UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

EFFECTS OF SELF-CONCEPT ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: A STUDY OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ELMINA, CENTRAL REGION.

JOHN EKOW LARYEA

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ELMINA, CENTRAL REGION.

BY

JOHN EKOW LARYEA

Thesis submitted to the Department of Educational Foundations of the Faculty of Education, University of Cape coast, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy Degree in Guidance and Counselling

JUNE 2009

DECLARATION

Candidate's declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature: …… Date: …….

Name: JOHN EKOW LARYEA

Supervisors' declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature: …… Date: ……

Principal Supervisor's name : DR. FREDERICK OCANSEY

Co- Supervisor's Signature: …….. Date: ……

Name: DR. EMMANUEL KOFI GYIMAH

ABSTRACT

The main objective of the study was to determine the effects of self-concept on academic performance of Junior High School form three students in Elmina township. Simple random sampling was the technique used by the researcher in this study to draw the sample of schools.

In all, 280 form three students from the six selected Schools were used as respondents for the study. The research design adopted by the researcher was the Ex Post Facto and the instrument developed and used for eliciting relevant data for the study was the questionnaire which was in the form of summated scales (or Likert type of scales). Multiple regressions and One-way analysis of variance statistics were used to analyse the data.

The major result established by the study was that some constructs of self-concept including physical, self-esteem and academic self-concepts significantly influenced academic performance of students, while others did not.

In view of this, it was recommended that constructs that have significant influence on students' academic performance should be given prominent attention when counselling students to overcome their academic challenges.

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DEDICATION

To my late brother in-law, Mr. Samuel Kweku Wie-Jonah, and my beloved wife Miss Augustina Efua Appeatsiwa Rhule, for their support.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

There has been a general notion over the years that the level of academic performance has been very low among Junior High Schools students in Ghana. This trend has been attributed to certain factors including social, economic, religious and psychological, under which self-concept finds expression. For the purpose of the study, the concentration is placed on the self-concept.

The popular notion that academic performance is determined by self-concept has been supported by Nunez and Gronzalez-Pienda (1994). According to them, it is a causal relationship model, given that self-concept is what determines levels of academic achievement and that self-concept in turn can be strongly influenced by contingencies provided by the pupil's significant others among whom teachers must not be underestimated. This is the Pygmalion principle.

The Pygmalion principle means that it would be possible to increase levels of school performance by previously optimizing levels of self-concept and specifically levels of perceived competence. This stand point has been supported by Acosta (2001) who examined the relationships between the school climate, academic self-concept and academic performance and affirmed that total self-concept predicts academic performance.

Self-concept theory has always had a strong influence on professions especially in the field of counseling. By far, the most influential and eloquent voice in self-concept theory has been that of Rogers (1947) who introduced an entire system of helping build around the importance of the self. In Rogers' view, the self is the central ingredient in human personality and personal adjustment. Rogers described the self as a social product developing and of interpersonal relationship striving for consistency. He argued that there is a basic human need for positive regard both from others and from oneself. He also believed that in every person there is a tendency towards self-actualization and development so long as this is permitted and encouraged by an inviting environment (Purkey & Schmidt, 1987).

While most self-concept theorists wrote and conducted research during the 1970's and 1980's, general interest in self-concept declined. Patterson (1987) presents four reasons for the decline of interest in self-concept namely:

- A cornucopia of contrived games, gimmicks, and techniques that were introduced and controlled by unprepared professionals.
- A national mood of "back to basics" in education prevailed where concern for the emotional needs of students was viewed as inimical to academic excellence.
- Poor judgment by counselors and teachers in selecting suitable materials for values clarification programs resulted in public opposition to introduce values in school.
- Strong opposition by those who objected to any consideration of personal development of students because they believe it to be secular humanism and, therefore, an effort to undermine religion.

