare their love for their children, but look at themselves with disdain, then the children will eventually begin to adapt the negative self-talk of the parents. Ummet (2014) depicts that parents are the gatekeepers of the negative and positive self-talk. After all, children are not born with negative or positive self-talk, it is formed through their primitive developmental years and is commonly a reflection of their interaction with their parents. Parents will only exemplify what they personally know to be true in their own life. However, if parents reject their own goodness, then their children are surely going to develop a similar set of attitudes about themselves.

It is therefore very clear that one's SE may so heavily be affected by their parents' insecurities and vulnerabilities. SE indeed makes the world a pleasant journey, without it life can be an uphill battle. More tend to think of the old saying "Monkey see, Monkey do", and think that, this is what parents put into their kids minds (Lyons *et al.*, 2012). However, loving yourself unconditionally does not eliminate the rest of your makeup, rather it allows for the individual to see him or herself beyond their successes and failures. The unconditional love of self, works as an insulator against all good and bad that occurs in our lives. The unconditional love that is innately human is the foundation that affirms and reaffirms oneself worth (Van der Wal, 2019). Tonnie and Loomis (2017), narrated that when the basic needs are deprived for long periods; all other needs recede in the background. Hence, this study seeks to assess the relationship between parental characteristics and the self-esteem of the students in the university.

2.4.1 Parental Marital Status on Student Self-esteem

According to a 2011 study by the South African Institute of Race Relations only a third of children in South Africa are growing up living with two of their parents, 98,000 children live in child-headed households, 52,000 of whom have a living mother and 9million children are growing up with absent but living fathers. In another study done by Iguacel *et al.* (2018) on parental marital status and children's SE, found that SE of children from either single or married parent families is a very central issue, because it has a direct impact on the child's behavior in school. These findings are collaborated by the study of Elfhag *et al.* (2010) who also found out that, children from single parent families had lower self-esteem compared to

those raised by both parents. Further research has shown that children with present fathers do better in school, are less prone to violence, and have higher SE and self-confidence (Kevorkian, 2010).

The situation is not much different in Africa. According to Ahmad *et al.* (2013) in 2007 about 52 percent of African urban parents were single and had children with lower SE. According to Orth (2018), the amount of SE is affected by a variety of parental characteristics, not just whether the child is raised in a single or married family. According to his research, the development of children's SE begins with the parents' lives. Insecurities of parents are regularly infused into the lives of their children, becoming the children's own set of insecurities. The flaws or strengths of parents frequently become those of their children (Orth, 2018). This occurs in both the lives of single and married parents. This is to say that the manner of parenting, rather than the type of parenting, influences the development of an individual's SE.

The study showed that, the more mothers' educational level increases, the more the children's SE increases. In parallel, the more fathers' educational level increases, the more the children's self-esteem increases, however, this increase was not regarded as significant. In other studies, done in the field, the same findings were arrived at (Harding, 2018). The increase of the parents' educational level enables them to be more conscious about how to raise a child. Educated parents satisfy their children's basic psychological needs with a healthy approach. In a study conducted in 2017 by the Government, Unicef and the Family Support Institute in 13 counties in Kenya it was established that 45 percent of the families came from married families. As in any country, single parenthood arises because of divorce, death or estrangement of a spouse and teenage pregnancy.

The study of Van der Wal (2019) found that children in divorced and remarried families show higher levels of depression and anxiety, and lower levels of self-esteem compared to children in non-divorced families. These findings are collaborated by the study of Elfhag *et al.* (2010) who also found out those children from single parent families, had lower SE compared to those raised by both parents. An observation made by Pinantoan (2013), students with two parents operating in supportive roles are 52 percent more likely to enjoy school and get good marks than students whose parents are disengaged with what's going on at school.

Morrison *et al.* (2018) examined the 92 studies involving 13,000 children ranging from preschool to young adulthood and the overall result of this analysis was that children from divorced families are on "average" somewhat worse off than children who have lived in intact families. These children have more difficulty in school, more behavior problems, more negative self-concepts, more problems with peers, and more trouble getting along with their parents. Further research has shown that children with present fathers do better in school, are less prone to violence, and have higher self-esteem and self-confidence (Kevorkian, 2010). Boys without fathers are less likely to finish high school, more likely to suffer emotionally and economically, and are more likely to have difficulty forming relationships (Wu & Cebotari, 2018). In a study examining how family characteristics affect African American youth, Hadfield *et al.* (2018) found that, African American adolescent boys with non-married parents are more at risk for developing LSE compared with other African American adolescents.

Another study Farooq *et al.* (2011) validated the findings that children of divorce who are reared in single-parent families' fare worse than peers raised in families with two biological parents. As a result, a considerable amount of family research has been seen as providing solid evidence that children of divorce have more psychological, social, and scholastic challenges than their peers reared in families with two biological parents (Kinga *et al.*, 2014). Children in intact, two-parent households had superior educational outcomes than children in single-parent and step-family households, according to research from the United States and other industrialized countries. According to the findings of his research (Kevorkian, 2010), not growing up in an intact two-parent home did not reduce the link between fathers or mothers' engagement and educational outcomes. Living with two biological parents, on the other hand, does not have a consistent favorable effect throughout emerging countries.

Valentine *et al.* (2014) reported that when two parents are present in the child's household, they share the task of monitoring the child's activities and providing encouragement and discipline as needed. When parents live apart, however, the residential parent frequently becomes the dominant provider of both financial and parenting resources. The researchers concluded that because boys may mimic their fathers, the father-son interaction supported the acquisition of an appropriate self-concept. As a result, the non-residential parent is less active in the child's activities and thus has less regular engagement and involvement in day-to-day activities (Bailey, 2003). The preceding review clearly demonstrated that parental marital status has a considerable influence on students' SE. The bulk of these researches, however, have been

undertaken in rich nations, highlighting the necessity to explore the impact of parental marital status in a developing country like Kenya.

The perception of single parenting in most Kenyan communities may not have changed. A single parent family consists of one parent and dependent children living in the same household without the assistance of a co-parent (Mkenda *et al.*, 2019). According to Kimosop *et al.* (2015), single parent households can never be accepted, and there is a constant struggle between the parent's acceptability and that of the community. Because of the lack of acceptability by the community, single parents may have a bad self-image and may exploit their children to boost it. Most single parents face financial constraints because only one hand contributes to the family income, making it difficult to meet their basic demands. On the other hand, because both parents contribute to the family income, two parent families may not have economic constraints. Single parenting, on the other hand, was uncommon in traditional African cultures (Aryana, 2010). Efforts were put towards teaching the adolescents concerning sex. Sex outside of marriage was considered taboo, and anyone involved in it had to be cleansed. Aryana (2010) noted that single mothers are continually informed that they are not as good as married women as parents. These proverbs may subject both the parent and the child to legal and societal repercussions. Because a single parent is under emotional stress, they may be excessively harsh to impose discipline and withdrawing love, causing the child to feel inferior and retreat. This contradicts the beliefs of many scholars, as evidenced by the review of literature. Living with dual-parents, on the other hand, does not consistently enhance SE.

In America, nearly one third of all American families were headed by a single parent in 2006. The 2002 statistics indicated that single parent families represented 36% of US households, while 27% represent two parent households (US Bureau of Census, 2002). Relationships with children, child rearing and child care are factors that can present adjustment problems to single parents (Hetherington, 1989). Divorce for example produces a psychological crisis for both parents and children, resulting in disequilibrium and altered parent – child relationships and roles. A common assumption has been that female – headed single parent household is a pathological family form rather than a viable alternative to nuclear family; with the assumption that the trauma from divorce or separation is likely to result in poorly socialized cognitively deficient children who experience poor parent- child relationship (Hamner & Turner, 2017).

Financial problems are particularly acute for a large percentage of single mothers; more than 60 percent live in poverty (Hetherington, 2007). Moreover, most single mothers tend to have less education and lower paying jobs than do single fathers (De Mooij, 2019). In addition, single mothers report feelings of loneliness and isolation as a major problem, and they face a negative view from society. The widow has been valued more highly, the divorced or separated woman less highly, and the never-married mother has been viewed as immoral, while the lesbian mother is often viewed with contempt (Wakeman *et al.*, 2019). Following divorce also most single mothers were said to suffer from depression, anxiety and were unable to adequately care for their children, which in turn affect their children's self-esteem adversely (Liu *et al.*, 2017). Another study looked at 51 poor, urban African American families, in which students were living with their mothers, grandmothers, or aunts. The study revealed that the more social support the women received the greater their self-esteem and acceptance of their children. They also tended to be more stable psychologically.

A research reported that children living in single parenthood had a lower degree of self-esteem than children living with married parents (Farooqi & Intezar, 2019). Whereas, one of the research findings depicted that the level of self-esteem of a student does not depend on the type of parenthood parse but also depend on a complex interaction of factors such as the type of relationship between parents and children, the school environment and school conditions (Kinga, 2014). Therefore, findings also suggested that the upbringing of the child in intact families, single –parent may or may not alter the self-esteem of an individual. Moreover, in context with the relationship between adjustment and self-esteem, Manker (2011) found that the adjustment level of students was highly associated with their self-esteem level.

The view of the researchers is that development of self-esteem in children largely depends on the relationship between a child and the parent(s). Hence, the level of SE of a student does not depend on the type of parenthood, if the students' school environment and teaching conditions are the same. In fact, children tend to have a high level of SE, when they have a good relationship with a single parent, than when they have been brought up by two parents who are always quarreling. In addition, inaccessible, rejecting or hostile parent can be more damaging than an absent one (Wolfenstein, 2018). The study of Von Soest *et al.* (2016) shows that levels of SE depends on several parental factors, not just whether the child grows in a single or duo parent family. His study asserts that developing children's SE begins with the life of the

parents. In fact, parents' insecurities are commonly injected into the life of their children therefore becoming the children's own set of insecurities.

The weaknesses of parents frequently become those of their children. The qualities and optimism of parents can benefit their children (Orth, 2018). This occurs in both the lives of single and dual parents. Finally, children are a mirror image of their parents' lives. If parents have a specific set of perceived vulnerabilities, limits, negative self-talk, weaknesses, or negative repetitive acts, their children are more likely to develop such negative behaviors. Similarly, if parents build positive habits, self-talk, and perceptible strengths, their children are in a better position to develop a positive SE. This is to say that the technique of parenting, rather than the sort of parenting itself, influences an individual's SE development.

2.4.2 Parental Education Level on Students' Self-esteem

Harding (2015) found that the level of education and income were in positive correlation to SE. Another finding also found that the level of education is positively correlated to SE (Farooq *et al.*, 2011). In this study they stated that parents who have had the benefits of higher education can pass on values concerning the importance of learning to their children (Farooq *et al.*, 2011). In addition, they also stated that parents' educational level influences the cultural environments in which children are raised (Farooq *et al.*, 2011). However, in another study, parental education is negatively related to students' SE (Orth *et al.*, 2010). This is because well-educated parents expect more from their children, so that at the same level of academic achievement, students with well-educated parents do not feel as good about themselves as do those whose parents are less educated (Orth *et al.*, 2010).

Aryana (2010) found that children's reading and arithmetic attainment and social adjustments in schools are positively co-related to parental level of education. This is due to that fact that children spend more time at home than they do at schools, and the parents have the opportunity for a number of interactions with their children in one-on-one situations. Augustine and Negraia (2018) asserted that the education of parents could help the children to develop proper personality characteristics and equip them better to adjust socially, and academically. Based on behavior pattern of educated and uneducated parents, the author concluded that high degree of literacy leads to more positive and healthy pattern of behavior.

Memon *et al.* (2010) opined that parent's involvement in their child's education increases the rate of educational success of their children especially for educated parents. Farooq *et al.* (2011) came up with the result that multi – faceted factors including parental education level influenced educational achievements of students. According to Yamawaki *et al.*(2011) parental education was identified as a strong predictor of students' SE and academic achievements, as a big difference was found between achievements of high, low and average SES of students. Bückner *et al.* (2018) opined that parental education strongly related to students' SE and success in their school life performance.

Azhar *et al.* (2013) found that relation of parent's education to their children's SE and academic performances rests upon quite specific beliefs and behaviors. Parent's educational qualification is linked with their language competence, which has a significant influence in the manner in which parent's communicate with their children. Consequently, parental education does have a major influence on children's SE and in the end academic achievements. On the other hand, education is necessary for fathers as well as they are breadwinners of the family. They further found that parent's education, correlate significantly with students' SE. Their analysis strongly supported the assumption that educational systems implicitly accept influences of family background on students' SE and academic performances.

Zee and Koomen (2016), proposed that the home environment also affects the SE and academic performance of students. Educated parents can provide such an environment that suits best for self-worth and academic success of their children. The school authorities can provide counseling and guidance to parents for creating positive home environment for improvement in student's quality of work. According to Bertus (2012), students with educated parents outperform those with uneducated parents on standardized examinations. Educated parents can better communicate with their children about schoolwork and knowledge being taught at school. This will have an effect on their SE, resulting in improved academic achievement in school.

Benokraitis (2012) conducted a study on Anxiety and SE among university students. Alemu (2018) also conducted studies on impact of parental education and SES on academic achievements of university students while Saadat *et al.* (2012) conducted a study on relationship between SE and locus of control in Iranian University students. Therefore, calling

for a new study in a developing country setting like Kenya to be done and help in establishing the relationship between PC and university students' SE.

The parental level of education affected the student's academic performance to some extent. The higher the level of education of the parent, the more paying the occupation and this enhances the family income. The educational level of parents encourages the students to work harder and achieve their goals whereas others indicated that it helped the students to aim higher in their educational circles. Parents who were economically stable were in a position to provide resources and materials and enroll students to the schools of their choice. However, this was not the case among most of the parents, who were not economically stable (Nazir, 2012).

2.4.3 Parental Employment Status on Students' Self-esteem

Barett (2018) reports that unemployed or low income parents tend to see themselves as incapable because they cannot meet the needs of their children and families. Inadequate resources create conflict in the home. Such a state of affairs may influence the parent-child relationships and subsequently the holistic development of the child, including education and academic achievement. Valentine *et al.* (2014) explained that household income influences achievement of children in school as the parental income tend to predict the physical environment and learning experiences of the child in the home, based on the availability of reading materials. Moreover, Elder (2018) asserted that, when parents do not fulfill their basic duties, children are likely to suffer the consequences. However, Sa *et al.* (2019) opined that warmth and affection from parents in the students' environment was an important physiological need. If the need was unfulfilled, such children reported themselves as hostile and aggressive, dependent or defensively independent, impaired in SE and self-adequacy, emotionally unresponsive, emotionally unstable and had a negative worldview. Parents who have low status of employment can affect the self-esteem of the students. When students lose their self-esteem they may lose motivation in learning. Therefore, by building high self-esteem to the students is one of the most important in learning and parents can take to ensure that students will get affect to the criticism from other people despite the employment status of their parents. Usaini and Abubakar (2015), reported that parents' employment status plays a vital role on the students especially to their achievement, because of the confidence that they can take towards the employment status of their parents. Youth and adults who perceived themselves as rejected

appeared to be disposed toward behavior problems and conduct disorders, depressed and became involved in drug and alcohol among other problems.

In a research done by Zuiso (2017) findings were that students' whose parents have higher income level from their occupations, the more their SE increases. Their study asserts that people should have a certain income to feel them comfortable, valuable and competent enough to have an active role in their lives. Therefore, the relationship of income and SE can be regarded as an expected outcome. In the literature, it was emphasized that having higher income affected SE positively (Andreassen *et al.*, 2017). Despite this importance, there is limited empirical literature on relationship between parental characteristics on university students' SE in Kenya. Among factors that contribute to SE problems of a student is the home environment of which parents are a major component (Dupaul *et al.*, 2017). Parents-student interaction, both social and emotional, play a meaningful role in schooling and learning gains hence, the role of PC in the development of SE of students needs rigorous research.

Liu *et al.* (2017) found that employment status and income were positively correlated with self-esteem. Therefore, parents of higher SES are more likely seem to provide “expensive resources” such as encyclopedias, a computer, a car, overseas travel, and music classes (Rossi and Rossi, 2018). Upper-class parents also have a tendency to provide independent study rooms or desks for their children. They are also more likely to possess reading materials such as dictionaries, reference works, and fiction. Parents of higher SES also tend to keep contact with the teachers, be volunteers in school activities, donate resources, and participate in a variety of school activities (Booth, 2017). It can be concluded that parents employment status plays a significant role on the students especially to their achievement, because of the confidence that they that they can take towards the employment status of their parents. Self-esteem as a human personality has a connection with important human success, failures and frustration (Doodman *et al.*, 2017). Students will certainly enhance their self-esteem, because they will be proud to be associated to the opportunities for their growth (Ahmad *et al.*, 2013)

2.5 Theoretical Framework

The research will have its base its discussion on the Socio Meter Theory by Mark Leary (1999).

2.5.1 Mark Leary's Socio Meter Theory of self-esteem

The Socio Meter Theory proposes that the self-esteem system evolved as a monitor of social acceptance and that the self-esteem motive functions not to maintain self-esteem but rather to avoid social devaluation and rejection. Leary (1999) asserts that people seek self-esteem because it facilitates goal achievement and is a subjective feedback about adequacy of the self. The feedback which is self-esteem is positive when individuals cope well with circumstances and negative when they avoid threats. Self-esteem affects subsequent goal achievement as high self-esteem increases coping, while low self-esteem leads to further avoidance. The socio meter theory explains why primary determinants of self-esteem involve the perceived reactions of other people as self-judgments or dimensions that the person thinks are important to significant others (Leary, 1999). Most often, the self-esteem is lowered by failure, criticism, rejection and other events that have negative implications from relational evaluation. For this study the self-esteem of the student may be lowered by failure, rejection and criticism by the significant others that include parents and members of the peer group.

