

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-CONCEPT AND ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OL-JORO-
OROK DIVISION OF NYANDARUA DISTRICT, KENYA.**

BY

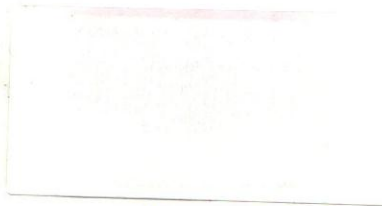
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A Research Project Report submitted to the Graduate School in Partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Award of the Master of Education Degree in Guidance and
Counseling of Egerton University.

EGERTON UNIVERSITY

JULY, 2005



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2008/76104X

DECLARATION

I declare that this research project report is my original work and has not been previously published or presented for the award of a degree in any other university.



Date 28/7/05

Charles M. Gichuru

RECOMMENDATION

This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as university supervisor.



Date 28/7/05

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DEDICATION

To my son Allan Gichuru, that he may aspire, for greater levels of Academic excellence.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My humble gratitude to the Almighty God for his guidance and providence, especially for provision of good health during the entire period. I have been working on the Masters Programme.

Special thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Chepchieng for his guidance, and encouragement, during the research period, may God bless him for his efforts and thoroughness. Special thanks also to Dr. Omulema and Dr. Fr. Mbugua for their guidance and instruction throughout the course work period.

I am most grateful, to my wife Margaret, who did a lot in typesetting and editing of the project proposal as well as the project report. I am also grateful to Mrs. Mwaniki of Kilimo High School and Mr. Owen, of Egerton University for their assistance in the data analysis.

I am grateful to my parents, and family, for sacrifice and their encouragement through out the period of my course, and all my friends and colleagues who in one way or the other contributed to the success of my work during the entire period of my course. May God bless them all in a very special way.

ABSTRACT

Students' academic performance is an issue of paramount importance, in our education system. Good performance in national examinations is the gateway to higher education and a satisfying career. A lot of work has been done, and research carried out, to find out the major factors that influence students' academic performance. The issue of academic performance has remained an issue of concern for, students, teachers, parents and education stakeholders. However, the major factors influencing student's academic performance could likely be within the student him/herself. The purpose of this study therefore was to find out the relationship between Self-concept of students and their academic performance. This study was a survey in which 140 students from secondary schools on Ol joro-orok division of Nyandarua District were the respondents. This figure was sampled out from a population of 350 students in form four in secondary schools in the division. Stratified random sampling technique was used to obtain the sample for the study. A self-concept rating scale was used in the collection of required data. Student's academic progress reports were used as source of information on academic performance. Data obtained was quantitative thus inferential statistics that include Karl Pearson correlation coefficient and t-test were used. The indicated statistical techniques assisted in testing the significance level of the stated hypotheses. The significance level was set at $\alpha=0.05$. The analysis was performed using version 11.5 of the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS).The study established that there is a significant relationship between student self concept and academic performance. It therefore recommended that school counselors should organize self-concept enhancement programmes in learning institutions , to help the learners in developing positive self concepts.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

The assessment of students' attainment in learning is an integral part of any educational process (Bogonko, 1992). Examinations have therefore been a major part of Kenya's education system. In 1985, the Kenyan education system changed from the 7:4:2:3 system to the 8:4:4 system which meant that learners had to undergo 8 years in primary school, 4 years in secondary school and 4 years at the university. Kenya embarked on this system with the hope that at the end of every stage, students would be capable of being selected to further education and/or enter into gainful employment. In effect, examinations were inevitable for selection and certification purposes. Therefore, every year thousands of students sit for the primary and secondary examinations.

These examinations are done at the end of the eighth and fourth year of primary and secondary education respectively. Surprisingly, there has been a lot of variation in the performance of students in the examinations among and within schools in the country. This is real despite the fact that students follow a common syllabus, and are of comparable abilities and have studied together in the same class through out their primary or secondary education.

Poor performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (K.C.S.E) for example, means that a student will miss the opportunity for higher education and gainful employment. Infact, Mutero (2001) remarked that, in a modern context, the driving force behind every parent's effort to take a child though all the level of education is the child's ultimate employability within the modern economy. It is for this reason that researchers

have been concerned with the questions of what factors are responsible for variation in academic performance in the education system in Kenya. Factors that have been identified by researchers (Maundu, 1980 ; Chepchieng, & Kiboss, 2004) as possible causes for the variation in academic performance among students include the following:

- i. Intelligence of students
- ii. Students need to achieve in school
- iii. Anxiety level of the students
- iv. Student Discipline
- v. Home environment factors
- vi. Learning facilities in schools
- vii. Teachers qualifications
- viii. Nature of tests

Whereas these factors have been recognized as possible contributions to the variation in academic performance, research has also been done to show the relationship between the students' self-concept and his/her academic performance. For instance, Marsh and Yeung (1997) found that not only can adolescence level of academic self-concept affect their later performance in school, but also their self-concepts are influenced by their prior academic achievements as indicated by their grades and test scores. Moreover, Byrne (1990) had earlier showed that academic self-concept was more effective than was academic performance in differentiating between poor and good performing students. Hamachek (1995) also asserts that self-concept and school achievement seem to be related. In addition, Berliner (1992) suggested that self-concept can impact a students expectation about future success based on the students past experiences. This expectation about future

success can be driving force towards the students' efforts to continue attaining better scores and grades in examinations.

In another longitudinal study examining a national sample of adolescents in the United States, it was found out that a link between students test scores and grades, and their levels of self-concept exist (Marsh, 1994). This study found that the students who score well on tests tend to receive higher grades in school, which in turn leads to their having higher levels of self-concept. Hence the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement seems to be reciprocal in nature, with each affecting the other.

Therefore it is against this background that the study endeavoured to establish whether students' self-concept and academic performance in secondary schools in Oljoro-orok division are related.