Fortunately, there is a new awareness on the part of both the public and professionals that self-concept cannot be ignored if we are to successfully address such nagging problems as drug and alcohol abuse, dropout rates, dysfunctional families, and more importantly students' academic performance. In addition to this growing awareness, new ways are being developed to strengthen self-concepts. For example, research by cognitive theorists such as McAdam (1986) and Ryan, Short and Weed (1986) are demonstrating that negative self-talk leads to irrational thinking regarding oneself and the world.

Self-concept may be understood as a perception every human has of himself or herself. It is a component of personality development and indicates who we are and how we fit into the world. Purkey (1988) sees the self-concept as the totality of a complex, organized and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence. Here, Purkey (1988) emphasized the difficulty, orderliness and harmonious manner of acquiring certain beliefs and attitudes to form opinions of oneself. Machargo (1991) perceives self-concept as a set of perceptions or reference points that the subject has about himself, a set of characteristics, attributes, qualities and deficiencies, capacities and limits, values and relationships that the subject knows to be descriptive of himself and which he perceives as data concerning his identity. This definition embraces issues including the set of knowledge and attitudes that we have about ourselves; the perceptions that the individual assigns to himself or herself and characteristics or attributes that we use to describe ourselves. This is understood to be fundamentally a descriptive assessment and has a cognitive nuance.

Arguing from the point of view of our individual capacities, Branden (1995) considered the self-concept as who and what we consciously and subconsciously think we are - our physical and psychological traits, our assets and liabilities, strengths and weaknesses. Shavelson, Hubner and Stanton (1976) also thought of the self-concept as the perception that each one has about himself/herself, formed from experiences and relationships with the environment, where significant people play an important role. From the foregoing definitions, self-concept can be conceptualized as the mental and conceptual awareness and persistent regard that sentient beings hold with regard to their own being. Components of a being's self-concept include physical, psychological, and social attributes and can be influenced by its attitudes, habits, beliefs and ideas. These components and attributes can each be condensed to the general concepts of self-image and self-esteem. Self-concept, self-image and self-esteem are very often used interchangeably in spite of the concepts not being the same. Franken (1994) in support of this indicates that self-concept though different from self-esteem are related. According to him, people who have good self-esteem have a clearly differentiated self-concept in that when people know themselves they can maximize outcomes because they know what they can and cannot do.

Generally, self-esteem is perceived as the affective or emotional aspect of the self which generally refers to how we feel about or how we value ourselves (one's self-worth). Branden (1995) asserts that self-esteem is a disposition to experience oneself as competent to cope with the basic challenges of life and as worthy or happiness. This further means that self-esteem is an aspect of self-concept that can be referred to some particular

measures about components of self-concept. Bandura (1997) points out that both self-concept and self-esteem are constructed by one's conscious reflections and so educators and parents should provide experiences that students can master rather than attempting to boost self-esteem directly through other means.

Self-concept is a phenomenon which is developed and maintained through certain processes involving taking action and reflecting on what we have done and can do in comparison to our expectations and the expectation of others, and to the characteristics and accomplishment of others (Brigham, 1986). That is to say, self-concept is not innate but is developed or constructed by the individual through interaction with peers, elders and indeed the environment, and reflecting on that interaction. His dynamic aspect of self-concept and by corollary, self-esteem is important because it indicates that it can be modified or changed (Franken, 1994). In respect of this Franken (1994) points out that there is a growing body of research works which indicate that it is not some things people cannot but rather it depends on the process of self-reflection.

Marsh (1992) indicates that there are several different components of self-concept. These include physical, social, transpersonal and academic. While the physical aspect of self-concept relates to what is concrete: how we look like, our sex, height, weight, the kind of cloth we wear, the kind of home we have and so forth, the social aspect describes how we relate to others. This is similar to the transpersonal self-concept which also describes how we relate to the supernatural or the unknown.