The importance of a positive self-esteem among university students may not be ignored. As observed earlier, self-esteem affects subsequent goal achievement and increases the ability of the individual to cope with challenging circumstances. A university student with a positive self-esteem may perform better than one with negative feelings about themselves. The stand point of the socio meter theory is that interpersonal rejection, results in emotional problems, difficulties in relating with others and maladaptive efforts to gain acceptance for example excessive dependency and membership in deviant groups which will in turn interfere with the social wellbeing of the individual. In addition, many personal problems lower self-esteem because they lead other people to devalue or reject the individual or the individual devalues him or herself.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

A diagrammatic representation of the conceptual framework which was used for the study is shown in Figure 1 below. The selected parental characteristics were treated as the independent variables while the students' self-esteem was treated as the dependent variables. In the model it is clear that parental marital status, educational level and occupation of parents are likely to play a significant role in enhancing the students' SE directly whereby the student may develop high, moderate or low self-esteem. The education level, employment status and marital status of the parents may dictate the family income. According to Maslow's theory, when the basic

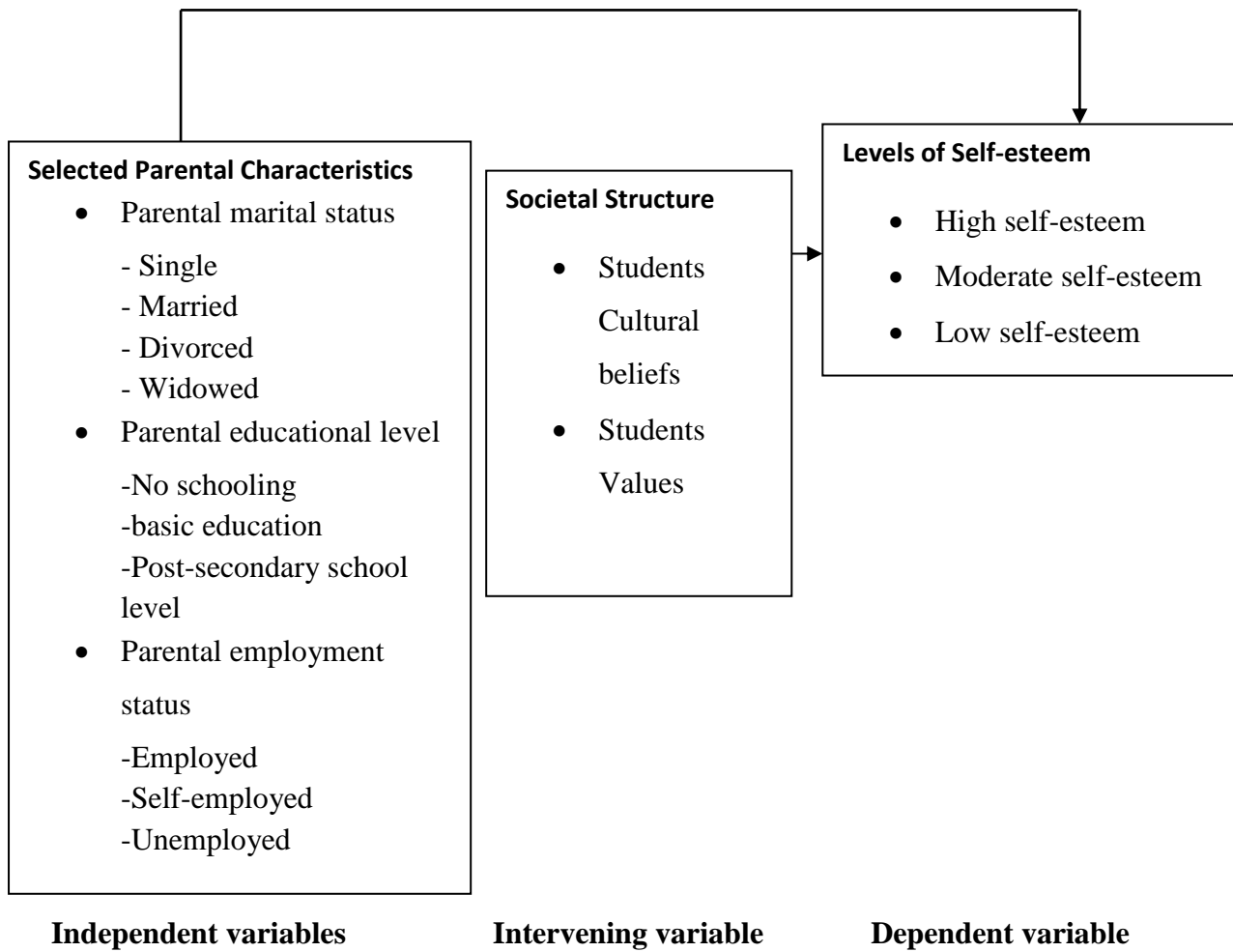
needs are deprived for long periods, all other needs recede in the background. Such individuals may feel insecure, inferior, inadequate, lack of resources and family support- which may influence the students' self-esteem.

For instance, the parental level of education may make a difference in determining whether the parent was keenly involved in their children's academic work. Parents who may be educated may be more interested in ensuring their children attain even higher levels of education and hence such students may develop confidence and positive sense of self-worth. The nature of parental employment status may also play a role in determining whether the parents will have the time for their children and provide the necessary psychological support required. Some employment status guarantees presence of the parents most of the time while others may be so demanding leaving limited time for the parents to give any form of support to their children. Students from such backgrounds are likely to feel neglected and may be tempted to engage in activities which may interfere with their behavior. The vacuum left by the parents may be filled by peers who may exert negative influence. The students' parental marital status may have far-reaching impact on their self-esteem and behavior. This study will include single (parent deceased, divorced, never married, guardian), and married parent families (polygamous, both parents present, guardians) among others.

Societal structure which was indicated by the student's cultural beliefs and students' values was treated as intervening variable. However, as much as such variables (independent and dependent) can influence the students' SE, students societal structure may intervene thus affect student' SE. For instance, student's cultural beliefs and student's values may motivate behaviour and mental attention which in the end affects their understanding both positively and negatively.

Figure 1

Interaction between Selected Parental Characteristics on Levels of Self-esteem



Note. The factors listed above may come into play within the university student's life affecting the student's self-esteem either positively or negatively. The status of the self-esteem cultivated may subsequently be manifested in the way the student behaves in the university, socializes with others and performance in school.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter mainly focuses on research design to be employed in this study. It describes where the study was done, the subjects of the study, the tools for data collection and data analysis procedures.

3.2 Research Design

The researcher used a descriptive survey research design which was used to investigate the role of selected parental characteristics on levels of self-esteem among undergraduate students in Public Universities in Kenya. This design describes the state of affairs as it exists (Heppner *et al.*, 2019). Surveys gather data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions (Cohen, 2014). The research design suited the study because according to Cohen *et al.* (2020), it gathers data on a one-shot basis and hence is efficient; provides descriptive, inferential and explanatory information; gathers standardized information (i.e. using the same instruments and questions for all participants); generates accurate instruments through their piloting and revision; presents material which is uncluttered by specific contextual factors; and gathers data which can be processed statistically.

3.3 Location of the Study

The research was carried out in Kericho County in the University of Kabianga, which is made up of former Kericho and Bureti districts. The County borders Bomet and Kisii County in the south, Nakuru County to the south east and Kisumu to the west. University of Kabianga is a Public Chartered University in Kenya. The university was chosen randomly to represent all public universities in Kenya. The University of Kabianga is about 26 Km from Kericho Town along the Kericho-Kisii Road. It is situated in the growing highlands of Kericho in the South-Western end of the Rift Valley Region. The University is situated in the Kabianga Complex, comprising of the then Kabianga Farmers Training Center, Kabianga High, Primary Schools and the Kipsigis County Council Tea Farm.

3.4 Population of the Study

This research aimed at 840 fourth-year students at the University of Kabianga and included 540 males and 300 female university fourth-year undergraduate students. The Fourth Year students

were chosen since they are thought to have been at the university long enough to provide knowledge on the trend of esteem difficulties as well as wholesome experience to share. Table 1 contains the summary:

Table 1

Population of University of Kabianga 4th Year Undergraduate Students

Year of Study	Gender of undergraduate students		Population
	Male	Female	
4 th Year	540	300	840
Total	540	300	840

Note. University of Kabianga admissions offices database (2017)

This study picked on year four students because they have interacted much more with the university system and administration. Year four students had also settled down and were able to understand themselves better, according to Erikson developmental stages of life (Kendra, 2020).

3.5 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

The sample size was determined using the Yamane (1967) formula

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} \text{ Where: } =$$

n signifies the sample size, N signifies the population under study, e signifies the margin error or the level of precision (0.05)

$$n = \frac{840}{1 + 840(0.05)^2} = \frac{840}{3.1} = 271$$

The study utilized stratified random sampling technique. First the population was categorized into male and female. Proportionate stratified sampling technique was used to select the study units. For this study 540 male and 300 female students were proportionately distributed to include 174 male and 97 female students from which a sample of 271 students was obtained. The technique was used to ensure both genders were represented. The summary is shown in table 2.

Table 2*Distribution of Sample Size*

Gender of students	Actual Population	Proportionate Formula	Distribution	Sample
Male	540	$(540 \times 271) / 840$		174
Female	300	$(300 \times 271) / 840$		97
Total	840	Total		271

3.6 Instrumentation

To acquire quantitative data from respondents, a questionnaire was employed. There were three sections to the questionnaire. Section one gathered information about the student's personal details. In part one, the researcher added questions such as the students' societal structure to reflect the students' cultural views and values, which could affect the students' self-esteem. The second section dealt with the interaction between students and parents. Section three was the students' self-esteem self-report questionnaire, which was based on the self-esteem scale developed by Rosenberg (1965) and included questions designed to elicit information about the self-esteem of university students.

3.6.1 Validity of Instruments

To ensure that the instrument was valid, the researcher aligned the items to the objectives of the study. Experts in guidance and counseling from the Department of Psychology Counseling and Educational Foundations were consulted to assess the content and face validity of the questionnaire.

3.6.2 Reliability of Instruments

The instrument was piloted in Egerton University. A sample size of 30 respondents was used for the pilot study. This was for estimating the reliability coefficient of the research instruments. Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of the items. According to McNeish (2017), the items were considered reliable if they yield a reliability coefficient of 0.70 and above which guided this study and may signify a high reliability because reliability scores of less than 0.6 are generally problematic (Taber, 2018). The Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was found to be .953, which was above the threshold for

acceptable alpha reliability coefficient of 0.7, as recommended by McNeish (2017) and Bachir (2018) who states that a reliability coefficient of above 0.7 is acceptable

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher obtained authorization to collect data from Graduate School and the Research Ethics Committee of Egerton University before applying for a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). The researcher sought authorization from the University of Kabianga, explaining the purpose of the study and got appointments for data collection. The researcher consulted with deans of faculties (schools) concerning the intended data collection within their faculties among the fourth year students only, after which appointments were booked with the class representatives, who then organized on how the students were to be accessed. The researcher administered the instruments. The participants were assured of confidentiality and were encouraged of the need to answer all questions truthfully. The entire data collection exercise took three weeks.

3.8 Data Analysis

Data collected was organized, coded and analysed with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26, which aided in analysing descriptive (cross tabulation, percentages and frequencies) statistics. The quantitative data was organized by the researcher in such a way that a meaningful interpretation could be deduced from it at the analysis stage.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents results and discussions of the data collected from the field, based on the responses to the items in the administered questionnaires as per the objectives, research questions of the study. The chapter is divided into the following sections: i) Demographic Characteristics of respondents, (ii) Role of Parental Marital Status, Parental Education level and Parental employment status on Respondents' Self-Esteem.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The study analyzed the demographic information of the participants in the study, which included age group, gender, societal structures, student parent interaction, parental marital status, parental level of education and parental occupational status. Descriptive statistics in form of frequencies, percentages and cross-tabulation were used to analyse the data, and presented in form of tables. Table 3 indicates the Students' distribution by age group.

Table 3

Students' Distribution by Age group

Age group of students	Frequency(f)	Percent (%)
20-22 years	167	61.62
23 -25 years	81	29.89
25 years and above	23	8.49
Total	271	100

Note. N=271. The results show that majority of the respondents were in the age group of 20 to 22 years.

The results in Table 3 show that 167(61.62%) of respondents were in the age bracket between 20 to 22 years, 81(29.89%) aged between 23 to 25 years and 23(8.49%) of the respondents had attained the age 25 years and above. The results show that majority of the respondents were in the age group of 20 to 22 years. This scenario could be explained by the fact that, this study concentrated on only year four students because they have interacted much more with the

university systems and have settled down and were able to understand themselves better, according to Erikson’s developmental stages of life (Susman, 2020). However, Adams *et al.* (2017) depicts that self-esteem largely depends on how one makes sense of his association to the rest of the universe. A total of 271 students therefore participated in the study, while it was also necessary to have distribution of student by gender. Results in Table 4 indicate the students’ distribution by gender.

Table 4

Students’ Distribution by Gender

Gender	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Male	174	64.21
Female	97	35.79
Total	271	100

Based on the findings in table 4 the study established that 64.21% of the respondents were male compared to 35.79% female. This implies that most of the respondents who participated in the study were male students. This could be attributed to the University student intake rate of admission as explained by Faria (2021), who talked about the student university enrolment and concluded that growth by 7.3 percent was related to an expansion in the number of government-sponsored students (intake). Moreover, she claimed that the majority of students in Kenyan universities were males, some 325.9 thousand, against 220.8 thousand females. The gender gap has become one of the most distinctive features of applications, doubling in size since 2007. Comparably, Young women in England are now 36% more likely to apply for a university course than their male counterparts and the gap is particularly distinctive when considering those from poorer backgrounds. Where women are 58% more likely to apply than men are (UCAS- Board). In this study, it deemed necessary to include societal structure of the students to indicate the student’s cultural beliefs and values, which could affect their self-esteem. Table 5 indicates student’s distribution by societal beliefs.

Table 5*Distribution by Societal or Cultural Beliefs*

Cultural or societal beliefs remarks	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Yes	174	64.21
No	97	35.79
Total	271	100

Based on the results in table 5, 64.21% respondents indicated that they had cultural beliefs and values, which would easily intervene with their self-esteem. The status of the self-esteem cultivated may subsequently be manifested in the way the student behaves in the university, socializes with others and performance in school as indicated by Gantt (2020). She continues to argue that student's cultural beliefs and values may lead to behaviour and mental attention, which in the end may affect their understanding both positively and negatively.

Comparatively, 35.79% of the respondents cited that they have no societal structures that are attached to the family based on where they were raised. Gantt (2020) depicts that culture is a belief about ethics, behaviors and values that are held by a majority of people within a society. The culture of which we are a part influences our identity and even our beliefs about the nature of life. For example, consider how these cultures limit the choices people have in choosing a profession, a spouse, women's roles and the garments they wear and behave. Some cultures encourage close physical proximity when in conversation, while others foster loud argumentative verbal exchanges, and some may prize soft-spoken polite conversation (Gantt, 2020). Emotional well-being is generally more evidenced in cultures that promote belief in facts and not theories because there is more emotional security in reality and therefore we can expect more need for social interaction. Results in Table 6 indicate the students' distribution by parental interaction.

Table 6*Students' Distribution by Parental Interaction*

Parental Interaction	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Mother	104	38.38
Father	131	48.33
Female guardian	22	8.12
Male guardian	14	5.17
Total	271	100

The findings of the study in table 6, indicates that 131(48.33%) of the respondents interacted with their fathers. The results show that, engaged dads have a big effect on student's overall well-being for example in academics and development. Fathers can shape their children's' character, ethics, sense of self-care, social skills, resilience, and responsibility. At school and in life, those skills matter most. It is also an indication that, fathers who get involved in their children's welfare have a big effect on the health, academic success, and happiness of their sons and daughters. Research has shown that fathers, no matter what their income or cultural background, can play a critical role in their children's behavior (Dhinga, 2020). When fathers are involved, their children learn more, perform better in school, and exhibit healthier behavior. Even when fathers do not share a home with their children, their active involvement can have a lasting and positive impact.

The findings further indicate that 104(38.38%) of the respondents interacted with mothers. Mothers are very important to their children's development, of course, but studies have shown that fathers help children grow in specific ways. Children with involved fathers are more ready to succeed academically when they start school and tend to show more patience. Other researchers, Scheilbling and Milkie (2023) and Dhinga (2020) have found that, highly engaged dads contribute to their children's concerns, homework and play which is no small thing. Children who are curious and enjoy learning are far more likely to be able to tap into their intrinsic motivation and curiosity, resisting the discouragement that can come with school environments that rely heavily on external rewards like grades, test scores, and eventually awards raising their self-esteem.

One recent analysis of 66 studies of urban children in pre-K through college found that on average, involved fathers had significant benefits for their children. However, Valentine *et al.* (2014) argued that when two parents are present in the child’s home, they share the responsibility of monitoring the child’s activities, providing encouragement and discipline as needed. Moreover, when parents live apart, the residential parent often becomes the primary provider of both economic and parental resources. The researchers concluded that the role of the father facilitated the adoption of an adequate self-concept because boys were able to model their fathers. Hence, the non-residential parent is less involved with the activities of the child and therefore as less regular interaction and involvement in day-today activities (Bailey, 2003). The review above has clearly indicated that parental marital status plays a significant role in influencing students’ SE. Table 7 indicates students’ distribution by parental marital status.

Table 7

Students’ Distribution by Parental Marital Status

Parental Marital Status	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Single	63	23.25
Married	208	76.75
Total	271	100

The findings of the study in table 7, indicate that 208(76.8%) and 63(23.2%) respondents were raised by married and single parents. It can therefore, be concluded that, majority of the students studying in University of Kabianga in Kericho County come from married families. In a study done by Iguacel *et al.* (2018) on parental marital status and children’s SE, found that SE of children from either single or married parent families is a very central issue, because it has a direct impact on the child’s behavior in school. These findings are collaborated by the study of Elfhag *et al.* (2020) who also found out that, children from single parent families had lower self-esteem compared to those raised by both parents. Further research has shown that children with present fathers do better in school, are less prone to violence, and have higher SE and self-confidence (Kevorkian, 2010). Besides distribution by parental marital status, student distribution by parental upbringing was done. Table 8 indicates the Students’ distribution by parental raise up (which parent raised you up).