1.2 Statement of the problem

A central feature in the education system in Kenya is the academic performance. This is because good performance leads to higher educational opportunities which in turn become essentials for securing opportunities in both private and public sectors of our economy. However, few students manage to meet the minimum requirements of entry to higher education compared to the large number of students who sit for the examinations every year. Usually, there are a myriad of factors that contribute to students' poor academic performance. However, for this study, self-concept has been considered as a factor that is likely to influence academic performance. This is because self-concept has been known to influence the whole of an individual's life. Consequently, negative self-concept, in students may result in anticipation of failure and perceived lack of ability which may result in lower academic performance. Academic performance of students enrolled in

schools within Oljoro-orok division has not been good over the years. There was need therefore to investigate the extent to which students' self-concept contribute to the observed poor students performance in national examinations in the division of study.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between self-concept and academic performance among secondary schools students in Ol joro-orok division of Nyandarua district.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- i. Determine the relationship between students' self-concept and academic performance.
- ii. Establish whether gender differences exist in self-concept among secondary school students
- iii. Find out whether gender differences exist in academic performance among secondary school students

1.5 Hypotheses of the study

The following were the stated hypotheses of the study:

- H₀₁: There is no statistically significant relationship between students' self-concept and academic performance
- H₀₂: There is no statistically significant gender difference in self-concept among secondary school students.

Findings: There is no statistically significant gender difference in academic performance among secondary school students.

1.6 Significance of the study

It was hoped that the study would help to develop greater insights into the influence of self-concept of students, on academic performance, in secondary schools. Therefore, the findings obtained may be of much help to school counsellors and teachers in secondary schools in helping students develop positive self-conceptions. The findings of the study may give insights to Education officers in understanding of self-concept as a factor that may be responsible for poor performance in national examinations in the schools within their jurisdictions.

1.7 Scope of the study

This study covered secondary schools in Oljoro-orok division of Nyandarua district, Kenya. It sought to investigate student's self-concept, and its relationship with academic performance. The respondents were form four students in selected secondary schools in the division.

1.8 Assumptions of the study.

It was assumed that the responses of the respondents were genuine and a true expression of their feelings and self-understanding. It was also assumed that other factors were not responsible for poor academic performance in the division.

1.9 Definition of terms

In this study, the following terms were operationally defined:

Academic performance: performance in school examinations as reflected in examination grades averaged for two years(six terms)

Achievement: knowledge or skills developed by a student through specific training or instruction.

Adolescence: the period of life from puberty to the completion of physical growth.

Gender: The state of a student being male or female

Discipline: Student's conduct in school, with regard to school rules and regulations.

Form four: the fourth year of study in secondary school.

Motivation: Driving force within a student based on her self-understanding that drives him or her towards a goal.

Self-concept: student's sense of identity, including a sense of what ones skill and personal attributes are. Includes also the students self esteem or value placed on self.

Self-esteem: a students feelings of worthiness or unworthiness about himself or herself.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The study sought to find out the relationship between the self-concept of students in secondary school, and their academic performance. Therefore, the primary purpose of this chapter was to review the literature on definition of self-concept, development of self-concept. Self-concept and academic achievement, benefits of self-concept, gender difference in self-concept among students and theoretical framework of the study.

2.2 Definition of self-concept.

Self-concept is one of the major variables in this study. According to Wylie (1961) ones theoretical orientation governs ones definitions and measurement of self-concept. In the author's views, self-concept can be thought of as an organized configuration of perceptions of the self which is composed of such elements as the perceptions of ones characteristics, attitudes, preferences, ideas, feelings, abilities and concepts of the self in relation to others and to the environment. In fact, Coppersmith and Feldman (1974) states that

"Self-concept consists of beliefs, hypothesis and assumptions that the individual has about himself. It is the person's views of himself as conceived and organized from his inner vantage. The self-concept includes the persons ideas of the kind of person he/she is and the characteristic he posses and his most important striking characteristic" (p.198)

This definition stresses the individual conception of what he/she is really like or his/her actual self. Markus and Wurf (1987) state that the most dramatic advances in research on the self-concept can be found in work on its structure, and concept. Historically, one of the major stumbling blocks to linking the self-concept to behaviour has been the view of self-

concept as a stable, generalized, or average view of self. Research in social psychology has resolved the problem by conceptualizing of self-concept as a multifaceted phenomenon composed of a set of images, schemes, and prototypes (Greenwald and Pratkanis, 1984; Schlenker, 1980). There has been a similar movement in sociology where the self is defined in terms of multiple identities (Schlenker, 1985; Stryker, 1980). Identities include personal characteristics, features and experiences as well as roles and social status. In both streams of research, researchers define the self-concept in terms of self-representations. Their work indicates that some self-representations are more important than others (Schlenker, 1980). Some are representations of what the self is perceived to be, versus what the self would like to be (Markus & Wurf, 1987) some are core conceptions cannot be while others are more peripheral, and some are relatively stable. Self-concept cannot be directly observed but it can only be inferred from a person's behaviour or self reported data (Muola, 2000).

2.3 Development of Self-concept

Goffman (1972) views the development of self-concept as a result of role played by others as well as the individual's development process. According to him, self-concept changes with the development process from infancy to adulthood.

The infant in his early stages is self-centered and perceives his/her world through senses governed by his/her biological needs. If the infant is kept comfortable and his/her responses attended to he/she begins to develop the notion that the world is a good place and that he/she is a good person. Such a notion may consequently lead to the development of feeling of self worth. On the other hand, if little is done to meet his/her needs and if he/she is not kept comfortable, he/she begins to think that he/she has little control over things and that the world is a hostile place. As a result he/she may develop feelings of

unworthiness (Mizola, 2000). Also, Gordon (1972) attempts to show that self-concept is not static; rather growth and experience affect it, different stages of development contribute to ones self-concept. Contexts such as school and significant others for example teachers may build or change the student's self-concept.

According to Brigham (1986) self-concept develops through the process of taking action and then reflecting on what has been done and what others say about what has been done. For instance, students reflect on what they have done and can do in comparison to their expectations and the expectations of others and to the characteristics and accomplishments of others. Self-concept is developed by the individual through interaction with the environment and reflecting on that interaction. This dynamic aspect of self-concept (and by corollary, self esteem) is important because it indicates that it can be modified or changed (Franken, 1994).