The academic self-concept has two levels and relates to how well we do in school or how well we learn. While the first level deals with the general academic self-concept of how good one is in all subjects, the other has to do with a set of specific content related to self-concept that describes how good one is in mathematics, science, social studies and English language. Self-concept like any psychological construct is relative and depends on some frame of reference. According to the frame of reference model, academic self-concept will depend on a student's own academic ability and the ability level of other students within the same class. When a student perceives himself as the best in class he tends to hold a positive self-concept of himself/herself. The converse is true for a student who sees himself/herself as very dull in relation to others in the class. Students' self-perceptions of ability may reflect assessments of their effort and good conduct as well as academic performance.

Educational psychology has been concerned with analyzing different types of relationships, both associative and predictive, that exist between self-concept and academic performance of students (Nunez et al.1994). According to Santrock (1994), self-concept is what determines levels of academic achievements of students and that can intend be strongly influenced by contingencies provided by students significant others among whom teachers must not be under estimated. By this assertion, it can therefore be inferred that it would be possible to increase levels of schools performance by previously optimizing levels of self-concepts and the very specific levels of perceived competence. To this effect, Santrock (1994), indicate that self-concept and academic performance are interrelated and that they can influence and

determine each other mutually. Whether these assertions are generally true or otherwise is what the researcher wants to grapple with.

Statement of the Problem

It is a general wish and aspiration of students, parents, teachers/educators and all stakeholders of education, that students and for that matter, learners in all levels of education, excel in their pursuance of academic work at all times. In view of this, various attempts are being made by students, parents, teachers among others in Ghana to ensure high academic performance among students. Some of these attempts include the acts of organising extra classes for students by teachers, parents spending extra monies on their children's education, and government increasing teachers' salaries to motivate them to give off their best.

Notwithstanding these, it appears some students continue to perform below average in educational institutions in Ghana. It is a source of worry to many stakeholders especially parents whose wards find themselves in this situation and the government of Ghana who spends a large proportion of the nation's resource on education.

One of the several factors which the literature identifies to be responsible for academic achievement is self-concept. For instance, Boutler (2002); Villarroel (2001); Bandura (1997) and Castor (1997) argued that positive self-concept of students does serve as causal and predictive of academic achievement of students, and that there is a linear association or relationship between self-concept and academic performance. Thus, if students can be expected to perform well in their examinations, positive self-concept is sine qua non. Incidentally, most research works and findings on the impact of

self-concept on academic performance have been those reported from Western cultures.

In Ghana, little or nothing is known about the impact self-concept has on students' academic performance, but it appears students' low academic performance could be linked to poor self-concept. The question the current study therefore attempts to answer is the extent to which the self-concept positively or negatively affects the academic performance of students in schools in Ghana.

Purpose of the Study

The major objective of this study is to determine whether students' self-concept significantly influence their academic performance.

The study examined:

1. How well measures of self-concepts of religious, physical, social, economic, esteem and educational orientation self-concepts predict total academic performance in Maths, English, Social Studies and Science.
2. How much variance in total academic performance in Maths, English and Science can be explained by the scores on six self-concept scales namely: religious, physical, social, economic, esteem and educational orientation self-concepts.
3. Which type of self-concept (religious, physical, social, economic, self-esteem or educational orientation) is the best predictor of total academic performance.

Research Questions

The questions listed below guided the study:

1. How well do measures of self-concepts in religious, physical, social, economic, esteem and educational orientation self-concepts relates with total academic performance in Maths, English, Social Studies and Science?
2. How much variance in total academic performance in Maths, English and Science can be explained by the scores on self-concept scales in religious, physical, social, economic, esteem and educational orientation self-concepts?
3. Which self-concept in terms of religious, physical, social, economic, esteem or educational orientation is the best predictor of total academic performance?

Hypotheses

In the light of the above aims the following null hypotheses have been formulated for testing in this study:

1. There is no significant influence of religious self-concept on academic performance among Junior High School form three students.
2. There is no significant influence of physical self-concept on academic performance among Junior High School form three students.
3. There is no significant influence of self-esteem on academic performance among Junior High School form three students.
4. There is no significant influence of social self-concept on academic performance among Junior High School form three students.
5. There is no significant influence of economic self-concept on academic performance among Junior High School form three students.

