

**AN EVALUATION OF STUDENTS' ACADEMIC SELF EFFICACY ON  
GENDER PERFORMANCE IN MATHEMATICS IN  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MBEERE SOUTH  
SUB COUNTY, EMBU COUNTY**

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**MED 110P03983**

**A RESEARCH PROPOSAL SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A MASTER DEGREE IN  
EDUCATIONAL PLANNING, MANAGEMENT  
AND ADMINISTRATION OF  
MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY**

**AUGUST, 2015**

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the academic self-efficacy in Mathematics on the gender differences in performance in Mathematics in secondary schools. The study had three objectives, namely: i) to evaluate the level of academic self-efficacy in Mathematics among boys and girls in secondary. (ii) Schools to assess the performance of boys and girls in Mathematics in Mbeere South Sub-County; and iii) to determine the relationship between academic self-efficacy and performance in Mathematics among boys and girls in secondary schools in Mbeere South Sub-County. The study will be informed by Bandura's social cognitive theory. Academic self-efficacy was the independent variable while performance in Mathematics was the dependent variable. The study employed mixed research methods using cross-sectional survey design. The target population was all 12421 public secondary school students in Mbeere South. Stratified, purposive and random sampling techniques were used to select the sample. The sample was consisting of, and 380 form three students. A pilot study was carried out in order to ascertain the reliability of the research instruments. The reliability of the research instruments was tested using Cronbach's alpha coefficient at a level of 0.7. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated from the results of the pilot study. The questionnaire was found to have a Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of 0.81 thus it was used without amendments. The literature on self-efficacy was used to check the content validity of the questionnaire items while form three Mathematics syllabus was used to check the content validity of the exam. Data was collected using self administered questionnaires and a standard modified Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education Mathematics exam that was administered to measure performance in Mathematics. The researcher issued the questionnaires to the respondents during arranged visits with school principals and administered the exam the same day. The Study collected quantitative data. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentages and presented in form charts and tables. To test the hypothesis the independent sample test and Pearson product Moment Correlation Coefficient were used. The level of self efficacy in Mathematics was found to be low with boys having higher level than girls. Boys were found to perform better than girls although generally the performance was poor. There was a strong positive relation between self efficacy and performance in Mathematics. The study recommends that efforts should be done to improve the academic self efficacy in Mathematics for both boys and girls.