Research in psychology (Greenwald & Prantkanis, 1984) has conceptualized the self-concept as a multifaceted phenomenon composed of a set of images, schemes and prototypes (Markus & Wurf, 1987). There has been a similar movement in sociology where the self is defined in terms of multiple identities (Schlenker, 1980, & Stryker 1982.) Identities according to the authors include personal characteristics, features and experiences, as well as roles and social status.

In several works of research, self-concept is defined in terms of various self-representations. The research indicates that some representations are more important than others (Schlenker, 1980, 1984) some are representations of what the self is perceived to

be, versus what the self would like to be (Markus & Wurf, 1987). Some are core conceptions or salient identities (Stryker, 1980).

2.2.1 Development of the perceived self

Most models and description of the self involve elements of self perceptions; one of the earliest theorists writing on the nature of the self was James (1890). He saw the self as consisting of whatever the individual views as belonging to himself, which includes material, a social and a spiritual self. The perceptions of the material self are those of ones body, family and possessions. The social self includes the views others have of the individual and the spiritual includes perceptions of ones emotions, and desires. Individual hold perceptions of themselves in terms of traits and values, experiences thought and actions (Cantor & Kilistrom, 1985, 1987) and their physical appearance, and dispositions of various sorts (Gecas, 1982)

Self perceptions are determined through interaction with ones environment. Process of attitude formation, attitude change, and self attribution all contribute to the development of a set of self perceptions (Jones, 1990). Two primary forms of information one receives about the self from the environment come in the form of task feed back and social feedback. (Leonard & Scholl, 1995). Completion of a project, accomplishment of a goal, and winning a competition are all forms of task feedback.

2.2.2 Development of ideal Self.

While the perceived self describes the set of perceptions individuals hold of their actual traits, competencies, and values, the ideal self represents the set of traits, competencies, and values an individual would like to possess (Rogers, 1969). In the early stages of interaction with a reference group, whether the reference group is the primary group, for instance the family for a young child, or a secondary group, that is peers, or co-workers, choices and decisions are channeled through the existing social system. As an individual interacts with the reference group, he/she receives feedback from reference group members, if the feedback is positive, and unconditional the individual internalizes the traits, competencies and values which are important to the reference group. (Bandura 1986), in this case individual becomes inner directed, using his/her own failures or successes.

Franken (1994) suggests that self-concept is related to self-esteem in that people who have good self-esteem have a clearly differentiated self-concept. Thus when students know themselves, they can maximize outcomes because they know what they can and cannot do. The self-esteem is the evaluative component of the self-concept (Gergen, 1971). It is a function of the distance between the ideal self and the perceived self. When the perceived self matches the ideal self, self-esteem is relatively high; low self-esteem occurs when the perceived self is significantly lower than the ideal self. Self-esteem is therefore a dynamic component of the self-concept (Korman, 1970, Brodzinsky, 1979). Observed that, students self-esteem is essentially the self judgment of their abilities, influence and popularity.

2.4 Self-concept and Academic achievement.

According to Marsh (1992), there are several different components of self-concept; physical, academic, social and transpersonal. The physical component of self-concept relates to that which is concrete, what a student looks like, sex, height, weight and so forth. The academic component of self-concept relates to how well a student does in school, or how well a student learns. According to Byrne (1990), there are two levels of academic self-concept; a general academic self-concept of how a student is in school and a set of specific content related self-concept that describe how a student views himself/herself as relating to other people; and the transpersonal self-concept that describes, how a student may view himself relating to the supernatural world.

Marsh (1992) suggested that the relationship of self-concept to academic achievement is very specific. General self-concept and non academic aspect of self-concept are not related to academic work, general academic achievement measures are related to academic success. Special measures of subject related self-concept is highly related to success in that content area.

Using linear discriminate analysis, Byrne (1990) showed that academic self-concept was more effective than was academic achievement in differentiating between poor performing and good performing students. In addition Hamachek (1995) also asserts that relationship; does self-concept produce achievement are related. The major issue is the direction of the relationship; does self-concept produce achievement or does achievement produce self-concept? (Gage & Berliner, 1992). Further study found self-concept to be positively related to patterns of successful achievement in spelling, arithmetic and written language in young children Kenshner (1990). This was interpreted as support for the importance of

self-concept as a possible cause of academic achievement. This means that anything that promotes the self-concept of children should be encouraged so as to enhance academic performance.

According to Hamachek (1985), a positive self-concept will allow a person to take risks, tolerate ambiguity, face fears and engage in many activities whereas a low self-concept will create intense shyness, fear of adults and peers, over inflation of sarcasm and resistance to experimentation. Low self-esteem is associated with lack of self-confidence, stress, value, over dependence on others and less creativity (Rosenberg, 1965, Coppersmith, 1967)

While comparing boys in the fifth and sixth grades on different levels of self-esteem, Coppersmith (1967) found that the group, which expressed a high level of self-esteem, was leading class discussions more than listening. They also expressed their own opinions more than other groups. They were not afraid of disagreement and were not particularly sensitive to criticism.

According to Stangvic (1979) persons with positive self-concept are generally more effective and in general, achieve more at a given level of intelligence than do persons who take a more negative view of themselves. Stangvic further observed that relating self attitudes to academic performance leads us to view that positives represent a self fulfilling prophecy of success, negative eventuate in anticipation of failure and perceived lack of ability which eventuate in lower performance.

2.5 Gender difference in Self-concept among students.

In the African traditional culture, expectations for each sex were different and depended on the role one was expected to play in the society. Men were expected to play the economic roles while women were expected to play domestic and other feminine roles. As a result of that, when formal schooling was introduced in Africa, there was much emphasis on the education of the boy because he/she was seen as the potential head of the family and a breadwinner while the girl was prepared for feminine roles and successful marriage. This emphasis is still held by some people, (Muola, 2000). These stereotyped expectations in relation to sex roles may tend to be reflected in the attitudes of parents and society towards students. Such differences in attitude, treatment and expectations may influence the self-concept of male and female students in secondary schools.

According to Muola (2000), women in Africa may have difficulties in developing a positive self-concept because of cultural bias that has for a long time tended to hold them in low esteem. In a study of 432 senior primary school pupils, Maritim (1979) reported a significant difference in academic self-concept between boys and girls. In this case girls had a lower academic self-concept as compared to boys. He attributed the findings to the teacher's low perception of the ability of girls and the fact that girls perceived themselves as less competent as compared to boys.