6. There is no significant influence of educational orientation self-concept on academic performance among Junior High School form three students
7. There is no significant influence on academic performance as a result of overall self-concept among students of the Junior High Schools form three students in the Elmina township.

Significance of the Study

The findings will contribute to the kind of additional supports students need to further develop their self-concept to positively reflect on their academic performance. The findings of this study will highlight the sources of the problems of self-concept militating against successful performance of students in schools. The findings may also lead the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports to intensify its efforts to set high standards in schools in relation to students' performance. This study will be particularly important to educational researchers and teachers, since the self is both an outcome of education and condition of subsequent learning.

The findings of the study will give rise to further investigations into the conditions under which the self develops, the methods by which it is changed, the limitation upon change once it has developed and the effect of a particular kind of self-concept upon learning. Since teachers are most influential in fostering the development of self-concept, the findings of this study will provide useful information to teachers on how to relate with their students.

In the case of counsellors, the information that will be gathered out of the findings of this study will go a long way to enrich their knowledge about

the self-concept thereby helping them build a strong base upon which effective counselling services could be rendered to their students.

Delimitation

There are many aspects of the self-concept which could have been researched into. The researcher, however, decided to limit himself to variables such as religious, physical, self-esteem, socio-economic and educational attainment self-concepts. The reason was that even though extensive research has been done in the area of self-concept, very little has been done in the identified areas.

The study, which is a case study, is limited to Elmina township. The choice of the town stems from its proximity to the University of Cape Coast where the researcher is studying and most importantly, researcher's familiarity with the town. It is therefore hoped that there can be easy access to information and increase in the return rate.

Limitation

The study was restricted to only Junior High Schools in Elmina township due to time and financial constraints. This implies that the entire results and conclusions drawn from the study were applicable to only Junior High Schools in Elmina township and not beyond. In view of this, the generalizations and conclusions were not very accurate and meaningful in other levels other than Junior High Schools. Besides that, they could also not be accurate and meaningful in district/municipal and regional or national contest, even though similar conclusions can be arrived at from further studies. However, some of the findings may have some useful application in

counselling sessions in a bid to assist students to overcome their academic challenges.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study the following terms used in the study are defined as follows:

Self-esteem: It refers to the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself/herself. Santrock, (1994) also refers to it as self-worth or self-image.

Self-concept: It refers to the perceptions, attitudes and feelings we hold about ourselves (Marshall, 1989). It also refers to both the overall view that individuals have about themselves, as well as their view of how well they function in specific roles or under certain constraints.

Academic self-concept: How students view their academic ability compared to other students (Marsh, 1993). It also refers to an individual's perception of his or level of competence or ability within the academic realm.

Physical self-concept: It has to do with how we look like, for example, our sex, height, weight, complexion and stature.

Religious self-concept: It is also referred to as transpersonal self-concept and that describes how we relate to the supernatural being. (Franken, 1994).

Social Self-concept: It describes how people relate with others (Franken, 1994).

Organisation of the study

The thesis is organized under five chapters. The first chapter comprises the Introduction which highlights the background of the research problem, the statement of the problem and the purpose of the study. Research question and hypothesis, the significance of the study and the delimitation of the study are also considered. The chapter concludes with the operational definition of terms. Chapter two discusses literature related to the study. The review is organised under theoretical and empirical reviews.

The third chapter describes the methodology used in the study. The research design, the population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, validity and reliability of Instrument, pre-testing of the instrument, data collection and data analysis procedures are considered. In chapter four, the analysis of data and the discussions of the findings are presented. The final chapter presents the summary, conclusions, recommendations and implications of the findings to both teachers and counsellors.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter mainly deals with the review of relevant and related literature on the concept of self and its impact on academic performance of students. The chapter is therefore categorized into two major sections namely, theoretical review and empirical review. They both capture the views of different authors that have relevance to the problem under study.