Table 8*Students' Distribution by Parental Upbringing*

Parental Upbringing	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Mother	38	14.02
Father	14	5.17
Both mother and father	185	68.27
Guardian	24	8.6
Self	3	1.1
Children's home	6	2.21
Church/Religious institution	1	0.37
Total	271	100

The results in Table 8 show that 38(14%) of the respondents were raised by their mothers, 14(5.2%) raised by their fathers, 185(68.3%) raised by both mother and father, 24(8.6%) raised by guardian, 3(1.1%) while 6(2.2%) raised by children's home self and 1(0.4%) raised by Church/Religious institution. This implies that, both Parents raise most students in UoK in Kericho County. Studies Chaidi *et al.* (2022) have shown that having both parents actively involved in a child's life can provide significant social, psychological, and health benefits, and the stability of having piece with both parents can provide greater opportunities for children to find their own paths to success and hence healthy self-esteem.

Barret (2018) asserts that proper aim of parental nurturing is to prepare a child for independent survival as an adult from a condition of total dependency. If upbringing is successful, the young man or woman will have evolved out of that dependency into a self- respecting and self-responsible human being capable of surmounting the obstacles placed in front of them. On the other hand, the family as an institution has to create conditions for development of positive relationship towards work, others and self, which as such is a predisposition towards a better establishment of a realistic approach for a better development of the student's personality. Zee and Koomen (2016) proposed that the home environment also affects the SE and academic performance of students. Educated parents can provide such an environment that suits best for self-worth and academic success of their children. The Students' Distribution by Mother/Female guardian level of Education is indicated in Table 9 below.

Table 9*Students' Distribution by Mother/Female guardian level of Education*

Parental level of education	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
No Schooling	25	9.23
Primary	44	16.23
Secondary	88	32.47
Post-secondary	114	42.07
Total	271	100

The results in Table 9 on educational level of the mother/female guardian shows that majority 114(42.07%) had attained Post-secondary education, 88(32.5%) secondary, 44(16.2%) primary level of education and 25 (9.2%) of the respondent's mother/female guardian had no schooling. The educational level of the parent was important since it was a variable in the study and it was assessed later to investigate whether it affects the self-esteem of the students. Parent's educational qualification is linked with students' language competence, which has a significant role in the manner in which parent's communicate with their children as indicated by (Bücker *et al.*, 2018). The increase of the parents' educational level enables the parents to be more conscious about how to raise a child. Educated parents satisfy their children's basic psychological needs with a healthy approach (Bücker *et al.*,2018).On the other hand, education is necessary for fathers as well as they are breadwinners of the family hence father's level of education was also investigated. Table 10 shows Students' Distribution by Father/Male guardian level of Education.

Table 10*Students' Distribution by Father/Male guardian level of Education*

Parental level of education	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
No Schooling	31	11.44
Primary	34	12.55
Secondary	76	28.04
Post-secondary	130	47.97
Total	271	100

The results in table 10 on educational level of the father/male guardian shows that majority of 130(48%) had attained post-secondary education, 34(12.5%) primary level of education, 76(28%) secondary and 31(11.1%) of the respondent's father/male guardian had no schooling. According to Yamawaki *et al.* (2011) parental education was identified as a strong predictor of students' SE and academic achievements, as big difference was found between achievements of high, low and average SES of students. Bucker *et al.* (2018) opined that parental education strongly related to students' SE and success in their school life performance. Harding (2015) found that the level of education and income were in positive correlation to SE. Another finding also found that the level of education is positively correlated to SE (Farooq *et al.*, 2011). In this study they stated that fathers who have had the benefits of higher education can pass on values concerning the importance of learning to their children (Farooq *et al.*, 2011). However, in another study, father's education is negatively related to students' SE (Orth *et al.*, 2018). This is because well-educated fathers expect more from their children, so that at the same level of academic achievement, students with well-educated fathers do not feel as good about themselves as do those whose fathers are less educated (Morrison *et al.*, 2018).

Slavin (2019) opined that the higher the level of education of the parent, the more paying the occupation and this enhances the family income. Parents who were economically stable were in a position to provide resources and materials and enroll students to the schools of their choice. However, this was not the case among most of the parents who were not economically stable. Apart from parental level of education, parental employment status was also investigated. The employment status of a parent was divided into three (Employed, Unemployed and Self-employed). The students' distribution by mother/female guardian occupation is shown in Table 11 below.

Table 11

Students' Distribution by Mother/Female Guardian Employment status

Mother/female guardian employment status	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Employed	57	21.03
Self-employed	133	49.08
Unemployed	81	29.89
Total	271	100

As summarized in Table 11, 57(21%) of the respondent's mother/female guardian were employed, 133(49.1%) self-employed and 81(29.9%) were unemployed. Of noteworthy, was the high percentage of the self-employed parents of the students who participated in the study and this was suspected to have played a part on students' self-esteem. Another issue the researcher investigated was the employment status of the respondents' father/male guardian. Table 12 show Students' distribution by father/male guardian employment status.

Table 12

Students' Distribution by Father/Male guardian Employment Status

Father/Male guardian employment status	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Employed	110	40.59
Self-employed	91	33.58
Unemployed	70	25.83
Total	271	100.0

Table 12 shows that 110(40.6%) of the respondent's father/male guardian were employed, 91(33.6%) self-employed and 70(25.8%) were unemployed. The results of the study suggest that majority of the respondent's father/male guardian in UoK in Kericho County are employed. Barrett (2019) reports that unemployed or low income parents tend to see themselves as incapable because they cannot meet the needs of their children and families. Inadequate resources create conflict in the home. Such a state of affairs may be associated in the parent-child involvement and subsequently the holistic development of the child.

4.3 Role of Selected Parental Characteristics on Students' Levels of Self-Esteem

The researcher came up with three objectives for the study. In order to achieve the objectives, descriptive statistics was used. The sections that follow indicate each objective and how it was achieved.

4.3.1 Levels of Self-Esteem among Undergraduate Students

Student's response regarding self-esteem scores on Rosenberg scale is shown in Table 14

Table 13*Distribution Scores on Rosenberg Scale for Both Male and Female Students*

Score	Frequency(f)	Percentage (%)
0	3	1.11
5	3	1.11
6	11	4.06
7	18	6.64
8	19	7.01
9	30	11.07
10	26	9.59
11	33	12.18
12	33	12.18
13	31	11.44
14	19	7.01
15	21	7.75
16	12	4.43
17	4	1.48
18	7	2.58
29	1	0.36
Total	271	100

Note. The results in table 13 show the levels of self-esteem according to the respondents as shown in table 14

Table 14*Distribution Level of Self Esteem*

Level of self-esteem	Frequency(f)	Percentage (%)
High self-esteem	1	0.37
Medium self-esteem	186	68.63
Low self-esteem	84	31.00
Total	271	100

Key: 0-9 low, 10-19 medium, 20-30 high

The results in table 14 show that 186(68.63%) of the respondents have medium self-esteem, 84(31%) have low self-esteem and one (0.37%) has high self-esteem. This being the case therefore, it is evidently clear that majority of the students of UoK possess medium self-esteem 68.63% and 31.00% with low self-esteem respectively. Thus, the self-esteem status does not vary significantly among the undergraduate students as most of them fall in one category of having medium self-esteem status. Table 15 shows the mean scores of self-esteem attributes.

Table 15

Self-Esteem Attributes

Attributes (n = 271)	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Mean
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	19.9%	3.7%	3.3%	28.8%	44.3%	3.45
I wish I could have more respect for myself.	5.9%	19.2%	11.8%	32.5%	30.6%	3.56
At times, I think I am no good at all.	6.3%	5.9%	10.0%	35.8%	42.1%	3.60
I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	4.4%	3.7%	10.7%	28.0%	53.1%	3.75
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	3.3%	7.4%	17.7%	30.6%	41.0%	3.98
I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	12.2%	19.6%	12.5%	23.6%	32.1%	4.02
I certainly feel useless at times.	4.4%	5.9%	2.6%	25.5%	61.6%	4.13
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	3.3%	5.9%	8.5%	27.7%	54.6%	4.22
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	15.1%	13.7%	9.6%	25.5%	36.2%	4.25
I certainly feel usefull at times.	3.3%	12.5%	8.9%	17.3%	57.9%	4.33
Overall						3.93

Note: SD=strongly disagree, D=disagree, NS=not sure, A=agree, SA=strongly agree

The results in Table 15 show the mean scores of self-esteems. The overall mean of the responses on the items of self-esteem is $M = 3.93$ which means that most of the respondents agreed with various aspects of self-esteem. Specifically, the outcomes indicate that most of the respondents concurred with the following items; that they felt they did not have much to be proud of ($M = 3.45$) meaning, they have a mind that's constantly wavering between feeling proud and comfortable about themselves. Wakeman *et al.* (2019) depicts that having a strong, healthy sense of self-worth, leads to generally more positive well-being. It's a vital part of leading an unhealthy and unhappy life as those with mean of $M = 3.56$ anticipated that they could have more respect for themselves. It can also be seen from the table that;- at times they thought they were not good at all ($M = 3.60$), they felt that there are people of worth, at least on an equal plane with others ($M = 3.75$), they are able to do things as well as most other people ($M = 3.98$), they felt that they have a number of good qualities ($M = 4.02$), they certainly felt useless at times ($M = 4.13$), that all in all, they are inclined to feel that they are failures ($M = 4.22$), that they were satisfied with themselves ($M = 4.25$) and that they take a positive attitude toward themselves ($M = 4.33$). The results show a variation in the self-esteem scores of the respondents hence a difference in levels of SE. This result is in agreement with Guerra *et al.* (2017) who stated that low self-esteem can lead to behavior problems and to increased aggression in some children.

Based on the study, self-esteem issues such as good quality, feeling useless, a failure, and satisfaction and useful, are the only factors that attracted favorable scores among the respondents as leading to esteem levels. However, they had scores ranging between $M = 4.02$ to $M = 4.33$ which are considered as neutral. Surprisingly, these factors have also been identified to be the most important in self-esteem (Slavin, 2019). Other issues that appeared to elicit responses with scores above three were learned helplessness and natural tendencies (proud, more respect, not good, worthlessness and doing things as others) that students have to compare themselves with others. That according to Wairimu *et al.* (2016) are personal attributes that are attributed to low self-esteem. However, Pounders *et al.* (2016) define SE as an individual's overall appraisal, whether high or low, based on all of the positive and negative self-perceptions that comprise that individual's self-concept. According to Slavin (2019), the value of individual's self-esteem is generated from a comparison with other people. A surprising point about self-esteem is the enormous range of variation between individuals. However, while some people think the whole world is theirs for the taking and asking, others feel they have no right to exist. Students in universities with low self-esteem are unable to let go their mistakes,

they wallow in self-pity and blame themselves, which leads them to have personal, and social problems (Guerra *et al.*, 2017). Overall, available evidence indicates that strong self-esteem may have good effects for an individual's well-being and achievement, whereas low self-esteem may be a risk factor for poor outcomes.

The statement that respondents are inclined to feel that they are a failure, not good at all, comparisons to be on equal plane with others and wishing to have more respect for themselves were supported by respondents in M=4.22, M=3.60 and M=3.56 respectively. Self-esteem building forms the basis of an individual's re-invention and getting back to the road towards success. As a result, it is critical to explore the impact of PC in determining the degree of SE of Kenyan university students. Neither extreme of SE, however, is good. Eriş (2018) also found a correlation between SE and behaviours. Wakeman *et al.* (2019) depicts that students with different levels of successes normally involve self-esteem protection mechanisms. Moreover, self-esteem building forms the basis of an individual's re-invention and getting back to the road towards success.

Based on the study, particular self-esteem issues attracted favorable scores among the respondents leading to high and medium self-esteem levels while other issues appeared to elicit responses with scores indicating low self-esteem. However, low self-esteem is an enormous public health problem and people who report low self-esteem usually say that it has been present since early childhood or at least adolescence. Low self-esteem results from one having a poor self-image caused by his or her negative attitudes, about the self, performance in class and his purpose in life. High self-esteem is the opposite of low self-esteem. It is a very important aspect of one's life.

In American culture for instance, high esteem is viewed as the basis for good interaction with other people and academic success. Harrison (2018) observes that high esteem forms the cornerstone of interpersonal association and positive attitudes towards living. High self-esteem in this regard refers to desirable levels of esteem, which are not too high or too low majorly referred by scholars as positive self-esteem or middle ground. The result indicated that even though all students tended to have high level of self-esteem, that some of the students scored significantly higher than the rest. This could be attributed to the fact that respondents came from different home backgrounds making the development of self-esteem hampered and having differences in levels of self-esteem.

Due to the natural tendencies that children have to compare themselves with others, those with exceptionalities may have low self-esteem from lack of success in school, sports, and friendships (Mu, 2019). Rebuilding one’s thought patterns and compensation as a way of substituting an attribute that cannot be changed brings about improvement in self-esteem levels. The current findings add support to previous findings where Wakeman *et al.* (2019) found that students with different levels of successes normally involve self-esteem protection mechanisms, that are activated when a person’s SE is threatened.

4.3.2 Role of Parental Marital Status on Students Level of Self-Esteem

The first objective of the study was to determine the role of parental marital status on levels of self-esteem among undergraduate students in public universities in Kenya. The research question for this objective stated: What is the role of parental marital status on levels of self-esteem among undergraduate students in Public Universities in Kenya? The parental marital status were divided into; Single (1), Married (2). The role of parental marital status on levels of self-esteem among undergraduate students was analysed using tables, frequencies and cross-tabulation. Table 16 shows students’ distribution by parental marital status on the level of SE among students.

Table 16

Students’ Distribution by Parental Marital Status on self-esteem level

Students parental marital Status	Self- esteem level							
	High		Moderate		Low		Total	
	<i>F</i>	(%)	<i>f</i>	(%)	<i>f</i>	(%)	<i>f</i>	(%)
Married	1	0.37	146	53.87	67	24.72	214	78.97
Single	0	0	40	14.76	17	6.27	57	21.03
Total	1	0.37	186	68.63	84	30.97	271	100

From Table 16, it is explicitly clear that those students from the married status were more in all levels of SE (high – 1(0.37), moderate – 146(53.87), low -67(24.72) and overall of 214(78.97). It can therefore, be concluded that most students in University of Kabianga come from married families. 57(21.03) are from single families, however McKay and Orth (2018) opined that, the level of SE depends on several parental factors, not just whether the child grows

in a single or married family. The study of Wairimu *et al.* (2016) asserts that, developing children's SE begins with the life of the parents and that, parents' insecurities are frequently injected into the life of their children; therefore, becoming the children's own set of insecurities. This happens in the lives of both single and married parents. This is to indicate that, it is the manner of parenting, rather than type of parenting per se that motivates the development of an individual's SE.

In a two-parent family, the balance between the fathers and mothers different socializing patterns may be what keeps the self-esteem levels relatively high. Apparently, the researcher feels that from the single parenthood, the absent parent upsets this balance, which leaves the student from the single parenthood in a family environment in which less is expected from him, and consequently may not develop the positive feelings of self-esteem. However, it was worth noting that all the groups had moderate self-esteem of 53.87% and 14.76% respectively. These results are in agreement with studies done by Booth (2017) indicating that gender of the parent plays an important role in the development of self-esteem. Moreover, not all students from single parent families are affected by low self-esteem, just as not all students living with two parents are doing great. However, Guthman and Roble-Pina (2017) observed that, there was no gender difference in self-esteem and that there was also no significant difference in the self-esteem scores in relation to parental marital status. These findings corroborate with the research findings of Mu (2019) which showed that the students with married parents had higher overall self-esteem compared with students with single parents.

The findings reveal that parental marital status play a major role in determining the undergraduate students level of self-esteem as shown in tables 18-21. At the same time, it was important to use a special type of Table - crosstab for students SE and parental marital status for examining the role the categorical variables play on students SE levels which leads to insights on a more granular level as indicated in Table 17

Table 17

Results of Cross- tabulation determining the Role of Single parenthood on Levels of Self-Esteem among Undergraduate Students

Statement	Students Responses									
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Not Sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others	3	1.1	52	19.1	1	0.3	1	0.3	0	0
At times I think I am no good at all.	52	19.1	0	0	2	0.7	2	0.7	1	0.3
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	20	7	0	0	0	0	3	1.1	52	19.1
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	52	19.1	1	0.3	0	0	0	0	41	4
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	0	0	56	20.6	1	0.3	0	0	0	0
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	52	19.1	1	0.3	1	0.3	1	0	2	0.7
I take a positive attitude toward Myself	5	1.8	52	19.1	0	0	0	0	0	0
On the whole. I am satisfied with myself	52	19.1	3	1.1	0	0	1	0.3	1	0.3
I wish I could have more respect for myself	3	1.1	52	19.1	0	0	1	0.3	1	0.3
I certainly feel useless at times.	52	19.1	0	0	0	0	2	0.7	3	1.1

Results in Table 17 show, that 20.9% of respondents from single families disagreed with the statement “I take a positive attitude toward myself”. The statement that “I am able to do things as well as most other people” was disagreed by 20.6% of the respondents. Results indicate that majority of respondents disapproved the statements “I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others”(20.2%) , “On the whole, I am satisfied with myself” (20.2%)

and “ I wish I could have more respect for myself”(20.2%). When the respondents were asked if they felt that they have a number of good qualities, 20.2% of them agreed. This suggests that constant self-criticism can lead to persistent feelings of sadness, depression, anxiety, anger, shame or guilt.

The main issue emerging from the data in table 18 is that students emphasize personal feelings and expectations as feel down, expect failure, and doubt their abilities. These are words said when about to give up and a show of lack of faith in the self. This is explained by the sizeable number of respondents citing not being optimistic about situations, interactions, and themselves. People with positive attitudes remain hopeful and see the best even in difficult situations (Dhruvi Thakkar's, 10 nov.2023). Typically, a person with low self-esteem; is extremely critical of themselves, downplays or ignores their positive qualities, judges themselves to be inferior to their peers and uses negative words to describe themselves such as not good at all, little to be proud of, ugly or unlovable (Kendra Cherry, feb,13 2023) the researcher depicts that signs of low self-esteem include; lack of self-trust, constantly comparing self to others, engage in people pleasing behavior, feel little control over own life and don't reinforce boundaries.

These findings are in agreement with those of Kendra (2023) who indicates that low self-esteem not only impacts how you feel about and treat yourself, but it can even affect your motivation to go after the things you want in life and your ability to develop healthy, supportive function. It plays an important role in a variety of areas in life, which is why having low self-esteem can be such a serious problem. Mu (2019) explains low self-esteem as, thinking negatively about self, being self-judgmental and lack of confidence. Kendra (2023) further indicates that students with poor self-esteem can still affect a person's thoughts, emotions, and patterns of behavior. Sometimes its signs can be fairly apparent. Other times, low self-esteem symptoms are much more subtle. However Mu (2019) depicts that students with low self-esteem feel inadequate and less worthy than others.