In addition, Simmon (1975) found that self-esteem of boys and girls differed modestly. In the study, adolescent girls showed considerably higher instability of self-concept and were less certain about themselves and their ideas. In another research on self-esteem among minority and majority youth in Netherlands, Verkuyten (1995) found that the self-esteem of boys was significantly higher than that of girls. Boys were also found to have a more

self-concept in the same study. The sex difference in self-concept reported in these studies mentioned is expected to be reflected in general among students in secondary schools.

2.6 Theoretical framework ✓

Cognitive theorists (Piaget, 1967, Horrocks & Jackson, 1972) argue that a child is capable of possessing and constructing a meaningful self-concept when he/she enters Piaget's fourth stage that corresponds with the onset of adolescence. During this stage, he/she can develop and test cognitive hypothesis concerning his/her personal worth. This may suggest that the child's self-concept does not stabilize until this stage (Muola, 2000).

During the adolescence stage, the individual suffers from identity crisis and this is reflected in the kind of self-concept he/she develops. Through the process of self-identity the adolescence is capable of defining himself/herself in terms of what he/she is and what he/she is not. In other words he/she formulates hypothesis about what he/she is and goes ahead to test them and as a result gains more self-awareness.

The adolescent evaluates himself/herself, applies his/her value criteria and builds expectations about him/her in reception to various roles he/she adopts and arrives at a new self-concept by hypothesis. In effect, the relationship between cognitive development and the development of self-concept is firmly established. Therefore changes in cognitive development are directly related to changes in the way one perceives himself or herself. Harman (1990) strongly supports Piaget theory on the development of self-concept when he argues that entrance into a new life stage can change one's self-concept.

Another theorist who emphasized of the self was Abraham Maslow. In his humanistic theory, Maslow believed that each person has an essential nature. (Maslow, 1971). In Maslow's view, people have higher level of growth needs as the need for self actualization and understanding of self, but these higher needs only assume a dominant role in persons lives after more primitive needs (psychological needs safety needs for belonging and self esteem needs) are satisfied.

The motive of self-actualization according to Maslow is related to extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation.

Self-actualization refers to an individuals needs to develop his or her potentialities, in other words to do what he or she is capable of doing. "Self actualized" people therefore are people who make the fullest use of their capabilities. Self-actualization is the top need in a hierarchy of needs or motives (Maslow, 1970). The motive to self-actualize is the driving force behind a student's effort in academic achievement.

Wentz of motivation distinguish between internal self-concept-based motivation and external self-concept based motivation. (Leonard & Scholl, 1995)

(i) Internal Self-concept based Motivation

Self-concept motivation will be internally based when the individual is primarily inner directed. Internal self-concept motivation takes the form of the individual setting internal standards that become the basis for the ideal self. The individual tends to use fixed rather than ordinal standards of self measurements as he/she attempts to first, reinforce perceptions of competency, and later achieve higher levels of competency.

This need to achieve higher level of competency is similar to what McClelland (1961) refers to as high need for achievement, and what Maslow (1970) refers to as, need for self actualization.

The motivation force for individuals who are inner driven and motivated by their self-concept is task feed back. It is not important to these individuals that their efforts are vital in achieving outcomes. It is important that others provide reinforcing feedback as is true for other directed individuals. This process is similar to Deci (1975) idea of intrinsic motivation as representing one's attempt to seek out and overcome challenges.

(ii) External Self-concept based motivation

Self-concept-based motivation is externally based when the individual is primarily other-directed (Markus & Wurf, 1987). In this case, the ideal self is derived by adopting the role expectations of reference group. The individual attempts to meet the expectations of others by behaving in ways that will elicit social feedback consistent with self perceptions; (Leonard, Beauvais and Scholl, 1995). When positive feedback is obtained; the individual finds it necessary to communicate these results to members of the reference group. The individual behaves in the ways which satisfy reference group members, first to gain status. These two needs, for acceptance and status are similar to McClelland's (1961) need for affiliation and need for power, and to Maslow's (1970) need for acceptance and belonging.

The individual continually strives to earn the acceptance and status of reference group members. A student with external self-concept based motivation strives to earn the acceptance of teachers and parents as well as status in a peer group. This need for acceptance and belonging, acts as for academic motivation. According to Leonard (1995)

individuals experience both internally and externally –based self-concept motivation to varying degrees.

The motivation is intrinsic (Deci 1985) because the goals are internal feelings of effectiveness, competence, and self-regard is intrinsically motivated. Traditional models of academic motivation distinguished between intrinsic motivation (Deci, Ryan, 1985) more recent models of academic motivation examine the goal orientation of students. Goals are cognitive representations of student's purposes in different achievement situations. They are assumed to guide students behaviour, cognition, and social affect their academic work (McCormey 1995, Pintrich, Wenzel, 1991) of these orientations, social goals and academic goals play an important role in directing behaviour towards outcomes that individual students would like to achieve. The following diagram illustrates the interaction of variables, as explained in the theoretical framework of the study.