Theoretical Review

This study was informed by social psychological theories that influence the development of a self-concept. According to social psychological theories, people get a sense of who they are from the social world in which they live. What we think of ourselves is often based upon what we think others think of us. We also get a sense of who we are by comparing ourselves to others (Brown, 1998). Others serve as a mirror in which we see ourselves reflected, we then appraise ourselves based on what we see reflected, thus forming a self-concept. These reflected appraisals can come from particular ("significant") others.

Self Theories

William James (1890), being the strongest advocate for self theory, has identified three components of self experience: *material me* (one's body and personal possessions), *social me* (one's awareness of his or her social reputation), and the *spiritual me* (the self that monitors private thoughts and feelings). According to him, everything associated with one's identity became

a part of self. For example, when our friends or family members are insulted, we react as though we have been attacked because a part of ourselves has been threatened. We likewise take pride in possessions like cars and special collections, which are really extensions of our 'selves' (Belk, 1988).

That apart, some theorists have distinguished between the knower and the known. While the former refers to the part of you that experiences thoughts, feelings and perceptions (the part that guides behaviour), the latter refers to what Rogers (1951), and others call self-concept, that is, all conscious or potentially conscious thought, ideas and evaluations one has of himself/herself. According to Rogers (1951), the self-concept is a dynamic mental structure that motivates, organizes and regulates intrapersonal and interpersonal bahaviours, meaning that one's self-concept influences the way one processes information about him or herself. He also suggests that personality is made up of two constructs: the organism and the self.

The Organism

The organism is the center of all experiences that take place within the individual at a particular time. Psychologically conceived, it is the locus of the experience. It represents the total being whose physical, psychological and spiritual dimensions cannot be separated except artificially. This totality of experiences constitutes the phenomenological field. This phenomenological field is the individual's frame of reference which cannot be known to person himself/herself. It can never be known to another person except through empathic understanding and then can never be perfectly known (Hall, Lindsey & Campbell, 1998). This field notably is not identical in the field of consciousness. Consciousness or awareness is a symbolization of some of our

experiences. The organism's phenomenal fields include both conscious and unconscious experiences available at a given moment (Hall, Lindsey & Campbell, 1998).

The organisms may, however, subset-discriminate and react to an experience which is not symbolized. However, each person tends to check his symbolized experiences against the world as it is, providing him with dependable knowledge of the world to enable him to behave realistically. Those perceptions that remain either untested or inadequately tested may cause an individual to behave unrealistically, and even to his own detriment. He explains that what a person experiences or thinks is actually not reality for the person; it is merely a tentative hypothesis about reality, which may or may not be true, a person suspends judgment until he put the hypothesis to test. This test requires checking less certain information against more direct knowledge or variety of sensory data. The organism is all times a total organize system in which alteration of any part may produce changes in other parts.

The Self

The self is that portion of the individual's phenomenological field that becomes differentiated and symbolized. Rogers (1951), notes that as development occurs, a portion of the phenomenological field becomes differentiated and also become the person's self. The self is the central construct of the theory and develops through interactions with others and involves awareness of being and functioning. It is based largely on the social evaluations experienced. It is the part of the experience that a person identifies

as ‘I’, ‘me’ or ‘myself’ and includes the awareness of “what I am” and “what I can do”.

Self-Concept

In very general terms, self-concept may be defined as the cumulation of an individual’s self perceptions (Wigfield & Karpathian, 1991), particularly those perceptions relating to relative ability (Byne & Shavelson, 1986). These perceptions are derived from experiences with the social environment as information is supplied by significant others in the home, school and community (Cole, Maxwell, Martin, Peeke, Seroezynski, Tram, Hoffman. Ruzz, Jacquez, & Maschman, 2001; Hau, Kong, & March, 2000). ‘The self-concept is the organized set of characteristics that the individual perceives as peculiar to himself/herself’ (Ryckman, 1977). Self-perceptions are said to drive behaviour which in turn further influences the way we perceive ourselves (Byme & Shavelson, 1986; Dai, 2001; Shavelson, Hubner & Stanon, 1976).