The study of Van der Wal (2019) found that children in single families show higher levels of depression and anxiety, and lower levels of self-esteem compared to children in married families. These findings are collaborated by the study of Elfhag *et al.* (2010) who also found out those children from single parent families, had lower SE compared to those raised by both parents. Ryan and Deci (2017) state, that self-esteem is a critical component of a person's experience and quality of life. In other words, a person's unfavorable self-evaluation was found

to cause psycho-social dangers. As a result, SE in a university student's life plays a key part in developing competency and proficiency, which can eventually lead to the development of his or her entire human potential.

Kimosop *et al.* (2015) reported that single parent households can never be accepted, and there is a constant struggle between the parent's acceptability and that of the community. Because of the lack of acceptability by the community, single parents may have a bad self-image and may exploit their children to boost it. It is apparent from this table that not a single respondent indicated their agreement on the item posed ("I take a positive attitude toward myself"). Aryana (2010) noted that single mothers are continually informed that they are not as good as married women as parents. These proverbs may subject both the parent and the child to legal and societal repercussions. Because a single parent is under emotional stress, they may be excessively harsh to impose discipline and withdrawing love, causing the child to feel inferior and retreat. This contradicts the beliefs of many scholars, as evidenced by the review of literature. Living with dual-parents, on the other hand, does not consistently enhance SE.

A common assumption has been that female – headed single parent household is a pathological family form rather than a viable alternative to nuclear family; with the assumption that the trauma from divorce or separation is likely to result in poorly socialized cognitively deficient children who experience poor parent- child association (Hamner & Turner, 2017). Table 18 depicts the role of married parenthood on levels of self-esteem among undergraduate students.

Table 18

Results of Cross- tabulation determining the Role of Married Parents on Levels of Self-Esteem among Undergraduate Students

Statement	Responses									
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others	9	3.3	195	71.9	1	0.3	4	1.4	5	1.8
At times I think I am no good at all.	195	71.9	6	2.2	3	1.1	7	2.5	3	1.1
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	7	2.5	1	0.3	1	0.3	10	3.6	195	71.9
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	195	71.9	8	2.9	0	0	0	0	11	4.0
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	1	0.3	202	74.5	3	1.1	7	2.5	1	0.3
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	196	72.3	5	1.8	3	1.1	3	1.1	7	2.5
I take a positive attitude toward myself	8	2.9	195	71.9	0	0	10	3.6	1	0.3
On the whole. I am satisfied with myself	195	71.9	6	2.2	6	2.2	7	2.5	0	0
I wish I could have more respect for myself	6	2.2	195	71.9	6	2.2	7	2.5	0	0
I certainly feel useless at times.	196	72.3	7	2.5	3	1.1	3	1.1	5	1.8

As can be seen from Table 18, most respondents indicated that they felt that they had a number of good qualities (75.6%). 75.2% of the respondents in another statement indicated that “I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.”74.8% of the respondents disagreed with statements that stated “All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure”, “I am able to do things as well as most other people” and “I take a positive attitude toward myself”. 74.1% of the respondents also disagreed on the following statements indicating that “At times I think I am no good at all”, “I feel I do not have much to be proud of”(74.1%), “On the whole, I am satisfied with myself”(74.1%) and “I wish I could have more respect for myself”(74.1%). Orth (2018) depict that, parental mirroring through early childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood communicates acceptance acknowledgement, and admiration. This contributes significantly to the development of self-esteem and self-confidence.

Objective one of this study set out to determine the role of parental marital status on levels of self-esteem among undergraduate students in public universities in Kenya. Notably individuals experience the positive feelings of high self-esteem when they believe that they are good and worthy and that others view them positively. Individuals experience the negative feelings of low self-esteem when they believe that self-esteem is determined by many factors, including how well this individuals view their own performance and appearance, and how satisfied they are with their position with other people. Moreover, self-esteem is in part a trait that is stable over time, with some people having relatively high self-esteem and others having lower self-esteem. But self-esteem is also a state that varies day to day and even hour to hour. When we have succeeded at an important task, when we have done something that we think is useful or important, or when we feel that we are accepted and valued by others, our self-concept will contain many positive thoughts and we will therefore have high self-esteem. When we have failed, done something harmful, or feel that we have been ignored or criticized, then negative aspects of the self-concept are more accessible and we experience low self-esteem.

It can also be seen from the table that 19.4% of the respondents said “all in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure” and “I feel I do not have much to be proud of” 19.4% respectively. The results also show that 19.1% of the respondents disagreed with the statement “At times I think I am no good at all. The findings suggest several course of action which the university counselors need to take. They need to emphasize the importance of programs that promote confidence and competence in students' own skills as a vital component in successful learning and academic advancement. Student counselors may be able to develop new tactics and

approaches (enhancing or establishing interventions that meet the requirements of students with low self-esteem) for strengthening guidance and counseling programs. Then have consideration in improving and introducing interventions that suit student SE needs, concerning the students and also change of strategies when it comes to guiding and counseling of these students, on interventions that aim at enhancing parent-child interaction, which will go a long way in developing HSE among the students'. It further throws light on the critical link between parental traits and students' self-esteem, providing vital insights into how parental support, communication, and involvement might affect undergraduate students' self-esteem.

Above strategies will hopefully minimize problems arising from the emphasis on low self-esteem. This will ensure Students can obtain a better awareness of the numerous impacts on their self-esteem and potentially use this information to improve their self-confidence and overall well-being by studying this relationship. Data from table 20 show that most of the duo parents are in medium self- esteem 14.76% as compared to the single parents with low self-esteem 6.27%. Orth (2018) depicts that the development of children's SE begins with the parents' lives. The weaknesses of parents frequently become those of their children. The qualities and optimism of parents can benefit their children (Orth, 2018). This occurs in both the lives of single and dual parents. The review above has clearly indicated that parental marital status plays a significant role in influencing students' SE. These findings are collaborated by the study of Elfhag *et al.* (2010) who also found out that, children from single parent families had lower self-esteem compared to those raised by both parents. The situation is not much different in Africa. According to Adams *et al.* (2017) in 2007 about 52 percent of African urban parents were single and had children with lower SE. According to Orth (2018), the amount of SE is affected by a variety of parental characteristics, not just whether the child is raised in a single or married family. Insecurities of parents are regularly infused into the lives of their children, becoming the children's own set of insecurities. The flaws or strengths of parents frequently become those of their children (Orth, 2018).

Contrary to expectations, over 20.6% of the respondents also declined that they were able to do things as well as most other people. According to Branden (2021) people with high self-esteem are unafraid to show their curiosity, discuss their experiences, ideas, and opportunities. They can also enjoy the humorous aspects of their lives and are comfortable with social or personal assertiveness. Notably family structure and their emotional functioning are also among the important social aspects for development of self-esteem. Due to the natural

tendencies that children have to compare themselves with others, those with exceptionalities may have low self-esteem from lack of success in school, sports, and friendships (Lyons *et al.*, 2012). Whereas, one of the research findings depicted that the level of self-esteem of a student does not depend on the type of parenthood parse but also depend on a complex interaction of factors such as the type of relationship between parents and children, the school environment and school conditions (Kinga, 2014). Therefore, findings also suggested that the upbringing of the child in intact families, single –parent may or may not alter the self-esteem of an individual. The result in Table 19 and table 20 indicates that parental marital status played a role on the level of SE among undergraduate students based on self-esteem statements. The study established that most of the respondents who had stayed in married parenthood were optimistic about life, full of confidence and were pleasant with discomfort having a response of 74.8% and 74.1% respectively.

This confirms an earlier literature review which reported that development of self-esteem in children largely depends on the interaction between a child and the parent(s). In fact, children tend to have a high level of SE, when they have a healthy interaction with a single parent, than when they have been brought up by two parents who are always quarreling. In addition, inaccessible, rejecting or hostile parent can be more damaging than an absent one (Wolfenstein, 2018). The study of Von Soest *et al.* (2016) shows that levels of SE depends on several parental factors, not just whether the child grows in a single or duo parent family. His study asserts that developing children's SE begins with the life of the parents. In fact, parents' insecurities are commonly injected into the life of their children therefore becoming the children's own set of insecurities. The flaws or strengths of parents frequently become those of their children (Orth, 2018). This occurs in both the lives of single and married parents. Finally, children are a mirror image of their parents' lives. If parents have a specific set of perceived vulnerabilities, limits, negative self-talk, weaknesses, or negative repetitive acts, their children are more likely to develop such negative behaviors. Similarly, if parents build positive habits, self-talk, and perceptible strengths, their children are in a better position to develop a positive SE. This is to say that the technique of parenting, rather than the sort of parenting itself, motivates an individual's SE development.

This finding emphasizes the relevance of family structure and stability in shaping young people's self-esteem. Another study also supported the findings that children of divorce which is under single-parent family tend to fare less well than peers raised in families with two biological parents (Farooq *et al.*, 2011). Moreover, a substantial amount of family research has provided convincing evidence that children of single parenthood tend to experience more psychological, social, and academic difficulties than those raised in households with two biological parents (Kinga *et al.*, 2018). However, living with two biological parents does not have a consistently beneficial effect across developing countries.

Table 20 above indicates that 21.6% of the single and 78.4% of the married had a low self-esteem. 21.1% of the single and 78.9% of the married had a medium self-esteem. Finally, 40.0% of the single and 60.0% of the married had a high self-esteem. However, of all the levels of self-esteem, most of the respondents had a medium level of self-esteem. This could be as a result of the balance between the mothers and fathers' different socializing patterns may be what keep the SE of the students relatively high. This finding emphasizes the relevance of family structure and stability in shaping young people's self-esteem. This finding aligns with that of Farooq *et al.* (2011) that supported the findings that children of divorce which is under single-parent family tend to fare less well than peers raised in families with two biological parents. However, it is the manner of parenting, rather than type of parenting per se that attracts the development of an individual's SE hence the association between a child and the parent(s) and not the type of parenthood.

The findings may be of great assistance to university administration in understanding SE as a factor that may be responsible for students' behavior in the university, and thus find intervention aimed at helping students develop positive SE, as well as consider when designing university policy to improve student welfare. Student counselors may be able to develop new tactics and approaches (enhancing or establishing interventions that meet the requirements of students with low self-esteem) for strengthening guidance and counseling programs.

4.3.3 Role of Parental Education Level on the Level of Self-esteem among Undergraduate Students in Public Universities

The second objective of the study was to determine the role of parental education level on the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students in Public Universities in Kenya. The

research question for this objective stated: What is the role of parental education level on the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students in Public Universities in Kenya? The parental educational level was divided into; no schooling (1), basic education (2) and Post-secondary school level (3). The role of parental education level on the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students was analysed using cross-tabulation. Before the crosstabs analysis were the frequencies and percentages to evaluate the esteem levels. Table 19 shows the results of student's distribution by mothers/female guardian educational level and level of self-esteem.

Table 19

Students' Distribution by Mothers' / Female Guardian Education level on the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students

Mother/ Female guardian Educational level	Self- esteem level							
	High		Moderate		Low		Total	
	<i>f</i>	(%)	<i>F</i>	(%)	<i>f</i>	(%)	<i>f</i>	(%)
No schooling	0	0	14	5.17	11	4.06	25	9.23
Primary	1	0.37	27	9.96	16	5.90	44	16.24
Secondary	0	0	66	24.35	22	8.12	88	32.47
Post-secondary	0	0	76	28.04	38	14.02	114	42.06
Total	1	0.37	183	67.53	87	32,10	271	100

The study showed that, the more mothers' education level increases, the more the student's SE increases. This implies that parental education does have a major role on student's SE. The study by Harding (2015) showed that, the more mothers' education level increases, the more the children's SE increases. As mothers share a close bond with her children than the father, so is mother's education more important. In other studies, done in the field, the same findings were arrived at (Harding, 2015). The increase of the parents' education level enables them to be more conscious about how to raise a child. This could be contributed by a fact that educated parents may satisfy their children's basic psychological needs with a healthy approach. However, Adams *et al.* (2017) pointed out that self-esteem largely depends on how one makes sense of his role to the rest of the universe.

Table 20

Results of Cross- tabulation determining the Role of Mothers' / Female Guardian Education (No Schooling) level on the Level of Self-Esteem among Undergraduate Students

Statement	Students Responses									
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others	2	0.7	42	15.4	1	0.3	1	0.3	0	0
At times I think I am no good at all.	42	15.4	2	0.7	1	0.3	1	0.3	0	0
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	1.4	42	15.4
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	42	15.4	1	0.3	0	0	0	0	3	1.1
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	42	15.4	0	0	0	0	2	0.7	2	0.7
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	42	15.4	0	0	1	0.3	2	0.7	1	0.3
I take a positive attitude toward myself	1	0.3	42	15.4	0	0	2	0.7	1	0.3
On the whole. I am satisfied with myself	1	0.3	42	15.4	0	0	3	1.1	0	0
I wish I could have more respect for myself	44	16.2	0	0	1	0.3	1	0.3	0	0
I certainly feel useless at times.	42	15.4	3	1.1	0	0	0	0	1	0.3

The results in Table 20 show that 17.3% students felt that they did not have much to be proud of and 16.8% of the respondents observed that even though their mother/female guardian had no schooling; they however felt that they had a number of good qualities. The results indicate that the students are reliable, dependable however are helpless because they can't celebrate actual concrete things while still coping with difficult scenarios (Luha2022). Another issue emerging from the data in table 21 is that the students embrace comfort zone and spends more time daydreaming. It is apparent from this table that only a small number of respondents indicated their agreement on the items posed. The results reveal that 16.5% of the respondents disagreed with the statement "I certainly feel useless at times". Walker 2015 depicts that parents play a huge role in how their children perceive themselves. However, the effects of un-education do not boil down to this entirely, as studies have shown that a mother's education may be the most defining factor in a child's upbringing. A study done by Foundation of Child Development shows that low level of education in a mother can significantly impact a child's level of economic status, educational success and their self-esteem.

According to the Census of India (CoI, 2011), female literacy is at 65.46% while the male literacy is at 82.14%. An educated mother can help curate cognitively stimulating activities to enhance a child's academic potential. Despite the setbacks, unlocking a girls potential by increasing her self-esteem growing up is essential. A good level of self-esteem can help a girl push through some of the tough times in her academic path and also, make her proud of her work. Majority of the students also disagreed on the statement "I wish I could have more respect for myself" 16.2%. This means that the students were able to take care of themselves before others. A person with self—respect will never allow others to treat them badly, nor will they allow someone else to be treated badly (Dana, 2022). She continues to say that self-respect knows one's own qualities and strengths while striving to improve one's weaknesses. That it involves respecting an individual's own right as a human being while also respecting the rights of others- being true to their feelings and thoughts whilst handling the feedback from others appropriately that may disagree. 16.1% of respondents also disagreed on the statement "I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others" and another 16.1% also disagreed that "at times I think I am no good at all".

The results show that the respondents were typically proactive and took steps to achieve their goals while spent time ruminating on problems, an indication of persons that are at the fudge

of giving up and a feeling of worthless. Self-esteem is based on an individual's most habitual ways of thinking, attitudes about self and life. Luha (2022) depicts that a negative attitude does comparisons; blaming others; self-sabotaging behavior and embrace comfort zone. Findings suggest that the upbringing of the child in a family where the mother/female guardian has no education may alter the self-esteem of an individual. The result in Table 21 indicates that mothers/female guardian education (*No schooling*) level plays an important role on the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students based on self-esteem statements. The study established that most of the respondents who had stayed in Mothers'/ Female Guardian no Schooling had feelings of inferior to others and valued the opinions of others above their own having a response of 1% and 0% respectively.

The study is critical, especially in understanding the role of parental education level on the level of SE among undergraduate students in Kenya. The respondents need more help to feel that they belong. This may help improve the student's capacity to perform better in numerous professions. Furthermore, by understanding the role of mothers'/ female guardian education with no schooling level on the level of self-esteem among students', educators and treatment providers can emphasize the importance of programs that promote confidence and competence in students' own skills as a vital component in successful learning and academic advancement. Educators, counselors, and even students may better comprehend others or themselves, make more reasoned decisions about their association with their parents, and realize the important role their parents play in portraying the students' SE.

Table 21

Results of Cross- tabulation determining the Role of Mothers'/ Female Guardian Primary Education level on the Level of Self-Esteem among Undergraduate Students

Statement	Responses									
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others	0	0	11	4.0	0	0	1	0.3	0	0
At times I think I am no good at all.	11	4.0	0	0	0	0	1	0.3	0	0
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.3	11	4.0
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	11	4.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.3
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	11	4.0	1	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	11	4.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.3
I take a positive attitude toward myself	11	4.0	1	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
On the whole. I am satisfied with myself	1	0.3	11	4.0	0	0	0	0	0	0
I wish I could have more respect for myself	12	4.42	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
I certainly feel useless at times.	11	4.0	0	0	0	0	1	0.3	0	0

The results in Table 21 indicate that 4.4% of the students disagreed with the statement “I wish I could have more respect for myself”. The statement “I feel that I have a number of good qualities” was fully supported by 4.3% of the respondents. 4.3% of the respondents also

disagreed on the statements;” I take a positive attitude toward myself”, 4.3% “On the whole, I am satisfied with myself” and “I am able to do things as well as most other people”4.3%. It can also be seen from the table that most students disagreed on the statements “I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others” 4.0%’, “at times I think I am no good at all” 4.0% and that “all in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure”4.0%. The table indicates that not a single responded agreed with the statements “I take a positive attitude toward myself” (0%), “on the whole, I am satisfied with myself” (0%) and “I wish I could have more respect for myself” (0%). However another notably result shows that the statement “I feel that I have a number of good qualities” was disagreed on by 0% of the respondents.