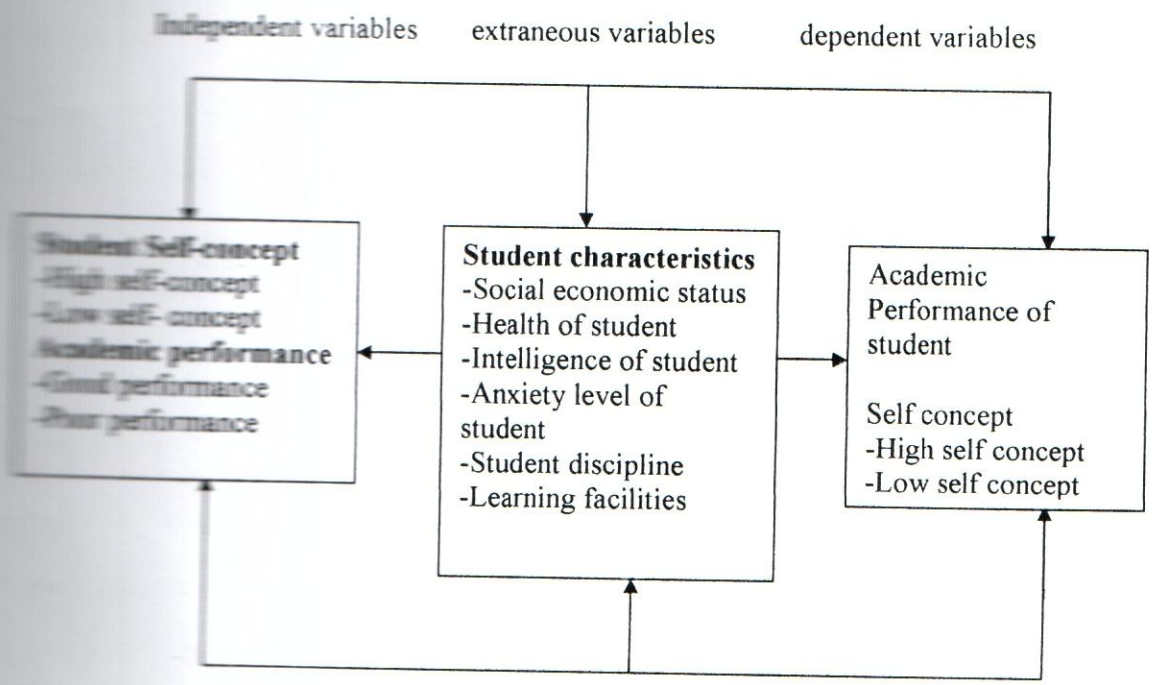


Fig 2.1: The relationship between academic performance and student self-concept

Previous research done on the relationship between student self-concept and academic performance suggest that there may be a relationship between the two variables: Earlier research has also suggested that the relationship between student's self-concept and academic performance may be reciprocal in nature, with one affecting the other. High self-concept may lead to good academic performance and good academic performance may results to high self-concept thus one variable may depend on or affect the other. The interaction of the two variables in the present study therefore is such that one is dependent on the other that is the interaction is reciprocal. The intervening variables are the students' characteristics such as social economic status and gender of the student.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, a description of research design, the target and accessible populations, sample size, sampling procedure and instruments that were used in the study are specified. A description of data collection procedures that were employed and the statistical methods that were adopted for data analysis are also presented.

3.2 Research design

The study utilized ex post facto co-relational research design. According to Kathuri and Pals (1993) this involves the collection of two or more sets of data from a group of subjects with the attempt to determine the subsequent relationship between those sets of data. The researcher collected a set of data regarding student's self-concept and academic performance. Again, in this research design no treatment was given to the respondent before collecting data from them. Therefore the data that was collected was already in existence. It had occurred naturally, thus the variables of the study (independent and dependent) were controlled as their manifestations had already occurred.

3.3 Location

This study was located within Ol joro-orok division of Nyandarua District. The location was chosen because of its familiarity to the researcher. The division has 9 secondary schools, one secondary school is a boy's district secondary school, one is a private girl's school, and the rest are district mixed secondary schools.

3.4 Population of the study

This study targeted form four secondary students, both male and female enrolled in four secondary schools within Ol joro-orok division. The division had nine schools with a population of 750 form four students. The accessible population was 350 students.

3.5 Sample size and sampling procedures:

Out of the nine secondary schools in the division, the researcher purposively chose four secondary schools; this is because of the accessibility of the schools. Among the four schools, were the boys` district school and the girls` private schools.

The sample was obtained through the formula used in calculating the sample as suggested by Kathuri and Pals (1993). The formula is as follows.

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

In which:

S = required sample size

N=given population size.

P=population proportion that for table construction has been assumed to be .50, as this magnitude yields maximum possible sample size required.

d= degree of accuracy as reflected by the amount of error that can be tolerated in the fluctuation of a sample proportion P about the proportion P the value being .05 in the calculation for entries in the table.

χ^2 = table value for chi-square for one degree of freedom relative to the desired level of confidence. The value is 3.841 for the .95 confidence level in the tablesThe working is as follows:

$$S = \frac{3.841 \times 350 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{(0.5)^2 \times (350-1) + 3.841 \times 0.5 \times 0.5} = 140$$

The respondents of the study were selected through stratified random sampling, this type of sampling was necessary because the population under study comprised both boys and girls, thus it was divided into two strata (boys and girls).

3.6 Instrumentation

A questionnaire in form of a Self-concept rating scale was administered to measure the student self-concept. This was a 5-point likert scale which was adopted from Muola (2000) with a reliability coefficient of 0.90 the self-concept rating scale was modified to suit the study and the respondents thus the items were reduced to fifty from eighty. Data regarding academic performance of students was obtained from academic progress of individual student this was average grade point obtained in a period of six terms (2 years). This was obtained from class teachers of the students in the study.

3.6.1 Pilot testing of research instruments

Before the instrument was used for actual study, it was pilot tested in a secondary school which was not be among those to be used in the actual study. This was for the purposes of establishing the validity and the reliability coefficient of the instruments. Cronbach coefficient alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of the items. This is a method of estimating reliability by use of a single administration of a test. The items were considered reliable after yielding a reliability co-efficient of 0.70. this figure is usually considered respectable and desirable for consistency levels. (Henerson, Morris & Fitz-Gibbon, 1987).

3.7 Data collection procedure

The researcher sought permission from the District Education office. Upon granting of permission the researcher visited the selected schools within Ol joro-orok Division in person, to make appointments with the school head teachers. The researcher asked for assistance from class teachers of the form four for sampling procedures and class grades. After sampling, the subjects were given the questionnaires and allowed to respond to the questionnaires. After completion, the respondents handed in their questionnaires to a central location, within the school. The researcher collected the questionnaires for data analysis.

3.8 Data analysis

The data that was collected was quantitative hence inferential statistics were used which included Karl Pearson and t-test. Descriptive statistics which included percentages and frequencies were also used. In the analysis, the relationship between self-concept, and academic performance was computed and also established whether differences in self-concept existed between boys and girls. The indicated statistical technique assisted in testing the significance level of the stated hypotheses. The significance level was set to be at $\alpha = 0.05$. The analysis was performed using the Statistical Package for Social sciences (SPSS) version 11.5.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the results of the data analysis, and discussion of the findings are presented. The findings and a discussion on the relationship between self- concept and academic performance of secondary school students are presented first. This is followed by the results and discussions on gender differences in self- concept among students in secondary school. Thirdly the findings and discussion on gender difference in academic performance among students in Ol Joro-orok Division is presented.