Historically, research described self-concept as a general or global construct that was not differentiated across physical, social, academic and other domains (March & Shavelson, 1985). However, recent research has demonstrated that self-concept is multidimensionality constructed and hierarchically ordered (Byrne & Shavelson, 1986; Harter, 1985; Marsh, 1993; Marsh & Holmes, 1990).

Of particular interest to the present study is that students’ overall academic self-concept may be effectively and validly differentiated into their English and Mathematics self-concepts (Hau, et al, 2000; Marsh, 1993). Moreover, as might be expected, students’ Maths and English self-concepts

are typically positively associated with their Maths and English achievement respectively. Conversely, students' Maths and English self-concepts are typically negatively associated with their English and Maths achievements respectively (Marsh, Walker, & Debus, 1991). In other words, self-concept appears to be domain specific with respect to achievement.

Self-Concept as a Function of Environmental Perception and its Influence on Academic Behaviour

Self and field theories as well as psychoanalytic theory suggest that environmental cues as perceived by individuals influence their behaviour. For instance, Child (1947) asserted that, the development of persistent striving for achievement is affected by the patterns of success and failure resulting from striving in the past. According to Child (1947), this pattern results not only from the approval or disapproval of the learner's behaviour by other significant person in that milieu, but also from his own innate influences or capacities, his physical environment and other aspects of his social environment or the way in which he is now being influenced by the world around him.

Child's standpoint aptly describes the school situation where achievement motive underscores almost all the activities that characterize the teaching-learning process. Furthermore his assertion that individual hereditary endowment and his physical and social environment affect his pattern of success and failure is applicable to the schools situation, where students' performance is generally believed to be determined by his intellectual capacities and the type of physical, social and psychological environment from which he learns (Lewin, 1948). These views of Child and Lewin harmonise

with that of Adler (1935), who asserts that the determiners of one's life style are social and constitutional in nature and that the heredity endows the individual with certain abilities; the environment gives him impressions. The abilities, the impressions and the way in which individual experiences them or interprets his experiences are the bricks with which the individual creates or builds his attitude towards life – the attitude that determines his relations to the outside world. It is thus implicit in child's view point that the type of interaction existing between the individual and his environment affects his pattern of success and failure.

Boy and Pine (1968), illustrating Child's viewpoint in their theory about perception and school achievement, emphasized how an individual builds his self-concept which influences his performance from the way he perceives and interacts with his school environment; perceives it as one that values and recognizes his contribution, the tendency for him to behave consistently with school expectations is high and vice versa. For this reason, Boy and Pine (1968), viewed students' poor study habits, inability to follow instructions and inability to concentrate in classroom as signs of "perceptual malnutrition" which are concomitants of developing in an unhealthy and unwholesome school environment. It can be inferred from the forgoing self theory, field theory and psychoanalytic theory that by interacting with his environment, the individual student builds self-concept from the ways he thinks others perceive him in the school environment and how things appear to him. This self-concept which depends on the type of nurturance the environment provides, aids the individual to perform highly or poorly on academic tasks.

Festinger (1957), in his theory of cognitive dissonance points out that dissonance is tension that arises when two psychological inconsistent conditions, such as opinions, attitudes or beliefs occur concurrently. He hypothesizes that cognitive dissonance occurs when inconsistent or contrary to one's belief about oneself. These two psychological inconsistent cognitions, according to Festinger (1957), create tension or dissonance that is unpleasant. This dissonance then compels the person to take action to reduce it. In his dilation on Festinger's theory, Aronson (1972), is of the view that much of our motivation is to justify our own behaviour and correct actions and information that threaten our self definitions. For Aronson (1972), therefore, dissonance is most likely to occur when an individual's behaviour is different from his or her personal definition of self.