The main issue emerging from the data in Table 22 is that respondents are unpleasant with discomfort, making assumptions and are self- judgmental. This confirms the assertion that individuals low in confidence report significantly greater negative affect than individuals high in confidence (Slavin, 2019). Thus, the Watson-Tellegen theory of affect is supported, and negative affect is linked to negative or low self-esteem. The findings are in agreement with those of Adams *et al.* (2017), who indicate that self-esteem is heavily portrayed by how one perceives his interaction to the rest of the universe. This results in good interpersonal relationships, which are defined by understanding of one another, the avoidance of unpleasant words or emotional outbursts, and correct communication. In the multi model counseling approach, Mu (2019) sees interpersonal interaction as one of the seven key areas of functioning within the complex of human personality. As a result, an individual's SE can be either low or high depending on how one assesses his or her worth. A surprising point about self-esteem according to Slavin (2019) is the enormous range of variation between individuals. While some people think the whole world is theirs for the taking and asking, others feel they have no right to exist. As noted in Table 25, sense of self is partly determined by individual cognition and the product of their affect and how respondents feel about themselves. For example, self-discrepancy theory highlights how we feel distress when we perceive a gap between our actual and ideal selves. Our self-esteem is determined by many factors, including how well we view our own performance and appearance, and how satisfied we are with our interaction with other people (Kendra, 2023).

Self –esteem describes ones level of confidence in ones abilities and attributes. Having healthy self-esteem can influence ones motivation, one’s mental well-being, and one’s overall quality of life. However, having self-esteem that is either too high or too low can be problematic. Better

understanding what ones unique level of self-esteem is can help one strike a balance that is just right for oneself. Self-esteem impacts ones decision-making process, one's association, emotional health, and one's overall well-being. It also involves motivation, as people with a healthy, positive view of themselves understand their potential and may feel inspired to take on new challenges (Kendra, 2023)

Table 22

Results of Cross- tabulation determining the Role of Mothers'/ Female Guardian Secondary Education level on the Level of Self-Esteem among Undergraduate Students

Statement	Responses									
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others	7	2.5	71	26.1	0	0	0	0	0	0
At times I think I am no good at all.	71	26.1	1	0.3	1	0.3	3	1.1	2	0.7
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	5	1.8	0	0	0	0	2	0.7	71	26.1
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	71	26.1	4	1.4	0	0	0	0	3	1.1
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	71	26.1	6	2.2	0	0	1	0.3	0	0
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	72	26.5	4	1.4	0	0	0	0	2	0.7
I take a positive attitude toward myself	71	26.1	4	1.4	0	0	3	1.1	0	0
On the whole. I am satisfied with myself	2	0.7	71	26.1	3	1.1	1	0.3	1	0.3
I wish I could have more respect for myself	72	26.5	2	0.7	1	0.3	3	1.1	0	0
I certainly feel useless at times.	71	26.1	3	1.1	1	0.3	2	0.7	1	0.3

The result in Table 22 above show that there is a role of the secondary level of education of the mother/female guardian on the level of self-esteem of the students. 28.6% of the respondents disagreed with the statement “I feel that I am a person of worth at least on an equal plane with others”. However, 28.3% positively identified with the statement “I am able to do things as well as most other people”. 27.9% of the respondents disagreed with the statement “I feel I do not have much to be proud of” while 27.5% students disapproved the statement “all in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure”. When the students were asked whether they take a positive attitude toward themselves, 27.5% of them disagreed.

The main issue emerging from the data in Table 23 is that the respondents are not living their life to the fullest and exploiting their talents and abilities to the best of their knowledge according to (Omondi, 2022) as the English saying goes; a positive person is typically more proactive and takes steps to achieve their goals, while a negative individual may spend more time daydreaming or ruminating on problems. This suggests that respondents are also having an accurate and balanced self-view. Meaning the students with a healthy self-esteem may help them recognize and accept their abilities, flaws, strengths and weaknesses. Educated parents can better communicate with their children about schoolwork and knowledge being taught at school. This will have an effect on their SE, resulting in improved academic achievement in school. According to Yamawaki *et al.* (2011) parental education was identified as a strong predictor of students’ SE and academic achievements, as a big difference was found between achievements of high, low and average SES of students.

The results in table 22 show that sometimes it’s difficult for the respondents to accept compliments, as they tend to focus on their perceived weaknesses rather than their assets. However Memon *et al.* (2010) opined that parent’s involvement in their child’s education increases the rate of educational success of their children especially for educated parents. Farooq *et al.* (2011) came up with the result that multi – faceted factors including parental education level influenced educational achievements of students. Bückner *et al.* (2018) opined that parental education strongly related to students’ SE and success in their school life performance.

In this study they stated that parents who have had the benefits of higher education can pass on values concerning the importance of learning to their children (Farooq *et al.*, 2011). In addition, they also stated that parents' educational level motivates the cultural environments in which children are raised (Farooq *et al.*, 2011). However, in another study, parental education is negatively related to students' SE (Orth *et al.*, 2010). This is because well-educated parents expect more from their children, so that at the same level of academic achievement, students with well-educated parents do not feel as good about themselves as do those whose parents are less educated (Orth *et al.*, 2010). The findings may be of great assistance to university administration in understanding SE as a factor that may be responsible for students' behavior in the university, and thus find intervention aimed at helping students develop positive SE, as well as consider when designing university policy to improve student welfare.

Table 23

Results of Cross- tabulation determining the Role of Mothers'/ Female Guardian Post-secondary Education level on the Level of Self-Esteem among Undergraduate Students

Statement	Responses									
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others	3	1.1	113	41.6	1	0.3	3	1.1	4	1.4
At times I think I am no good at all.	113	41.6	3	1.1	3	1.1	4	1.4	1	0.3
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	4	1.4	0	0	1	0.3	6	2.2	113	41.6
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	113	41.6	4	1.4	0	0	0	0	7	2.5
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	113	41.6	3	1.1	1	0.3	2	0.7	5	1.8
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	113	41.6	2	0.7	3	1.1	2	0.7	4	1.4
I take a positive attitude toward myself	113	41.6	6	2.2	0	0	5	1.8	0	0
On the whole. I am satisfied with myself	4	1.4	113	41.6	3	1.1	4	1.4	0	0
I wish I could have more respect for myself	117	43.1	1	0.3	1	0.3	4	1.4	1	0.3
I certainly feel useless at times.	114	42.0	1	0.3	2	0.7	2	0.7	5	1.8

The result in Table 23 shows that 44% of the respondents disagreed with the statement “On the whole, I am satisfied with myself”. The statement “I feel that I have a number of good qualities” was supported by 43.8% of the respondents. When the respondents were asked about their attitude 43.8% disagreed with the statement “I take a positive attitude toward myself”. It can be noted that 43.4% of the respondents also disagreed with the statement “I wish I could have more respect for myself”. The major issue emerging from the data in table 24 is that half of the respondents show an indication of self-awareness, courage and confidence however, a few also indicate that they miss a lot of things and opportunities that life presents before them. This is explained by the sizeable number of respondents citing personal issues like feeling good, satisfied, respect and positive attitude while those citing negativity such as feeling a failure, not having much to be proud of, taking a negative attitude toward self, and settling in comfort zone about having a number of good qualities as being the main self-esteem statements. Another finding also found that the level of education is positively correlated to SE (Farooq *et al.*, 2011). In this study they stated that parents who have had the benefits of higher education can pass on values concerning the importance of learning to their children (Farooq *et al.*, 2011). In addition, they also stated that parents’ educational level influences the cultural environments in which children are raised (Farooq *et al.*, 2011). However, in another study, parental education is negatively related to students' SE (Orth *et al.*, 2010). This is because well-educated parents expect more from their children, so that at the same level of academic achievement, students with well-educated parents do not feel as good about themselves as do those whose parents are less educated (Orth *et al.*, 2010).

Self-esteem is a very important aspect of one’s life. In American culture for instance, high esteem is viewed as the basis for good relationships with other people and academic success. Harrison (2018) observes that high esteem forms the cornerstone of interpersonal interaction and positive attitudes towards living. High self-esteem in this regard refers to desirable levels of esteem, which are not too high or too low majorly referred by scholars as positive self-esteem or middle ground. Students with strong self-esteem will exhibit traits such as good interpersonal interaction, confidence, self-respect, and assertiveness, among others. Low self-esteem results from one having a poor self-image caused by his or her negative attitudes, about the self, performance in class and his purpose in life. High self-esteem is the opposite of low

self-esteem. These attributes are derived from the two components of self-esteem, namely awareness of one's own worth and a sense of one's own capacity.

Consequently, parental education does have a major influence on student's SE and in the end academic achievements. Azhar *et al.* (2013) found that relation of parent's education to their children's SE and academic performances rests upon quite specific beliefs and behaviors. Parent's educational qualification is linked with their language competence, which has a significant role in the manner in which parent's communicate with their children. They further found that parent's education, correlate significantly with students' SE. Their analysis strongly supported the assumption that educational systems implicitly accept the role of family background on students' SE and academic performances. On the other hand, education is necessary for fathers as well as they are breadwinners of the family. However, the study by Harding (2015) showed that, the more mothers' education level increases, the more the children's SE increases as mothers share a close bond with her children than the father, so is mother's education more important therefore showing the role of the parental education level on the level of SE of undergraduate students.

Positive self-esteem is one technique to help students develop life skills therefore, the importance of a positive self-esteem among university students may not be ignored. As observed earlier, self-esteem affects subsequent goal achievement and increases the ability of the individual to cope with challenging circumstances. A university student with a positive self-esteem may perform better than one with negative feelings about themselves. Therefore, the findings from this study may benefit university student academic advisors, dean of students' office, students' welfare and student counselors. This may enable them to build up an understanding, on the important role parents play in the development of self-esteem of their students. Then have consideration in improving and introducing interventions that suit student SE needs, concerning the students and also change of strategies when it comes to guiding and counseling of these students, on interventions that aim at enhancing parent-child interaction, which will go a long way in developing HSE among the students'.

Table 24*Students' Distribution by Fathers' / Male Guardian Education level on the level of self-esteem*

Father/ Male guardian Educational level	Self- esteem level						Total	
	High		Moderate		Low			
	<i>F</i>	(%)	<i>F</i>	(%)	<i>f</i>	(%)	<i>f</i>	(%)
No schooling	0	0	18	6.64	13	4.79	31	11.44
Primary	0	0	22	8.12	12	4.79	34	12.55
Secondary	1	0.37	61	22.88	14	5.17	76	28.04
Post-secondary	0	0	83	30.63	47	17.34	130	47.97
Total	1	0.37	181	66.79	86	31.73	271	100

In parallel, the more fathers' educational level increases, the more the children's self-esteem increases, however, this increase was not regarded as significant. In other studies, done in the field, the same findings were arrived at (Harding, 2015). Educational level of the parent may dictate the socio-economic status of the family among other factors. The higher the level of education of the parent, the more paying the occupation and this enhances the family income. These educated parents support and guide their children thus improving their sense of power and worth. Some illiterate and semi-illiterate parents neglect, shame and sometimes ridicule their children. These parents also use isolation, appeals to guilt and other methods of discipline involving the threat of love hence lowering the SE of their children (Kutob *et al.*, 2010). Table 25 shows the results of Cross- tabulation determining the role of fathers'/male guardian with no schooling level of education on the Level of Self-Esteem among Undergraduate Students

Table 25

Results of Cross- tabulation determining the Role of Fathers' / Male Guardian Education (No Schooling) level on the Level of Self-Esteem among Undergraduate Students

Statement	Students Responses									
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others	2	0.7	42	15.4	1	0.3	1	0.3	0	0
At times I think I am no good at all.	42	15.4	2	0.7	1	0.3	1	0.3	0	0
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	0	0	42	15.4	0	0	0	0	4	1.4
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	42	15.4	1	0.3	0	0	0	0	3	1.1
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	42	15.4	0	0	2	0.7	2	0.7	0	0
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	42	15.4	0	0	1	0.3	2	0.7	1	0.3
I take a positive attitude toward myself	1	0.3	42	15.4	0	0	2	0.7	1	0.3
On the whole. I am satisfied with myself	1	0.3	42	15.4	0	0	3	1.1	0	0
I wish I could have more respect for myself	44	16.2	0	0	1	0.3	1	0.3	0	0
I certainly feel useless at times.	42	15.4	3	1.1	0	0	0	0	1	0.3

Results in Table 25 shows that 16.5% of the respondents disapproved the statement “I certainly feel useless at times”. When the students were asked if they wished they could have more respect for themselves, 16.2% disagreed. It can be seen from the table that respondents seems

dependable and helpful because they have a sense of personal worth and value. Self-esteem is an individual's subjective sense of overall personal worth or value according to Kendra (2023). Similar to self-respect, it describes one's level of confidence in their abilities and attributes (Slavin, 2019). The qualities and optimism of parents can benefit their children (Orth, 2018). Memon *et al.* (2010) opined that parent's involvement in their child's education increases the rate of self-acceptance and self-awareness of their children. Having healthy self-esteem can influence one's motivation, mental well-being and overall quality of life. However, having self-esteem that is either too high or too low can be problematic. Therefore, low self-esteem is an enormous public health problem and people who report low self-esteem usually say that it has been present since early childhood or at least adolescence. Low self-esteem results from one having a poor self-image caused by his or her negative attitudes, about the self, performance in class and his purpose in life. High self-esteem is the opposite of low self-esteem. It is a very important aspect of one's life. The above findings show that parents play a vital role in helping the children to acquire sound self-esteem. Most low self-esteem stems out from unfortunate childhood experiences. According to Sowislo and Orth (2013) parents who have definite values, who have a clear idea of what they regard as appropriate behavior and who are able and willing to present and enforce their beliefs, are more likely to rear children who value themselves highly.

When the respondents were asked whether they felt they were people of worth, at least on an equal plane with others, 16.1% disagreed. The statement "At times I think I am no good at all", was unsupported by 16.1% of the respondents. 15.7% of the respondents also disagreed on the statement "I take a positive attitude toward myself", "The results show that 15.7% of the respondents are inclined to feel that they are a failure. The main issue emerging from the data in Table 26 is that the respondents emphasize on negative affect than subjects high in confidence. This is explained by the sizeable number of respondents citing not being on purpose but their feelings, thoughts and emotions often overshadow their judgment. For example feeling worthless, thinking they are not good enough, a failure, negative attitude and generally making assumptions or judging others.

The statement that "I feel I do not have much to be proud of" was disagreed by 15.4% of the respondents. 15.4% of the students said that they do not take positive attitude toward themselves. Students with low SE criticize themselves and doubt they can do things well. They feel they're not as good as other students and think of the times they fail rather than when they

succeed (Araujo, 2023). The socio meter theory explains why primary determinants of self-esteem involve the perceived reactions of other people as self-judgments or dimensions, that the person thinks are important to significant others according to Leary (1999) as stated by Mu (2019). Most often, the self-esteem is lowered by failure, criticism, rejection and other events that have negative implications from relational evaluation. For this study the self-esteem of the student may be lowered by failure, rejection and criticism by the significant others that include parents and members of the peer group.

Azhar *et al.* (2013) found that relation of parent's education to their children's SE and academic performances rests upon quite specific beliefs and behaviors. Parent's educational qualification is linked with their language competence, which has a significant influence in the manner in which parent's communicate with their children. Pounders *et al.* (2016) define SE as an individual's overall appraisal, whether high or low, based on all of the positive and negative self-perceptions that comprise that individual's self-concept. Its application usually involves thoughts of worthiness. Zee and Koomen (2016) proposed that the home environment also affects the SE and academic performance of students. Educated parents can provide such an environment that suits best for self-worth and academic success of their children. The school authorities can provide counseling and guidance to parents for creating positive home environment for improvement in student's quality of work.

Results in this table indicate that some students, (15.4%), disagreed that they feel they have a number of good qualities therefore feel liked, accepted, and confident even though their fathers/ male guardians never went to school. In American culture for instance, high esteem is viewed as the basis for good relationships with other people and academic success. Harrison (2018) observes that high esteem forms the cornerstone of interpersonal relationships and positive attitudes towards living. High self-esteem in this regard refers to desirable levels of esteem, which are not too high or too low majorly referred by scholars as positive self-esteem or middle ground. Students with strong self-esteem will exhibit traits such as good interpersonal skills, confidence, self-respect, and assertiveness, among others.

Table 26

Results of Cross- tabulation determining the Role of Fathers' / Male Guardian with Primary Education level on the Level of Self-Esteem among Undergraduate Students

Statement	Students Responses									
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others	1	0.3	10	3.6	0	0	0	0	0	0
At times I think I am no good at all.	10	3.6	0	0	1	0.3	0	0	0	0
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	1	0.3	10	3.6	0	0	0	0	0	0
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	10	3.6	1	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	11	4.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	10	3.6	1	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
I take a positive attitude toward myself	1	0.3	10	3.6	0	0	0	0	0	0
On the whole. I am satisfied with myself	1	0.3	10	3.6	0	0	0	0	0	0
I wish I could have more respect for myself	10	3.6	0	0	1	0.3	0	0	0	0
I certainly feel useless at times.	10	3.6	0	0	0	0	1	0.3	0	0

Results in Table 26 show that 4.0% of the respondents declined the statement “I am able to do things as well as most other people”. 3.9% of the students disagreed with the statement “on the

whole, I am satisfied with myself". When the students were asked whether they take a positive attitude toward themselves 3.9% declined. Furthermore 3.9% of the respondents too disagreed that they felt they do not have much to be proud of. The results from Table 31 show that 3.9% of the respondents disagreed with the statement "I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others"

The results show that the respondents agreed with only one statement "I certainly feel useless at times"1.3%. This is a surprising finding considering that being negative makes things quite worse and that constant self-criticism can lead to persistent feelings of sadness, depression anxiety, anger, shame or guilt (Kevorkian, 2010).In addition, many personal problems lower self-esteem because they lead other people to devalue or reject the individual or the individual devalues him or herself. The stand point of the socio meter theory is that interpersonal rejection, results in emotional problems, difficulties in relating with others and maladaptive efforts to gain acceptance for example excessive dependency and membership in social adjustments in schools are positively co-related to parental level of education. This is due to that fact that children spend more time at home than they do at schools, and the parents have the opportunity for a number of interactions with their children in one-on-one situations. Augustine and Negraia (2018) asserted that the education of parents could help the children to develop proper personality characteristics and equip them better to adjust socially, and academically.