The data obtained from respondents was analysed with the help of the computer using version 11.5 of SPSS. Results are presented in this chapter using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The following hypotheses were tested by the study:

HO₁: There is no statistically significant relationship between students self-concept and Academic performance

HO₂: There is no significant gender difference in self-concept among students in Secondary school.

HO₃: There is no statistically significant gender difference in academic performance Among secondary school students.

4.2 Relationship between Students self-concept and Academic performance

The first null hypothesis stated that, "there is no statistically significant relationship between student's self-concept and academic performance". Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test this hypothesis. The results are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: The relationship between self-concept and academic performance

	Coefficient of correlation	Sig. (2 tailed)
Grade	.559**	.000
Self-concept	.559**	.000

** Correlation is significant at both 0.01 and 0.05 level

According to the results, a significant relationship between self-concept and academic performance was noted. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. The results revealed a correlation co-efficient of 0.559 which is a moderate positive correlation. Further analysis by cross tabulation revealed that there is a strong relationship between grade and self-concept. Results revealed that students who score high grades also had high scores in self-concept; On the other hand, students who scored low grades had low scores in self-concept as shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Grade and self-concept cross tabulation

		Self-concept			Total
		High	Moderate	Low	
Grade	A	5	2	-	7
	B	17	19	5	41
	C	6	36	18	60
	D	2	5	25	32
Total		30	70	40	140

According to Stangvic (1979) persons with positive or high self-concept are generally more effective and in general, achieve more at a given level of intelligence than do persons who take a more negative view of themselves. According to Stangvic, positive attitudes towards self represents a self fulfilling prophecy of success, negative attitudes

eventuate in anticipation of failure and perceived lack of ability which eventuate in lower performance.

A positive self-concept allows a person to approach life eagerly, to explore new interests to challenge oneself and to lead the life of a happy person. Adolescents with a positive self-concept are enthusiastic and able to make initiative, to work independently to feel proud of their accomplishments, and to recover from experiences of failure. (Schlenker, 1984). Adolescents with negative self-concept in contrast may feel inadequate, refuse to try a new task or problem and give up before they begin, because they assume that they are sure to fail.

Further analysis revealed that 65.8% of the students in the study scored an average of grade C and below whereas only 34.3% scored an average of grade B and above, in examinations. Table 4.2 showed a relationship between grade scored and level of self-concept. It therefore means that, a majority of the students who scored low grades had negative self-concepts.

Table 4.3: Percentage distribution of grade scores among the students

Grade	Frequency	Valid percent
A	7	5.0
B	41	29.3
C	60	42.9
D	32	22.9
Total	140	100.0

The key developmental task for the adolescent is answering the question "who am I". According to Erikson, (1968), the core conflict of adolescence is the tension between role confusion and identity, seeking identity involves trying to get a clear sense of what ones

skill and personal attributes are to discover where one is headed in life. The adolescent who forms a sense of identity gains two key benefits, a feeling of being at home in ones body and a sense of psychological well being.

According to Philips, (1981) Adolescents with low self-concept set lower achievement standards for themselves, and set lower expectations for success in school. In a study of gifted students, Phillips, (1981) found that, intelligence was not the critical factor, because students considered, less successful had equally high IQs, with those considered more successful. He found that, the less successful students were dissatisfied with themselves, because others placed very high expectations on them, the students reacted by feeling that they were failures and lost the motivation to try. As a result these students performed poorly in school. It therefore means that, the poor performance of the students in this study may not necessary mean that they are of low ability; but due to their negative self-concepts they might loose motivation and set lower achievement standards for themselves. Students who had low scores in self-concept, may indeed, posses very high abilities, to perform well if they are encouraged to have a more positive view of themselves and their abilities.

✓ 4.3 **Gender differences in Self-concept among Students in Secondary school**

The second objective of the study was to establish whether gender differences exist in self-concept among secondary students. As such, a t-test analysis was undertaken to determine whether self-concepts of male and female students in secondary school differ significantly. The results are presented and discussed in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Means, SDs and t-test analysis of Academic performance of secondary school students by gender

GENDER	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	sig.
Male	71	196.4789	38.10132	0.847 ^{ns}	0.081
Female	68	191.1765	35.55653		

ns= not significant at $\alpha = 0.05$

The analysis of gender differences in self-concept among secondary school students showed that the mean self-concept score for male students was 196.4789 while the mean for the female students was 191.1765. This shows that the mean for male students was 5.3024 points higher than that of the female student. The implication is that the male students have higher levels of self-concept than that of the female student. However these mean differences were found to be insignificant. ($t=0.847, sig.=0.081, P>0.05$). Further analysis by cross tabulation of the data revealed very small differences in the levels of self-concept between male and female students as shown in Table 4.5. Based on the inferential and descriptive statistics, the null hypothesis suggesting that there was no significant gender difference existing among students in secondary school, was upheld.

Table 4.5: Relationship between gender and self-concept

		Self-concept			Total
		High	Moderate	Low	
Gender	Male	18	28	24	70
	Female	12	32	26	70
Total		30	60	50	140

The difference in self-concept as shown in table 4.5 cannot be ignored, it could be, reflected in a larger sample. Maritim (1979) reported a significant difference in academic

self-concept between boys and girls. In this case girls had a lower academic self-concept as compared to boys.

Verkuyten (1995) found that the self-concept of boys was significantly higher than that of girls. Simmons, (1975) found that adolescent girls were less certain about themselves and their ideas.

Self-concept reported in these studies mentioned were not generally reflected among students in this study. One factor that could explain the contradiction of the findings of this study with findings of previous studies is the effect of gender related issues campaigns that may have enlightened, and freed considerably the female students and women in general from cultural bias that for a long time has tended to hold them in low esteem. Maritim (1979) attributed his findings to teachers' low perception of the ability of girls, which is a reflection of the attitude held by the wider society about girls. Negative attitudes towards girls in the society are changing, and in many areas the society places equal value on both boy child and girl child and especially in education, where they are given equal opportunity.