It can be inferred from the foregoing dissonance theory that low performing students who find themselves in a school environment perceived to be high performing will re-orient their attitudes, cognitions and behaviour and be motivated to work harder and thereby reduce the dissonance by performing better than before. Weiner's theory is closely related to the dissonance theory. Weiner's attribution theory as cited by Ames et al. (1984), which seeks to reinforce the notion that performance of learners on a given task depends on the level of motivation they have. Weiner's attribution theory which is cognitive oriented, in fact deals with perceived causes of success and failure in achievement situation. The theory holds that the student after perceiving the achievement task and making causal attributions estimates his probable success and failure and develops an effective anticipation, hope or success and fear of failure. Weiner's theory assumes that one's perception of his general

ability is stable over time and his perception of difficulty of a given task is also reasonably stable. However, the amount of efforts one puts in at a particular time is assumed to vary. This assumption of stability and difficulty of a given task suggests that one's belief about a good or a poor performance could be so enduring as to influence his good or poor performance until such a perception of the environment changes.

In conclusion, both the psychoanalysts and field theorists hold the view that the individual through interaction with his/her environment builds his/her self-concept from the way he perceives his environment. The individual evaluates the resultant self-concept which consists of his existing physical, social and intellectual capacities within the framework of his environmental standards. When this evaluation of self-concept happens to be contrary to or is inconsistent with his perceptions of the established environmental standards, the individual is thrown into a stage of psychological crisis. This crisis impels him to vary his efforts to meet expectations of his established order, and by so doing he resolve the crisis. It is though this process of change from the psychoanalyst and field theoretical perspectives that one builds his self-concept from the environment, which self-concept may be said to influence his behaviour.

The self-theorists also hold strongly to the belief that behaviour is the product of the forces exerted upon the individual within his environment. In other words, reality for the individual is phenomenal field as perceived and experienced at the moment of action. To this end, they contented that when the environmental forces are controlled through telling, showing, rewarding,

punishing, directing, guiding, arranging and manipulating, behaviour could be moulded or shaped in line with the goal set (Combs, 1961).

Maehr as cited by Ames, (1984), believed that people perceive success and failure differently because they have varied standards of performance and also may judge the value of a task differently. Maehr's view point harmonizes with that of Bruner (1973), who hypothesized that the greater the individuals need for a society valued object, the more marked would be the operation of the behavioral determinants. In other words, a student is likely to put in an effort equivalent to the value he places on success or failure. Ames (1984), thus identified three basic inter-related aspects of meaning that are important determinants of personal interment. These are (1) beliefs about self; (2) perceived goals of behaviour; and (3) perceived alternatives for pushing these goals or action possibilities. In his elucidation of these inter-related aspects of meaning, Maehr (1948), noted that in the teaching-learning situation, for instance, social expectations frequently take the form of peer group expectations pressurize the individual student in the situation to attempt certain goals and behave in specific ways that is harmonious with that of Staines (1958), who asserted that classroom is part of the child's environment, it has some effect on the child's self-concept. It can be deduced from Maehr's theory that the school environment, as a distinct socio-cultural milieu, does not only provide the framework for definition of self, goals and expectations, but also determines the quality of work that can be done by the students and teachers who live and work in it at a particular time.

Social comparison theory

Social comparison theory offers a lens to understand better not only to whom students compare themselves, but how these comparisons influence self-concept. The original theory of social comparison by Festinger as cited by Schachter et al. (1989), state that people have a desire to know what they are like. To obtain this knowledge, people compare themselves to others who are similar to them. Recent evidence concludes that people may not only compare themselves to people who are similar, but also to others who they believe are slightly better off than they are through upward comparisons (Collins, 1996), or worse off than they are through downward comparisons (S. E. Taylor & Lobel, 1989). Who people compare themselves to, whether it is upward or downward affects self-concept. In his review of the literature on the self-concept, Marsh (1990), discusses an effect that results from social comparisons called the Big Fish Little Pond Effect (BFLPE). The frame of reference model underlying the big-fish-little-pond effect (BFLPE) hypothesizes that students compare their own academic ability with the academic abilities of other students in their reference group. They then use this relativistic impression as one basis for forming their own academic self-concept. The BFLPE occurs when equally able students have lower academic self-concepts when they compare themselves to more able students, and higher academic self-concepts when they compare themselves with less able students (Marsh, 1990).