Roman Poet Ovid wrote, "A horse never runs so fast as when he has other horses to catch up and outpace" what Ovid meant is that a little competition makes everyone want to perform better. While healthy competition can motivate and inspire people, unhealthy competition can lead to a self-defeating and negative attitude. Overall, available evidence indicates that strong self-esteem may have good effects for an individual's well-being and achievement, whereas low self-esteem may be a risk factor for poor outcomes. Furthermore, by understanding the role of fathers'/ male guardian with Primary education level on the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students' educators and treatment providers can emphasize the importance of programs that promote confidence and competence in students' own skills as a vital component in successful learning and academic advancement. The students then may benefit from change of strategies, interventions and develop HSE necessary for personal growth.

Table 27

Results of Cross- tabulation determining the Role of Fathers’/ Male Guardian with Secondary Education level on the Level of Self-Esteem among Undergraduate Students

Statement	Students Responses									
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Not Sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others	4	1.4	51	18.8	0	0	1	0.3	0	0
At times I think I am no good at all.	51	18.8	0	0	0	0	4	1.4	1	0.3
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	3	1.1	51	18.8	0	0	0	0	2	0.7
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	51	18.8	3	1.1	0	0	0	0	2	0.7
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	55	20.3	0	0	0	0	1	0.3	0	0
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	52	19.2	3	1.1	0	0	0	0	1	0.3
I take a positive attitude toward myself	3	1.1	51	18.8	0	0	2	0.7	0	0
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself	2	0.7	51	18.8	2	0.7	1	0.3	0	0
I wish I could have more respect for myself	53	19.6	2	0.7	0	0	1	0.3	0	0
I certainly feel useless at times.	51	18.8	2	0.7	1	0.3	2	0.7	0	0

Table 27 indicates that 20.3% of the respondents disagreed with the statement “I am able to do things as well as most other people”, “I feel I do not have much to be proud of” was disapproved

by 20.3% of the respondents and that “I wish I could have more respect for myself” 20.3% of the respondents also disagreed with the statement. It is so, yet 20.2% of the students disagreed with the statement “I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others”. 19.9% of the students’ disagreed that, “I feel that I have a number of good qualities”,” All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure”19.9% of the students disagreed. “I take a positive attitude toward myself” also 19.9% of the respondents disagreed. The implication of this is that half of the respondents are respectful, confident and have good qualities. According to Adams *et al.* (2017), self-esteem is heavily influenced by how one perceives his relationship to the rest of the universe. This results in good interpersonal relationships, which are defined by understanding of one another, the avoidance of unpleasant words or emotional outbursts, and correct communication.

The view of 20.2% of the respondents that the students are not people of worth, at least on an equal plane with others suggests that they are judgmental on themselves to be inferior to their peers and that they are critical of themselves (Susman, 2018). Low self-esteem is characterized by depressive illness, prejudice, poor interpersonal skills, psychosomatic disorders, abuse and anxiety (Schiraldi, 2016). Low self-esteem expresses a feeling that one cannot cope, face life’s challenges and that he/she is not fit to function as a person. To a person with low esteem life means pain, under performance, complains, have no control over their impulses, and this explains why most of the victims contemplate committing suicide. As Morley and Moran (2011) states, after recognizing the undesirability of too high or too low self-esteem, therapists try for a middle ground.” While not all students with LSE will do poorly in school, research done by Susman (2018) indicates that LSE can lead to aggression and being pessimistic. Negative feelings the constant self-criticism can lead to persistent feelings of sadness, depression and self- judgment to be inferior to their peers while ignoring their positive qualities.

Parents are the gatekeepers of the negative and positive self-talk (Ummet, 2014). After all, children are not born with negative or positive self-talk, it is formed through their primitive developmental years and is commonly a reflection of their interaction with their parents. Parents will only exemplify what they personally know to be true in their own life. However, if parents reject their own goodness, then their children are surely going to develop a similar set of attitudes about themselves. According to Yamawaki *et al.* (2011) parental education was identified as a strong predictor of students’ SE and academic achievements, as a big difference was found between achievements of high, low and average SES of students.

Table 28

Results of Cross- tabulation determining the Role of Fathers'/ Male Guardian with Post-secondary Education level on the Level of Self-Esteem among Undergraduate Students

Statement	Students		Responses							
	Disagree		Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others	5	1.8	144	53.1	1	0.3	3	1.1	5	1.8
At times I think I am no good at all.	144	53.1	4	1.4	3	1.1	4	1.4	3	1.1
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	5	1.8	144	53.1	1	0.3	1	0.3	7	2.5
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	144	53.1	4	1.4	0	0	0	0	10	3.6
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	150	55.3	1	0.3	2	0.7	4	1.4	1	0.3
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	144	53.1	2	0.7	3	1.1	2	0.7	7	2.5
I take a positive attitude toward myself	8	2.9	144	53.1	0	0	6	2.2	0	0
On the whole. I am satisfied with myself	5	1.8	144	53.1	4	1.4	4	1.4	1	0.3
I wish I could have more respect for myself	148	54.6	1	0.3	1	0.3	6	2.2	2	0.7
I certainly feel useless at times.	145	53.5	2	0.7	2	0.7	2	0.7	7	2.5

The results in Table 28 shows, that 56.1% of the respondents disagreed with the statement “I take a positive attitude toward myself”. 55.6% of the students disagreed with the statement “I am able to do things as well as most other people. 54.9% of the respondents disagreed that “I wish I could have more respect for myself”, “On the whole, I am satisfied with myself”, 54.9% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. When the respondents were asked about their feelings, 54.9% disapproved the statement “I feel that I have a number of good qualities”. The statement “I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others” was disagreed by 54.9% of the respondents. This implies that majority of the respondents with fathers’/ male guardian of post-secondary education level have an accurate and balanced self-view despite having negative attitude towards themselves. People with healthy self-esteem recognize and accept their abilities and their flaws, their strengths and their weaknesses and also hold realistic expectations for themselves and others (Schiraldi, 2016). These results are consistent with findings of study by Augustine and Negraia (2018) which found that the education of parents could help the children to develop proper personality characteristics and equip them better to adjust socially, and academically.

The main issue emerging from the data in Table 28 is that most of the respondents are assertive, confident, and resilient and are optimistic about life (Zee & Koomen, 2016). Students with strong self-esteem will exhibit traits such as good interpersonal involvement, confidence, self-respect, and assertiveness, among others. These attributes are derived from the two components of self-esteem, namely awareness of one's own worth and a sense of one's own capacity. Positive self-esteem is one technique to help students develop life skills. SE appears to have an effect on motivation as well. Unfortunately, there is evidence that students with special needs are more likely to acquire low self-esteem (Tian *et al.*, 2013). In the ‘Self-Worth’ book life coach Danijela Jokic Vaislay explains why self-worth is the foundation for increasing self-respect and self-confidence and how low self-worth can lead to perfectionism, the impostor syndrome, self-doubt, limiting beliefs, self-sabotage, and lack of self-love. Zee and Koomen (2016) proposed that the home environment also affects the SE and academic performance of students. Educated parents can provide such an environment that suits best for self-worth and academic success of their children.

The view of 54,9% of the respondents that the students are not people of worth, at least on an equal plane with others suggests that they are judgmental on themselves to be inferior to their

peers and that they are critical of themselves (Susman, 2018). Low self-esteem is characterized by depressive illness, prejudice, poor interpersonal relationships, psychosomatic disorders, abuse and anxiety (Schiraldi, 2016). Low self-esteem expresses a feeling that one cannot cope, face life's challenges and that he/she is not fit to function as a person. To a person with low esteem life means pain, under performance, complains, have no control over their impulses, and this explains why most of the victims contemplate committing suicide. As Morley and Moran (2011) states, after recognizing the undesirability of too high or too low self-esteem, therapists try for a middle ground." While not all students with LSE will do poorly in school, research done by Susman (2018) indicates that LSE can lead to aggression and being pessimistic.

Memon *et al.* (2010) opined that parent's involvement in their children's education increases the rate of educational success of their children especially for educated parents. Farooq *et al.* (2011) came up with the result that multi – faceted factors including parental education level influenced educational achievements of students. According to Yamawaki *et al.* (2011) parental education was identified as a strong predictor of students' SE and academic achievements, as a big difference was found between achievements of high, low and average SES of students. Bucker *et al.* (2018) opined that parental education strongly related to students' SE and success in their school life performance.

It is therefore very clear that one's SE may so heavily be affected by their parents' insecurities and vulnerabilities. SE indeed makes the world a pleasant journey, without it life can be an uphill battle. More tend to think of the old saying "Monkey see, Monkey do", and think that, this is what parents put into their kids minds that matter (Lyons *et al.*, 2012).It further throws light on the critical link between parental education and students' self-esteem, providing vital insights into how parental support, communication, and involvement might affect undergraduate students' self-esteem. Students can obtain a better awareness of the numerous impacts on their self-esteem and potentially use this information to improve their self-confidence and overall well-being by studying this role

Based on behavior pattern of educated and uneducated parents, the author concluded that high degree of literacy leads to more positive and healthy pattern of behavior. This study is in line with the study by Harding (2015) which showed that, the more fathers' education level

increases, the more the children's SE increases. This implies that parental education plays a major role on children's SE. The increase of the parents' education level enables them to be more conscious about how to raise a child. This could be contributed by a fact that educated parents may satisfy their children's basic psychological needs with a healthy approach. However, Adams *et al.* (2017) pointed out that self-esteem largely depends on how one makes sense of his relationship to the rest of the universe shaped by ones thoughts, interaction, and experiences, including those related to culture, religion, and societal status.

Bertus (2012) reported that students with educated parents outperform those with uneducated parents on standardized examinations. Educated parents can better communicate with their children about schoolwork and knowledge being taught at school. This will have an effect on their SE, resulting in improved academic achievement in school.

4.3.4 Role of Parental Employment Status on the Level of Self-Esteem among Undergraduate Students' in Public Universities in Kenya

The third objective of the study was to determine the role of parental employment status on the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students in Public Universities in Kenya. The parental employment status was divided into three; Employed (1), Un-employed (2) Self-employed (3). The role of parental employment status on the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students' was analysed using frequencies, percentages and cross-tabulation analysis and the findings are presented as follows: Table 29 and 30 illustrates the students' distribution by parental employment status on levels of self-esteem.

Table 29

Students' Distribution by Mothers' / Female Guardian Employment Status on the Level of Self-esteem

Mother/ Female guardian Employment status	Self- esteem level						Total	
	High		Moderate		Low		f	(%)
	f	(%)	f	(%)	f	(%)	f	(%)
Employed	0	0	33	12.18	19	7.01	52	19.19
Un-employed	0	0	60	22.14	23	8.49	83	30.63
Self-employed	1	0.37	93	34.32	42	15.50	136	50.18
Total	1	0.37	186	68.64	84	31.00	271	100

Table 30

Students' Distribution by Fathers' / Male Guardian Employment status on levels of self-esteem

Father/ Male guardian Employment status	Self- esteem level						Total	
	High		Moderate		Low		F	(%)
	f	(%)	f	(%)	f	(%)	F	(%)
Employed	1	0.37	60	22.14	49	18.08	110	40.59
Un-employed	0	0	34	12.55	36	13.28	70	25.83
Self-employed	0	0	80	29.52	11	4.06	91	33.58
Total	1	0.37	174	64.21	96	35.42	271	100

From Table 29, it was evident that self-employed status of parents dominated among the students with high self-esteem, moderate, low and overall of 136(50.18%), while in table 30 employed status of parents dominated with overall of 110(40.59%). Duvander *et al.* (2019) opined that warmth and affection from parents in the students' environment was an important physiological need. If the need was unfulfilled, such children reported themselves as hostile and aggressive, dependent or defensively independent, impaired in SE and self-adequacy, emotionally unresponsive, emotionally unstable and had a negative worldview. Youths and adults who perceived themselves as rejected appeared to be disposed toward behavior problems

and conduct disorders, depressed and became involved in drug and alcohol among other problems.

In a research done by Zuiso (2017) findings were that students' whose parents have high income level from their employment status, the more their SE increases. Their study asserts that people should have a certain income to feel them comfortable, valuable and competent enough to have an active role in their lives. Therefore, the significant role of income and SE can be regarded as an expected outcome. In the literature, it was emphasized that having higher income affected SE positively (Andreassen *et al.*, 2017). It was important to run the crosstab analysis to determine the role of parental employment status on the students' self-esteem levels as seen in table 31

Table 31

Results of Cross- tabulation determining the Role of Mothers'/ Female Guardian Employed status on the Level of Self-Esteem among Undergraduate Students

Statement	Students Responses									
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others	4	1.4	0	0	1	0.3	1	0.3	3	1.1
At times I think I am no good at all.	0	0	2	0.7	1	0.3	4	1.4	2	0.7
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	3	1.1	1	0.3	0	0	5	1.8	0	0
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	0	0	4	1.4	0	0	0	0	5	1.8
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	5	1.8	1	0.3	1	0.3	1	0.3	1	0.3
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	0	0	2	0.7	2	0.7	1	0.3	4	1.4
I take a positive attitude toward Myself	5	1.8	0	0	0	0	4	1.4	0	0
On the whole. I am satisfied with myself	5	1.8	0	0	2	0.7	2	0.7	0	0
I wish I could have more respect for myself	3	1.1	1	0.3	0	0	3	1.1	2	0.7
I certainly feel useless at times.	1	0.3	1	0.3	2	0.7	1	0.3	4	1.4

The result in Table 31 above show that there is a relationship between the mothers'/ female guardian employed status and the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students in public universities in Kenya. 2.1% of the respondents disagreed with the statement "I am able to do things as well as most other people". However, 1.8% positively identified with the statement "I wish I could have more respect for myself". 1.8% of the respondents disagreed with the statement "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself". While another 1.8% of the students disapproved the statement "I take a positive attitude toward myself". When the students were asked what they were inclined to feel 1.8% agreed that "All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure". 1.8% of the respondents agreed with the statement "I feel that I have a number of good qualities". 1.7% of the respondents agreed on the statement "I feel I do not have much to be proud of". The result indicates that 1.7% of the respondents agreed with the statement "I certainly feel useless at times".

The main issue emerging from the data in Table 31 is that the respondents feel open minded and can relate with others easily. The results indicate that the respondents are optimistic about life however do not embrace the comfort zone. The students are proud of what they can do and think good things about themselves and therefore are exploiting their talents and abilities to the best of their knowledge (Omondi, 2022) as the English saying goes, a positive person is typically more proactive and takes steps to achieve their goals, while a negative individual may spend more time daydreaming or ruminating on problems. This suggests that respondents are also having an accurate and balanced self-view. Meaning the students with a healthy self-esteem may help them recognize and accept their abilities, flaws, strengths and weaknesses. Educated parents can better communicate with their children about schoolwork and knowledge being taught at school. This will have an effect on their SE, resulting in improved academic achievement in school. According to Yamawaki *et al.* (2011) parental education was identified as a strong predictor of students' SE and academic achievements, as a big difference was found between achievements of high, low and average SES of students.

The results in table 31 show that sometimes it's difficult for the respondents to accept compliments, as they tend to focus on their perceived weaknesses rather than their assets. It was noted that only 1.6% of the respondents agreed with the statement "At times I think I am no good at all". 1.4% of the respondents disagreed with the statement "I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others". Parents who have low status of employment can affect the self-esteem of the students. When students lose their self-esteem they may lose

motivation in learning. Therefore, by building high self-esteem to the students is one of the most important in learning and parents can take to ensure that students will get affect to the criticism from other people despite the employment status of their parents. Usaini and Abubakar (2015), opined that parent's employment status played a key role on the students especially to their achievement, because of the confidence that they can take towards the employment status of their parents. The study found lower self-esteem in children whose mothers were un- employed while children whose mothers were self-employed had higher self-esteem. This is in agreement with Richtsmeier (2017) study which found lower self-esteem in children whose mothers were not employed while children whose mothers were employed full time had higher self-esteem. Youth and adults who perceived themselves as rejected appeared to be disposed toward behavior problems and conduct disorders, depressed and became involved in drug and alcohol among other problems.

Liu *et al.* (2017) found that employment status and income were positively correlated with self-esteem. Elder (2018) asserted that, when parents do not fulfill their basic duties, children are likely to suffer the consequences. This is due to that fact that children spend more time at home than they do at schools, and the parents have the opportunity for a number of interactions with their children in one-on-one situations. Parents-student relationships, both social and emotional, play a meaningful role in formation of student's self-esteem

Table 32

Results of Cross- tabulation determining the Role of Mothers'/ Female Guardian Self-employed status on the Level of Self-Esteem among Undergraduate Students

Statement	Students Responses									
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others	6	2.2	0	0	0	0	2	0.7	1	0.3
At times I think I am no good at all.	0	0	3	1.1	2	0.7	2	0.7	2	0.7
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	4	1.4	0	0	1	0.3	4	1.4	0	0
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	0	0	4	1.4	0	0	0	0	5	1.8
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	4	1.4	0	0	0	0	5	1.8	0	0
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	1	0.3	3	1.1	1	0.3	1	0.3	3	1.1
I take a positive attitude toward Myself	4	1.4	0	0	0	0	5	1.8	0	0
On the whole. I am satisfied with myself	2	0.7	0	0	2	0.7	4	1.4	1	0.3
I wish I could have more respect for myself	1	0.3	2	0.7	2	0.7	4	1.4	0	0
I certainly feel useless at times.	0	0	4	1.4	1	0.	2	0.7	2	0.7

The results in table 32 indicate that 2.2% of the respondents felt that the relationship between them and their self-employed mothers'/female guardian is negative because it made them feel unworthy comparing with others. The statement "I take a positive attitude toward myself" was supported by 1.8% of the respondents. When the respondents were asked about their performance feeling 1.8% approved that "all in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. It can also be seen from the table that 1.8% of the respondents agreed with the statement "I am able to do things as well as most other people"

The implication of this is that most of these students feel better about themselves some days and have an accurate and balanced self-view(Elder, 2018).The students view themselves positively and accept their abilities, strengths and weaknesses. This may be explained by the sizeable number of respondents citing esteem issues like inclined to feel a failure, positive attitude, at times thinking not good at all, not much to be proud of, feel useful, Moreover, Dupaul *et al.*(2017) depicts that Parents-student relationships, both social and emotional, play a meaningful role in schooling and learning gains. The view of the researchers is that development of self-esteem in children largely depends on the role of a child and the parent(s). Numerous studies have also proven that self-employed people are healthier, happier and more satisfied at work than employed people (Emma, 2023). However in another study by Huang (2022) his findings disagreed with those of Emma (2023) which reported that being self-employed destroys self-esteem because most individuals are always scared of the unknown predicament.