This fact is reflected, in Ol joro-orok division where this study was based, in that, there is a private girls school, with a considerably good enrolment, this reflects, the value placed on the girl child by the society in the division where this study was based. In such an environment the girls may have no difficulties in developing positive self-concept. However, the small insignificant gender difference in self-concept could mean that the society is not entirely free from cultural bias, and that in some areas girls still hold themselves in low esteem.

✓ 4.4 Gender difference in Academic performance Among students in secondary school.

The third objective of the study was to establish whether gender difference in a academic performance exist among students in secondary schools. T-test analysis was performed to test the significance of any existing difference. Table 4.6 gives a summary of the results obtained.

Table 4.6: Means, SDs and t-test analysis of academic performance of secondary school students by gender

GENDER	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	sig.
Male	71	2.3803	0.81707	3.3093 ^{ns}	.180
Female	68	1.9559	0.79988		

ns = not significant at $\alpha = 0.05$

An inspection of the results in Table 4.6 indicates that some mean difference in academic performance existed between male and female students in secondary school. The mean performance for males was 2.3803 whereas that for females was 1.9559. A mean difference of 0.4244 therefore existed with male having a higher mean than that of females. This implies that male students in secondary school perform better academically than their female counterparts. However, this finding was not sufficient to make a conclusion on the stated hypothesis. Therefore, a look at the mean scores and standard deviation (SDs) should provide a clue which the the t-test value would either corroborate or falsify. The obtained t-value ($t=3.093$, $P>0.05$) is indicative of statistically insignificant differences in academic performance between male and female students in secondary school. In view of these findings, the null hypothesis suggesting that gender differences in

academic performance amongst secondary school students did not exist was accepted. However the small differences in the mean score should not be ignored, and may be well reflected in a larger sample.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to establish the relationship between self-concept and academic performance among secondary school students in Oljoro-orok Division of Nyandarua District.

In this study, one measurement instrument, the student's self-concept scale was used to collect the needed quantitative data. Information on students academic performance, in form of grades averaged from a period of two years, were obtained from the students progress reports, provided by the respective class teachers of the students in the study.

In this chapter, the summary of findings and conclusion drawn from the findings of the study are presented. Secondly, the recommendations on how the findings obtained can be applied to enhance self-concept of students and improve their academic performance and finally suggestions for further research are presented.

5.2 summary of findings

From the findings of the study, it was established that there is a significant positive relationship between academic performance and self-concept of secondary school students. Thus the first null hypothesis which stated that, "There is no significant relationship between self-concept and academic performance of students in secondary school" was rejected. The second null hypothesis which stated that "there is no significant gender difference in self-concept among students in secondary school" was accepted because, the data analysis showed no significant relationship between the two variables. The third hypothesis stated that "there is no statistically significant gender differ

academic performance among students in secondary school” the analysis revealed that the difference that existed was insignificant and the null hypothesis was upheld

5.3 Conclusions

The study established that a significant relationship exist between self -concept and academic performance of students in secondary schools. The study established a Pearson correlation co-efficient of 0.559. The study also established that there is no significant gender difference in self-concept among students in secondary school. Poor performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (K.C.S.E) means that a student will miss the opportunity for higher education and gainful employment. Mutero (2001) remarked that, in a modern context, the driving force behind every parent to take a child through all the levels of education in the child’s’ employability within the modern economy. It is therefore important to identify those factors that could hinder good performance of students in any level of education, as this could also hinder the students’ employability.

Self-concept has been identified in this study as a factor influencing good academic performance. The relationship between academic performance and self-concept established in this study revealed that students with high or positive self-concept, perform well in school, and those with a poor self-concept perform relatively poor in school. .

This therefore means that improving the self-concept of a student will eventuate in better academic performance.

The study established that no significant relationship exist between gender and self-concept. The findings of the study seem to contradict findings of earlier studies, e.g.

Maritim (1979). The reason for this could be that the gender equality campaigns may have begun to bear fruits.

The study also established some gender difference in academic performance. The study revealed that boys out perform girls in academic performance. Since no significant gender difference in self-concept existed, the difference in academic performance between boys and girls can only be attributed to other factors.

One of the factors could be the roles the girls are expected to perform by parents outside school which considerably reduce their time for study, which eventuate in their poor performance as compared to their male counterparts.

5.4 Recommendations.

Based on the findings, of the study, the following recommendations were made by the researcher.

- (i) This study recommends that school counsellors, should organize self-concept enhancement, programmes in primary and pre-primary schools, and educate the parents of these children on how to communicate with them and to correct their mistakes. Children receive subtle messages from the way parents and teachers treat them. These adults encourage some children to keep trying at a difficult task but quickly give the solution to others, thereby expressing a judgment that these children have little competence and deny them the possibility of feeling pride in finding the answer by themselves. Parents and teachers should be educated against stifling children's opinions, which can make them feel that their views and themselves are worthless. Counsellors and teachers should realize that each individual student has within him the capacity and tendency latent if not evident to

move forward to maturity. In a suitable psychological climate this tendency is realized and becomes actual rather than potential.

- (ii) Teachers and parents should set realistic and achievable goal for their children in secondary and primary schools. High and unachievable goals result to failure. If a student continues to fail he/she is likely to develop very low regard of him/herself. Failure results to a feeling of unworthiness. The relationship between self-concept and academic performance is reciprocal, continued failure can result to negative self-concept. Reduction of the subjects in the secondary and primary curriculum is one way of lowering goals to a realistic level, and reducing failure hence improving self-concept. Parents should be enlightened on the fact that all human beings are innately good and seek to grow and expand their horizons; such growth is dependent on love and acceptance.

They should therefore accept and love their children, in spite of their gender, or ability, such a positive regard will enhance the self-concept of their children and adolescents.

More energy and finances should be directed to provision of boarding facilities for girls in secondary school, to ensure that they have ample time to study and therefore compete, on an equal footing with their male counterparts.

This will create room for the girls to grow without being subjected to possible discrimination by teachers with a bias for male students. This discrimination and negative attitude may give rise to poor academic performance of girls in the mixed schools.