The importance of a positive self-esteem among university students may not be ignored. As observed earlier, self-esteem affects subsequent goal achievement and increases the ability of the individual to cope with challenging circumstances. Self-esteem is shaped by ones thoughts, roles, and experiences, including those related to culture, religion, and societal status (Dupaul *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, educators and treatment providers can emphasize the importance of programs that promote confidence and competence in students' own skills as a vital component in successful learning and academic advancement. A university student with a positive self-esteem may perform better than one with negative feelings about themselves.

1.7% of the respondents agreed with the statement "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself" a situation that apparently makes the students focus on their perceived weaknesses rather than their assets, and often afraid of failure and believe everyone else is better than they are. Usaini

and Abubakar (2015), reported that parents' employment status plays an important role on the students especially to their achievement, because of the confidence that they can take towards the employment status of their parents. In a research done by Zuiso (2017) findings were that students' whose parents have higher income level from their occupations, the more their SE increases. Their study asserts that people should have a certain income to feel them comfortable, valuable and competent enough to have an active role in their lives.

Table 33

Results of Cross- tabulation determining the Role of Mothers’/ Female Guardian Unemployed status on the Level of Self-Esteem among Undergraduate Students

Statement	Students		Responses							
	Disagree		Not	Agree		Strongly				
	F	%	sure	F	%	F	%			
I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others	2	0.7	0	0	1	0.3	2	0.7	1	0.3
At times I think I am no good at all.	0	0	1	0.3	2	0.7	3	1.1	0	0
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	2	0.7	0	0	0	0	4	1.4	0	0
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	0	0	1	0.3	0	0	0	0	5	1.8
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	2	0.7	0	0	3	1.1	1	0.3	0	0
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	0	0	1	0.3	1	0.3	2	0.7	2	0.7
I take a positive attitude toward myself	4	1.4	0	0	0	0	1	0.3	1	0.3
On the whole. I am satisfied with myself	2	0.7	0	0	2	0.7	2	0.7	0	0
I wish I could have more respect for myself	4	1.4	0	0	1	0.3	1	0.3	0	0
I certainly feel useless at times.	0	0	2	0.7	0	0	2	0.7	2	0.7

Results in this table 33 indicate that 1.8% of the respondents agreed with the statement “All in all, I am inclined to fee that I am a failure”. Majority of the respondents 1.4% agreed that “I feel that I have a number of good qualities”, “I feel I do not have much to be proud of”, and that,” I certainly feel useless at times”. However 1.4% of the respondents disagreed that “I take

a positive attitude toward myself’ and ‘I wish I could have more respect for myself’. The implication of this study is that most respondents recognize and accept their abilities and hold realistic expectations (Zuiso, 2017).

The findings in the study indicate that 1.4% of the respondents tend to focus on their perceived weaknesses rather than their assets. Youth and adults who perceived themselves as rejected appeared to be disposed toward behavior problems and conduct disorders, depressed and became involved in drug and alcohol among other problem Their study asserts that people should have a certain income to feel them comfortable, valuable and competent enough to have an active role in their lives. Baret (2018) reports that unemployed or low income parents tend to see themselves as incapable because they cannot meet the needs of their children and families. Inadequate resources create conflict in the home. Such a state of affairs may portray the parent-child character and subsequently the holistic development of the child, including education and academic achievement. Valentine *et al.* (2014) explained that household income determines the achievement of children in school as the parental income tend to predict the physical environment and learning experiences of the child in the home, based on the availability of reading materials.

Table 34

Results of Cross- tabulation determining the Role of Fathers'/ Male Guardian Employed status on the Level of Self-Esteem among Undergraduate Students

Statement	Responses									
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others	3	1.1	0	0	0	0	2	0.7	3	1.1
At times I think I am no good at all.	0	0	2	0.7	1	0.3	2	0.7	3	1.1
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	3	1.1	1	0.3	0	0	4	1.4	0	0
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	0	0	2	0.7	0	0	6	2.2	0	0
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	5	1.8	0	0	1	0.3	1	0.3	1	0.3
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	0	0	0	0	1	0.3	2	0.7	5	1.8
I take a positive attitude toward Myself	6	2.2	0	0	0	0	2	0.7	0	0
On the whole. I am satisfied with myself	3	1.1	0	0	2	0.7	2	0.7	1	0.3
I wish I could have more respect for myself	2	0.7	1	0.3	0	0	3	1.1	2	0.7
I certainly feel useless at times.	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.7	6	2.2

Results in table 34 show that, 2.9% of the respondents agreed with the statement “I certainly feel useless at times”. Self-esteem refers to the positive (high self-esteem) or negative (low self-esteem) feelings that we have about ourselves. We experience the positive feelings of high

self-esteem when we believe that we are good and worthy and that others view us positively (Andreassen *et al.*, 2017). We experience the negative feelings of low self-esteem when we believe that we are inadequate and less worthy than others (Dupaul *et al.*, 2017). When the students were asked what they felt, 2.5% of the respondents agreed that “I feel I do not have much to be proud of”. Individual’s self-esteem is determined by many factors, including how well they view their own performance and appearance, and how satisfied they are with their participation with other people (Tafarodi & Swann, 1995). The results show that 2.2% of the respondents agreed that “All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure”. 2.2% of the respondents disagreed that “I take a positive attitude toward myself”. This is indicating that self-esteem is in part a trait that is stable over time, with some people having relatively high self-esteem.

The findings in this study indicate that self-esteem is a state that varies day to day and even hour to hour depending on successes at important tasks or when students felt that they are accepted and valued by their parents. When the respondents felt that they have failed, done something harmful, or feel ignored or criticized, the negative aspects of the self-concept are more accessible and they experience low self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965). This is in agreement with Duvander *et al.* (2019) who opined that warmth and affection from parents in the students’ environment was an important physiological need, if the need was unfulfilled, such children reported themselves as hostile and aggressive, dependent or defensively independent, impaired in SE and self-adequacy, emotionally unresponsive, emotionally unstable and had a negative worldview.

In a research done by Zuiso (2017) findings were that students’ whose parents have higher income level from their occupations, the more their SE increases. Their study asserts that people should have a certain income to feel them comfortable, valuable and competent enough to have an active role in their lives. Having a job to go to everyday is very closely linked to self-worth and self-esteem (Allen, 2022). Therefore, the role of parental employment status and SE can be regarded as an expected outcome. In the literature, it was emphasized that having higher income affected SE positively (Andreassen *et al.*, 2017). According to Usaini and Abubakar (2015), parents employment status has a big influence on the students especially to their achievement, because of the confidence that they can take towards the employment status of their parents. Therefore, by building high self-esteem to the students is one of the most important aspects in learning and parents can take to ensure that students will get affect to the

criticism from other people despite the employment status of their parents. Youth and adults who perceived themselves as rejected appeared to be disposed toward behavior problems and conduct disorders, depressed and became involved in alcohol, drug and substance abuse. The findings may be of great importance to university administration in understanding SE as a factor that may be responsible for students' behavior in the university, and thus find intervention aimed at helping students develop positive SE, as well as consider when designing university policy to improve student welfare. Student counselors may be able to develop new tactics and approaches (enhancing or establishing interventions that meet the requirements of students with low self-esteem) for strengthening guidance and counseling programs.

Table 35

Results of Cross- tabulation determining the Role of Fathers' / Male Guardian Self-employed status on the Level of Self-Esteem among Undergraduate Students

Statement	Responses									
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others	0	0	4	1.4	0	0	1	0.3	2	0.7
At times I think I am no good at all.	0	0	2	0.7	2	0.7	2	0.7	1	0.3
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	3	1.1	0	0	1	0.3	3	1.1	0	0
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	0	0	2	0.7	0	0	0	0	5	1.8
I am able to do things as well as most other people. ²	2	0.7	0	0	1	0.3	4	1.4	0	0
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	1	0.3	2	0.7	1	0.3	0	0	3	1.1
I take a positive attitude toward myself	2	0.7	0	0	0	0	5	1.8	0	0
On the whole. I am satisfied with myself	2	0.7	0	0	2	0.7	3	1.1	0	0
I wish I could have more respect for myself	2	0.7	2	0.7	1	0.3	2	0.7	0	0
I certainly feel useless at times.	1	0.3	4	1.4	1	0.3	0	0	1	0.3

Table 35 indicates that 1.8% of the respondents agreed with statements “All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure”. “I take a positive attitude toward myself” was agreed by 1.8% of the respondents. When the respondents were asked about their feelings, 1.7% disagreed that “I certainly feel useless at times”. The implication of this is that most of these students’ thoughts and behaviors are largely determined by their programming, which is the result of their experiences, their environment, and the messages they received from those around them. It is likely that as per the father’s mindset and attitude then likely the student’s feelings were programmed into them during childhood therefore lead a healthy and positive lifestyle by focusing on their self-esteem and thought processes. Liu *et al.* (2017) found that employment status and income were positively correlated with self-esteem. Therefore positive thinking leads to a good self-esteem and is also proven to be effective in improving the student’s moods and ability to solve problems. According to Zuiso (2017) good self-esteem and positive thinking lead to positive action (healthy, assertive, solution- focused behavior) including goal setting, problem solving, dealing assertively with others, taking risks for success and building a balanced lifestyle.

Self-esteem is often described as the ‘feeling’ or the ‘value’ we place on ourselves as a person (and the things we do). E.g. ‘I feel that I am a person of worth. Positive action keeps us motivated in achieving the goals we set ourselves which in turn leads to numerous benefits including; feeling happy; increased sense of confidence and control (self-efficacy – ‘I can’), improved health and relationships with others, managing challenges better and learning from mistakes, so self-esteem is an important thing.

Therefore, parents of higher SES are more likely seem to provide “expensive resources” such as encyclopedias, a computer, a car, overseas travel, and music classes (Rossi & Rossi, 2018). Upper-class parents also have a tendency to provide independent study rooms or desks for their children. They are also more likely to possess reading materials such as dictionaries, reference works, and fiction. Parents of higher SES also tend to keep contact with the teachers, be volunteers in school activities, donate resources, and participate in a variety of school activities (Booth, 2017). It can therefore be concluded that the role of fathers self-employment status among the respondents is key especially to their thought and behavior programming, because of the confidence the students can take towards the employment status of their parents. Self-esteem as a human personality has a connection with important human success, failures and

frustration (Doodman *et al.*, 2017). Students will certainly enhance their self-esteem, because they will be proud to be associated to the opportunities for their growth (Ahmad *et al.*, 2013).

1.4% of the respondents disagreed with the statement “I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others”. The findings in table 36 indicate that 1.4% of the respondents also agreed with the statement “I am able to do things as well as most other people”. It can clearly be seen that the respondents whose father/male guardian are self-employed focus on their perceived weaknesses rather than their assets and are often afraid of failure and believe everyone else is better than they are a sign of low self-esteem. Low self-esteem expresses a feeling that one cannot cope, face life’s challenges and that he/she is not fit to function as a person. To a person with low esteem life means pain, under performance, complains, have no control over their impulses, and this explains why most of the victims contemplate committing suicide. It is also important to find a way, or ways, to raise SE and to also motivate students and find ways to avoid behavior issues and give students skills to improve SE and gain insight on their parental guidelines.

Table 36

Results of Cross- tabulation determining the Role of Fathers'/ Male Guardian Unemployed status on the Level of Self-Esteem among Undergraduate Students

Statement	Responses									
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others	0	0	4	1.4	1	0.3	2	0.7	0	0
At times I think I am no good at all.	0	0	1	0.3	2	0.7	4	1.4	0	0
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	3	1.1	0	0	0	0	4	1.4	0	0
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	0	0	4	1.4	0	0	0	0	3	1.1
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	4	1.4	0	0	1	0.3	2	0.7	0	0
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	0	0	3	1.1	2	0.7	1	0.3	1	0.3
I take a positive attitude toward myself	5	1.8	0	0	0	0	2	0.7	0	0
On the whole. I am satisfied with myself	3	1.1	0	0	2	0.7	2	0.7	0	0
I wish I could have more respect for myself	4	1.4	0	0	1	0.3	2	0.7	0	0
I certainly feel useless at times.	0	0	2	0.7	1	0.3	3	1.1	1	0.3

The results in table 36 show that 1.8% of the respondents disapproved the statement “I take a positive attitude toward myself”. 1.4% of the respondents agreed with the statement “I certainly feel useless at times”. 1.4% of the respondents agreed that “I feel that I have a number of good qualities”. When the students were asked about their feelings 1.4% disagreed with the statement “I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others” while 1.1% also disagreed with the statement “I feel I do not have much to be proud of”. The statement “I wish I could have more respect for myself” was disagreed on by 1.4% of the respondents. 1.4% of the respondents disagreed on the statement “I am able to do things as well as most other people”. From the table it can be seen that 1.4% of the respondents disagreed with the statement “All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure”. 1.4% of the students agreed with the statement “At times I think I am no good at all”. Surprisingly 1.1% of the respondents disagreed with “On the whole, I am satisfied with myself” The implication of this is that the respondent’s feelings, thoughts and emotions can often overshadow their judgment (Elder, 2018).

The results show that the respondents experience feelings of helplessness and hopelessness, and that they often have a decreased sense of self-identity. It just might be a lack of confidence in the respondents, a fear that they are not good enough, or an inability to find happiness in them without finding it in external sources. However, Andreassen *et al.* (2017) depicts that “Employment provides a sense of purpose, of belongingness,” those who are unemployed lack that purpose. There are strong indications that unemployed fathers/male guardians, are not meeting the educational needs of their students and hence affects their self-esteem negatively. These conditions, according to Doodman *et al.* (2017) create a range of unemployment causes like stress, which ultimately has long-term physiological health effects. These conditions can have negative consequences for people’s mental health, including depression, anxiety and lower self-esteem. There are several mechanisms by which unemployment could harm health (Roberts 2013). This could be possible as Rossi and Rossi (2018) concluded that it’s through stress and reduced self-esteem arising from the loss of day-to-day structure of work or the stigma associated with unemployment, as a result of financial hardship, insecurity and reduced future earnings potential, leaving people with stress which damages health. Policymakers’ therefore need to take interest in unemployment, particularly for parents so as to avoid the stressful situations that affect the respondents.

The findings indicate that unemployment should be associated with diminished well-being among individuals with low self-esteem, but should be less damaging to the well-being of individuals with high self-esteem. Thus self-esteem is expected to moderate the role of employment status and depressive affect, morale and anxiety. These results are consistent with findings of study by Barrett (2018) which found that unemployed or low-income parents tend to see themselves as incapable because they cannot meet the needs of their children and families. Inadequate resources create conflict in the home. Moreover, Rossi and Rossi (2018) asserted that when parents do not fulfill their basic duties, children are likely to suffer the consequences. Roberts (2013) said that warmth and affection from parents in the students' environment was an important physiological need. If the need was unfulfilled, such children reported themselves as hostile and aggressive, dependent or defensively independent, impaired in self-esteem and self-adequacy, emotionally unresponsive, emotionally unstable and had a negative worldview.

Table 37 shows the results of cross-tabulation determining the role of fathers'/ male guardian unemployed status on the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students. Parental employment status was categorized into employed, self-employed and unemployed. While self-esteem was measured as low, medium and high. Cross-tabulation results show that students from the unemployed father/male guardian and the employed mother/female guardian parents tend to see themselves as incapable. These results are consistent with findings of study by Barrett (2018) which found that unemployed or low-income parents tend to see themselves as incapable because they cannot meet the needs of their children and families. Inadequate resources create conflict in the home. Moreover, Rossi and Rossi (2018) asserted that when parents do not fulfill their basic duties, children are likely to suffer the consequences. Roberts (2013) said that warmth and affection from parents in the students' environment was an important physiological need. If the need was unfulfilled, such children reported themselves as hostile and aggressive, dependent or defensively independent, impaired in self-esteem and self-adequacy, emotionally unresponsive, emotionally unstable and had a negative worldview.

Self-esteem can be measured using both explicit and implicit measures, and both approaches find that most people tend to view themselves positively. One common explicit self-report measure of self-esteem is the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. Higher scores on the scale indicate higher self-esteem and low scores indicate lower self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965)

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This study sought to determine the role of parental marital status, parental education level and parental employment status on levels of self-esteem among undergraduate students in public universities in Kenya. This chapter is a conclusion to the study. It contains summary of the study and some general conclusions regarding the results. The chapter ends with recommendations regarding this study and for future studies.

5.2 Summary

University students in Kenya face a myriad of problems, which include drug abuse, deaths, relationship break ups and exam malpractice among others, which pose serious challenges in growth and development of the student. Psychological problems such as overwhelming anxiety, depression, loneliness, unrest, and somatic symptoms are quite prevalent among students with low self-esteem. This may lead to student's violation of the rights of others and of social norms as well as a disregard for authority among others. Feelings of self-worth develop very early in childhood; thus parents play a great role in determining what the child thinks about him or herself. A strong SE will act as a weapon against the challenges in life, the student will face. A low level of SE will inhibit development while a high level of SE will enhance it. As such, the study aims at looking into the role of selected parental characteristics on levels of self-esteem among undergraduate students in Universities in Kenya.

To tackle this problem, the researcher used a descriptive survey research whereby 840 fourth-year students at the University of Kabanga (the university was chosen randomly to represent all public universities in Kenya) which included 540 males and 300 female university fourth-year undergraduate students were targeted. The Fourth Year students were chosen since they are thought to have been at the university long enough to provide knowledge on the trend of esteem difficulties as well as wholesome experience to share. The study utilized stratified random sampling technique. For this study 540 male and 300 female students were proportionately distributed to include 174 male and 97 female students from which a sample of 271 students was obtained. The questionnaire was modeled on the findings of chapter two of this study, and was subjected to through validation by two experts who are familiar with the study area before use. To ensure reliability of the instruments, 30 university students (Egerton University) responded to it, and the items achieved Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha of .953

The first objective of the study was to determine the role of parental marital status on levels of self-esteem among undergraduate students in public universities in Kenya. The research question for this objective stated: What is the role of parental marital status on levels of self-esteem among undergraduate students in Public Universities in Kenya? The parental marital status was divided into; single and married. The findings reveal that 20.9% of respondents from single families disagreed with the statement “I take a positive attitude toward myself”. The statement that “I am able to do things as well as most other people” was disagreed by 20.6% of the respondents. Results indicate that majority of respondents disapproved the statements “I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others”(20.2%) , “On the whole, I am satisfied with myself” (20.2%) and “ I wish I could have more respect for myself”(20.2%). When the respondents were asked if they felt that they have a number of good qualities, 20.2% of them agreed. This suggests that constant self-criticism can lead to persistent feelings of sadness, depression, anxiety, anger, shame or guilt.

The main issue emerging from the data is that students emphasize personal feelings and expectations as feel down, expect failure, and doubt their abilities. These are words said when about to give up and a show of lack of faith in the self. This is explained by the sizeable number of respondents citing not being optimistic about situations, interactions, and themselves. The study established that most of the respondents who had stayed in married parenthood were optimistic about life, full of confidence and were pleasant with discomfort having a response of 74.8% and 74.1% respectively. Findings also suggested that the upbringing of the child in intact families, single –parent may or may not alter the self-esteem of an individual. The results indicated that parental marital status played a major role on the level of SE among undergraduate students based on self-esteem statements. This finding emphasizes the relevance of family structure and stability in shaping young people' self-esteem. The review above has clearly indicated that parental marital status plays a significant role in influencing students' SE.

The second objective of the study was to determine the role of parental education level on the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students in Public Universities in Kenya. The study established that most of the respondents who had stayed in Mothers'/ Female Guardian no Schooling had feelings of inferior to others and valued the opinions of others above their own having a response of 1% and 0% respectively. The results show that 15.7% of the respondents, whose father/male guardian had no schooling, are inclined to feel that they are a failure. The

main issue emerging from the data is that the respondents emphasize on negative affect than subjects high in confidence. This is explained by the sizeable number of respondents citing not being on purpose but their feelings, thoughts and emotions often overshadow their judgment. However, results also indicate that some students, (15.4%), disagreed that they feel they have a number of good qualities therefore feel liked, accepted, and confident even though their fathers/ male guardians never went to school. Respondents with mothers'/ female guardian primary education level results indicate that 4.4% of the students disagreed with the statement "I wish I could have more respect for myself". The statement "I feel that I have a number of good qualities" was fully supported by 4.3% of the respondents. 4.3% of the respondents also disagreed on the statements. The main issue emerging from the data is that respondents are unpleasant with discomfort, making assumptions and are self-judgmental.

Results showing the role of fathers'/ male guardian with primary education level on the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students indicate that the respondents agreed with only one statement "I certainly feel useless at times" 1.3%. This is a surprising finding considering that being negative makes things quite worse and that constant self-criticism can lead to persistent feelings of sadness, depression anxiety, anger, shame or guilt. The results showing role of the secondary level of education of the mother/female guardian on the level of self-esteem of the students indicate that 28.6% of the respondents disagreed with the statement "I feel that I am a person of worth at least on an equal plane with others". However, 28.3% positively identified with the statement "I am able to do things as well as most other people". 27.9% of the respondents disagreed with the statement "I feel I do not have much to be proud of" while 27.5% students disapproved the statement "all in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure". When the students were asked whether they take a positive attitude toward themselves, 27.5% of them disagreed. This suggests that the respondents are not living their life to the fullest and exploiting their talents and abilities to the best of their knowledge however respondents are also having an accurate and balanced self-view. Meaning the students with a healthy self-esteem may help them recognize and accept their abilities, flaws, strengths and weaknesses. Educated parents can better communicate with their children about schoolwork and knowledge being taught at school.

Results of role of fathers'/ male guardian with secondary education level on the Level of students SE indicate that 20.3% of the respondents disagreed with the statement "I am able to do things as well as most other people", "I feel I do not have much to be proud of" was

disapproved by 20.3% of the respondents and that “I wish I could have more respect for myself” 20.3% of the respondents also disagreed with the statement. It is so, yet 20.2% of the students disagreed with the statement “I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others”. 19.9% of the students’ disagreed that, “I feel that I have a number of good qualities”,” All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure”19.9% of the students disagreed. “I take a positive attitude toward myself” also 19.9% of the respondents disagreed. The implication of this is that half of the respondents are respectful, confident and have good qualities. This results in good interpersonal relationships, which are defined by understanding of one another, the avoidance of unpleasant words or emotional outbursts, and correct communication.

The view of 20.2% of the respondents that the students are not people of worth, at least on an equal plane with others suggests that they are judgmental on themselves to be inferior to their peers and that they are critical of themselves. Low self-esteem expresses a feeling that one cannot cope, face life’s challenges and that he/she is not fit to function as a person. To a person with low esteem life means pain, under performance, complains, have no control over their impulses, and this explains why most of the victims contemplate committing suicide. Negative feelings the constant self-criticism can lead to persistent feelings of sadness, depression and self- judgment to be inferior to their peers while ignoring their positive qualities. After all, children are not born with negative or positive self-talk, it is formed through their primitive developmental years and is commonly a reflection of their interaction with their parents. Parents will only exemplify what they personally know to be true in their own life. However, if parents reject their own goodness, then their children are surely going to develop a similar set of attitudes about themselves.

The results of mothers'/ female guardian post-secondary education level show that 44% of the respondents disagreed with the statement "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself". The statement "I feel that I have a number of good qualities" was supported by 43.8% of the respondents. When the respondents were asked about their attitude 43.8% disagreed with the statement "I take a positive attitude toward myself". It can be noted that 43.4% of the respondents also disagreed with the statement "I wish I could have more respect for myself". The major issue emerging from the data is that half of the respondents show an indication of self-awareness, courage and confidence however, a few also indicate that they miss a lot of things and opportunities that life presents before them. This is explained by the sizeable number of respondents citing personal issues like feeling good, satisfied, respect and positive attitude while those citing negativity such as feeling a failure, not having much to be proud of, taking a negative attitude toward self, and settling in comfort zone about having a number of good qualities as being the main self-esteem statements.

The results of fathers'/ male guardian with post-secondary education level show that 56.1% of the respondents disagreed with the statement "I take a positive attitude toward myself". 55.6% of the students disagreed with the statement "I am able to do things as well as most other people. 54.9% of the respondents disagreed that "I wish I could have more respect for myself", "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself", 54.9% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. When the respondents were asked about their feelings, 54.9% disapproved the statement "I feel that I have a number of good qualities". The statement "I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others" was disagreed by 54.9% of the respondents. This implies that majority of the respondents with fathers'/ male guardian with post-secondary education level have an accurate and balanced self-view despite having negative attitude towards themselves. People with healthy self-esteem recognize and accept their abilities and their flaws, their strengths and their weaknesses and also hold realistic expectations for themselves and others. The main issue emerging from the data is that most of the respondents are assertive, confident, and resilient and are optimistic about life.

Objective three sought to determine the role of parental employment status on the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students in Public Universities in Kenya. The study found lower self-esteem in children whose mothers were un-employed while children whose mothers were self-employed had higher self-esteem. There are strong indications that unemployed

fathers/male, guardians are not meeting the educational needs of their students and hence affects their self-esteem negatively. The findings indicate that unemployment should be associated with diminished well-being among individuals with low self-esteem, but should be less damaging to the well-being of individuals with high self-esteem. The results show that the respondents experience feelings of helplessness and hopelessness, and that they often have a decreased sense of self-identity. The implication of this is that most of these students' thoughts and behaviors are largely determined by their programming, which is the result of their experiences, their environment, and the messages they received from those around them.

Therefore, by building high self-esteem to the students is one of the most important aspects in learning and parents can take to ensure that students will get affect to the criticism from other people despite the parental marital status, parental education level and employment status of their parents. Youth and adults who perceived themselves as rejected appeared to be disposed toward behavior problems and conduct disorders, depressed and became involved in drug and alcohol among other problems. The findings may be of great assistance to university administration in understanding SE as a factor that may be responsible for students' behavior in the university, and thus find intervention aimed at helping students develop positive SE, as well as consider when designing university policy to improve student welfare. Student counselors may be able to develop new tactics and approaches (enhancing or establishing interventions that meet the requirements of students with low self-esteem) for strengthening guidance and counseling programs.

5.3 Conclusions

This study investigated the role of parental marital status, parental education level and parental employment status on levels of self-esteem among undergraduate students in public universities in Kenya. It was carried out among fourth-year undergraduate students since they are thought to have been at the university long enough to provide knowledge on the trend of esteem difficulties as well as wholesome experience to share. On the basis of the study findings, the following conclusions based on different individual objectives were made:

- (i) The study established that most of the respondents who had stayed in married parenthood were optimistic about life, full of confidence and were pleasant with discomfort having a response of 74.8% and 74.1% respectively.
- (ii) The study established that most of the respondents who had stayed in Mothers'/ Female Guardian no Schooling had feelings of inferior to others and valued the opinions of others above their own having a response of 1% and 0% respectively.
- (iii) Respondents whose mothers'/ female guardian had primary level of education are unpleasant with discomfort, making assumptions and are self- judgmental.
- (iv) The results on cross- tabulation determining the role of mothers'/ female guardian secondary education level on the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students showed that; sometimes it's difficult for the respondents to accept compliments, as they tend to focus on their perceived weaknesses rather than their assets.
- (v) Respondents whose mothers'/ female guardian had post-secondary level of education showed that half of the respondents show an indication of self-awareness, courage and confidence however, a few also indicate that they miss a lot of things and opportunities that life presents before them.
- (vi) The study findings show that parents play a vital role in helping the children to acquire sound self-esteem. Most low self-esteem stems out from unfortunate childhood experiences.
- (vii) Results on father/male guardian no-schooling level of education indicate that the respondents emphasizes on negative affect than subjects high in confidence. This is explained by the sizeable number of respondents citing not being on purpose but their feelings, thoughts and emotions often overshadow their judgment. For example feeling worthless, thinking they are not good enough, a failure, negative attitude and generally making assumptions or judging others.
- (viii) The results fathers'/ male guardian primary level of education show that the respondents agreed with only one statement "I certainly feel useless at times"1.3%. This is a surprising finding considering that being negative makes things quite worse and that constant self-criticism can lead to persistent feelings of sadness, depression anxiety, anger, shame or guilt.
- (ix) Results of fathers'/ male guardian with secondary education level, indicates that half of the respondents are respectful, confident and have good qualities. This results in good interpersonal relationships, which are defined by understanding of

one another, the avoidance of unpleasant words or emotional outbursts, and correct communication.

- (x) Majority of the respondents with fathers'/ male guardian with post-secondary education level have an accurate and balanced self-view despite having negative attitude towards them.
- (xi) The findings indicate that unemployment should be associated with diminished well-being among individuals with low self-esteem, but should be less damaging to the well-being of individuals with high self-esteem.
- (xii) The role of father's self-employment status among the respondents is key, especially to their thought and behavior programming, because of the confidence the students can take towards the employment status of their parents.
- (xiii) The implication of this is that most of these students with mother/female self-employed status feel better about them some days and have an accurate and balanced self-view. The students view themselves positively and accept their abilities, strengths and weaknesses.
- (xiv) Students from the unemployed father/male guardian and the employed mother/female guardian parents tend to see themselves as in capable. Respondents whose father/male guardian are self-employed focus on their perceived weaknesses rather than their assets and are often afraid of failure and believe everyone else is better than they are a sign of low self-esteem.

5.4 Recommendations for the Study

- i) This finding emphasizes the relevance of family structure and stability in shaping young people' self-esteem.
- ii) Student counselors have consideration in improving and introducing interventions that suit student SE needs, concerning the students and also change of strategies when it comes to guiding and counseling of these students, on interventions that aim at enhancing parent-child involvement, which will go a long way in developing HSE among the students'.
- iii) The Ministry of Higher Education should develop specific policies targeting undergraduate students' self-esteem in all Universities in Kenya to enhance their well-being.

- iv) Educational institutions may consider developing family support programs and workshops aimed at improving family ties and communication.
- v) Universities can contribute to their students' well-being and personal development by recognizing and addressing the relevance of family dynamics, resulting in a more favourable academic experience.
- vi) Treatment providers can emphasize the importance of programs that promote confidence and competence in students' own skills as a vital component in successful learning and academic advancement.

5.5 Further Research

The study was limited to University of Kabianga in Kericho County only. This restricts the generalization of the outcomes to other Universities in other counties:

- i) This research selectively captured parental characteristics and self-esteem among undergraduate students in University of Kabianga, which is a public institution. Therefore, further research can be done to capture other institutions like private universities in other regions to establish whether the findings were the same.

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APPENDICES:

Appendix A: Published paper on objective one



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Relationship Between Parental Marital Status and Levels of Self-Esteem Among Undergraduate Students in Public Universities in Kenya: A Case of University of Kabianga

Teresa N. Kucher, Ezra K. Maritim, Catherine Mumiukha

Abstract

Kenyan universities have experienced a growing phenomenon of student's unrest, drug abuse, deaths, relationship break ups, exam malpractice among others which pose serious challenges in the growth and development of the students. Feelings of self-worth develop very early in childhood, thus parents and guardians play a great role in determining what the child thinks about him or her self. Self-esteem of children from either single or married parent families is important as it has a direct impact on the child's behavior in school. This study investigated the influence of parental marital status on students' self-esteem in universities. Causal-comparative research design guided the study. The target population included 840 fourth year students from the University of Kabianga. Proportionate stratified sampling and simple random sampling was utilized to identify a sample size of 271 male and female students. Data was collected by use of a questionnaire. The study established a statistically significant difference ($t(2,386) = 115.788, p < 0.05$) between parental marital status and the level of self-esteem among undergraduate students in University of Kabianga. Students from married parent families recorded higher level of self-esteem to students from single parent family. The study concludes that parental marital status has a positive relationship on undergraduate students' self-esteem in universities. The study also recommends strategies to improve students' levels of self-esteem. The students should seek and train for self-esteem based counseling even when they are not encountering serious problems. University student counselors to develop SE special counseling programs and activities on psychological and psychosocial issues.

Keywords: Self-Esteem, Parental Marital Status

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Appendix B: Introduction Letter

Office of the Vice-Chancellor

University of Kabianga

KERICHO

26th March, 2021

From Teresa N. Kucher

ESM16/04004/14

Approved
Mooch
21/5/21



RE: REQUEST FOR – PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA FROM THE FOURTH YEAR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF UNIVERSITY OF KABIANGA- MAIN CAMPUS.

I am a master's student in the department of psychology, Counseling and Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education and Community Studies, Egerton University. My research title is: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELECTED PARENTAL CHARACTERISTICS AND LEVELS OF SELF-ESTEEM AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA: A CASE OF UNIVERSITY OF KABIANGA- I hereby request for the above permission to enable the researcher proceed for data collection from fourth year undergraduate students of the esteemed institution University of Kabianga which was selected randomly to represent all other public universities. Attached please find the Research Permit-NACOSTI, my national identification card and the research ethical approval certificate for your perusal.

Your kind assistance will be appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

T. Kucher

Teresa N. Kucher



Appendix C: Research Ethical Clearance

EGERTON

TEL: (051) 2217808
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UNIVERSITY

P. O. BOX 536
EGERTON

EGERTON UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

EU/RE/DVC/009

Approval No. EUREC/APP/115/2021

22nd February, 2021

Kucher Teresa Nyang'anyi

P.O Box 7437-20100

Telephone-- 0722976303

E-mail... teresakuch58@gmail.com

Dear Teresa,

RE: ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPROVAL: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELECTED PARENTAL CHARACTERISTICS AND LEVELS OF SELF-ESTEEM AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA: A CASE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF KABIANGA


This is to inform you that *Egerton University Research Ethics Committee* has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is *EUREC/APP/115/2021*. The approval period is *22nd February, 2021 –23rd February, 2022*.


This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements;

- i. Only approved documents including (informed consents, study instruments, MTA) will be used
- ii. All changes including (amendments, deviations, and violations) are submitted for review and approval by *Egerton University Research Ethics Committee*.
- iii. Death and life threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to *Egerton University Research Ethics Committee* within 72 hours of notification
- iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affected safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to *Egerton University Research Ethics Committee* within 72 hours

"Transforming Lives through Quality Education"


Appendix D: Research Permit


REPUBLIC OF KENYA


NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: 295177 Date of Issue: 18/March/2021

RESEARCH LICENSE




This is to Certify that Ms. Teresa Nyanganyi Kueher of Egerton University, has been licensed to conduct research in Kerticho on the topic: **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELECTED PARENTAL CHARACTERISTICS AND LEVELS OF SELF-ESTEEM AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA: A CASE OF UNIVERSITY OF KABANGA** for the period ending : 18/March/2021.


License No: NACOSTEP/21/9426

295177

Applicant Identification Number


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Appendix E: Students' Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

Please respond to each of the following items in all the three sections, by ticking next to the answer you consider most appropriate e.g. √.

Section One: Student's Personal Details

1. What is your age group? 20-22 23 -2 5 25 and above
2. What is your gender? Male Female
3. Do you have any societal or cultural beliefs that are attached to your family based on where you were raised? Yes No

Section Two: Student parent interaction

4. Which parent do you interact with the most?
 Mother Father Female guardian Male guardian
5. What is the marital status of your parent?
 Single Married
6. Which parent raised you up?
 Mother Father Both mother and father
 Guardian Self Children's home
 Church /Religious institution
7. What is the educational level of your Mother /Female guardian?
 No Schooling Primary Secondary Post-secondary
8. What is the educational level of your Father /Male guardian?
 No Schooling Primary Secondary Post-secondary
9. What is the employment status of your Mother /Female guardian?
 Employed Self-employed Unemployed
10. What is the employment status of your Father /Male guardian?
 Employed Self-employed Unemployed

Section Three: Student's Self-esteem Scale

11. Please indicate whether you strongly agree, Agree, Disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following 10 statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Tick only one answer for each statement.

SN	Statement	Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Not Sure 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
12.	I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.					
13.	At times I think I am no good at all.					
14.	I feel that I have a number of good qualities.					
15.	All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.					
16.	I am able to do things as well as most other people.					
17.	I feel I do not have much to be proud of.					
18.	I take a positive attitude toward myself.					
19.	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.					
20.	I wish I could have more respect for myself.					
21.	I certainly feel useless at times.					

End.

Thank you for your cooperation