- (iii) The Ministry of Education Science and Technology through the Kenya institute of education (K.I.E) should revise the school curriculum such that it is not wholly examination oriented and that success is not only measured in terms of an examination grade but on various activities and achievements in various areas. If this is implemented it will have the effect of reducing the feeling of unworthiness eventuated by failure of a student in an examination.
- (iv) The government through the Ministry of Education Science and Technology should consider establishment of guidance and counselling programmes and departments in pre-primary and primary schools which should be run by trained professional school counsellors as noted earlier basic roots of self-concept are to be found in the earliest interaction of a child with her parents and teachers. It is childhood that an individual develops feelings of personal worthiness or unworthiness a trained counsellor can provide the right psychological climate suitable for the child to develop a positive self-concept by helping teachers as well as parents in using the best methods of correcting a child and in communication, as well as helping affected children to adjust and to develop positive self-concept. If a child develops a basis for positive self-concept the adolescent who emerges from the child later will also develop positive self-concept and he or she will be a confident individual who is likely to perform well and achieve academically.

5.5 Suggestion for further research

This study sought to establish the relationship between self-concept and academic performance among secondary school students in Ol joro-orok division. In the course of the study, other issues that were not within the confinement of the study, but had possible impact on this study came up. Also issues that were beyond the scope of this study require further research, beyond what was done under the study.

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APPENDIX

Student Questionnaire (Self-concept scale)

SECTION A: Introductory letter

Dear respondent,

A study is being conducted on students' academic performance. You have been selected as a participant in the study and your response to the items in this questionnaire will contribute to the success of the study. There is no right or wrong answers you are requested to respond to each item as honestly as possible. Your responses will be held with at most confidentiality by the researcher. Thank you in advance.

SECTION B: Personal data.

School:.....

Sex Male

female

Here are some statements that tell how people feel about themselves. Read each statement carefully and decide whether or not it describes the way you feel about yourself. Select one of the five responses next to each statement that show exactly the extent to which you agree with the statement. If you strongly agree choose the letters (SA). If you agree, choose the letter (A). If you are uncertain or undecided, choose the letter (U). If you disagree choose the letter (D). If you strongly disagree, choose the letters (SD). Respond to every statement even if some are hard to decide. Choose only one response for each statement by circling the letter corresponding to your response. Remember that there are no right or wrong answers. It is only you who can tell how you feel about yourself, so I hope you will respond the way you really feel inside yourself.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided or Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD

1. I am a happy person 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
2. It is not easy for me to make friends..... 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
3. I am smart..... 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
4. I am shy 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
5. When I grow up I will be an important person...5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
6. I get worried when we have tests in school ... 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
7. I am popular..... 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
8. I am well behaved in school..... 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
9. I cause trouble in my family 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
10. I am strong 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
11. I have good ideas..... 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
12. I am an important member of my family 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
13. I am an important person to my friends 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
14. I do what is right most of the time 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
15. I solve my problems very easily..... 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
16. I change when I know I am wrong..... 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
17. I am lazy..... 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
18. I am helpful..... 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
19. I am useful to other people 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
20. I am good in my school work..... 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
21. I can write well..... 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
22. I am a good reader 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
23. I behave badly at home 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
24. I am slow in finishing my school work..... 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
25. I am important member in my class..... 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD
26. I am kind 5. SA 4. A 3. U 2. D 1. SD

27. I can talk in front of the class.....	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
28. I quarrel with my brother(s) and sister(s)	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
29. My friends like my ideas.....	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
30. I am obedient	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
31. I am lucky	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
32. I get worried most of the time.....	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
33. My parents expect too much of me	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
34. I like being the way I am	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
35. I am clean	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
36. I often volunteer in school	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
37. I wish I were different	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
38. I sleep well at night	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
39. I hate school	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
40. I do not share my things with other people am lazy5.	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
41. My classmates in school think I have good ideas.	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
42. I am unhappy	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
43. I have may friends.....	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
44. I get into a lot of fights.....	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
45. My family is not happy with me	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
46. I have an attractive face	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
47. I 'm popular with my classmates	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
48. I am friendly with many people	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
49. I have a healthy body	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD
50. I am an attractive person	5. SA	4. A	3. U	2. D	1. SD

Telephone: Nakuru 61620, 61031, 61032
Telegrams: UNIVERSITY, Njoro
Telex: 33075



EGERTON UNIVERSITY

P.O. Box 536
Njoro, Kenya.

Date: 14th April, 2003

In reply quote Ref:

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING STUDENTS' RESEARCH

The above programme is offered in our University at Master's level. In order to complete their study requirements they have to carry out a reasearch. They are currently seeking a place to do so and have found your institution a valuable place to enhance their learning.

I wish to introduce to you ...Charles Maina Gichuru..... registration number .EM16./0490/02..... for your kind assistance in their study.

Please, accord them the help they may need in order to achieve this objective. While they are carrying out a research, they are familiar and bound by the ethical standards of collecting information, safeguard of the same, and using the findings pro-actively.

On behalf of the University, we wish you well and thank you for your partnership in the training of our students.

Sincerely,

**CHAIRMAN
EGERTON UNI.
EDUC. PSYB COUN.
P.O. BOX 536 NJORO**

**DR. FR. STEPHEN MBUGUA NGARI
CHAIRMAN, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL, PSYCHOLOGY AND
COUNSELLING**

For: Vice Chancellor – Egerton University

OL JORO OROK EDUCATION
DIVISION OFFICE,
P.O BOX 80,
OL JORO OROK.
3RD FEB. 2005.

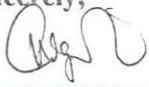
RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN OL JORO OROK DIVISION

Permission is granted to Charles Maina Gichuru, registration number EM16/0490/02 of Egerton University to carry out research in schools within the division. This will assist him in the Masters of Education Degree Programme he is undergoing.

Please accord him any assistance he may require in order to achieve his objectives.

On behalf of the Ol joro orok Division Education Office, we wish you well as you carry out your research.

Sincerely,


EDUCATION OFFICER
OL JORO-OROK DIVISION
CATHERINE WANJOHI
EDUCATION OFFICER
OL JORO OROK DIVISION.

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