Students' academic self-perceptions are influenced and based on comparisons of the academic ability of students in the immediate context (Marsh, 1990). The same objective criteria may lead to differing academic

self-concepts, leading one to believe that the self-concept is responsive, then, to changes in the social context, which again suggests that the social environment imposes comparisons that have an impact on the individual (Wood, 1989). If students compare themselves to other academically talented students, such as the participants in the current research in the Fellowship Program, they will have a lower self-concept. This indicates that years in the fellowship program could undermine academic self-concept. The BFLPE has been tested primarily on high school-aged adolescents, and focuses more on the macro level of school-average achievement, such that, academic self-concept will be correlated positively with individual achievement but negatively related to school-average achievement. However, it can serve as a means for understanding the social comparison process that occurs in a group of high ability college students. While the BFLPE is based on the assumption that the mean ability levels of other students in the reference group-a generalized other-serves as a standard of comparison.

Further research is needed to clarify whether specific other, an implicit generalized other, or both provide standards of comparisons" (Marsh, 1990). As such, the current study not only examined the social comparison process of high-achieving African American college students as it relates to academic self-concept, but also the reflected appraisal process.

This research explored how the reflected appraisals from the generalized and significant other affected the academic self-concept of high-achieving African American college students at a Predominantly White Institution's. Cooley as cited by Schubert (1998), and Mead (1934), we infer self-views from our experience with others and we infer who we are from our

social context. Along these lines, there are social influences on the self; in other words, we act differently in different social settings. The context influences what aspects of our selves become salient.

James' as cited by Gordon and Gergen, (1980), "a man [sic] has many social selves as there are individuals who recognize him and carry an image of him in their mind…we may say that he has as many different social selves as there are distinct groups of persons about whose opinion he cares. He generally shows a different side of himself/herself to each of these different groups" Gordon and Gergen (1980). According to this belief, a sense of self is dependent on the context of a situation and the reflected appraisals of others. These appraisals come from the significant or generalized other. Keeping in mind that it is what we think other people think of us, not what may be actually true. In addition, for the views of the other to be relevant to the self, the domain, or area under consideration, must be salient to the individual. While there is not a theory that applies specifically to high-achieving African American college students, an understanding of the reflected appraisal and social comparison process can be applied to aid in the understanding of how academic self-concept is influenced within the university context.

Empirical Review

Academic self-concept and academic performance

The construct, academic self-concept refers to an individual's perception of his or her level of competence or ability within the academic realm. In view of the fact that academic self-concept is linked to adolescents'

motivation to succeed in school (Henderson & Dweck, cited by Dienstbier, (1990) as well as their academic performance, it is considered an important component of an adolescents' educational wellbeing (Henderson & Dweck, 1990; Marsh et al, 1999).

According to Cooley (2000), academic self-concept is broadly conceptualized as how a student views his/her academic ability when compared with other students. For him, to be academically successful individuals must be identified with domain of academics. Academics must be part of their self-concepts; more specifically, they must have a positive academic self-concept. Some previous research works suggest that there is a positive relationship between academic self-concept and academic achievement as measured by grade point average (GPA) (Cooley, 2000; Gerardi, 1990; Reynolds, 1988; Spaights et al., 1986; Witherspoon et al., 1997).

The academic self-concept structure seems to include a global dimension referring to individual sense of competence in school or academics generally as well as a more differentiated dimension focused on distinct areas of academic work, such as science or math (Hay, Ashman, van Kraayenoord, & Stewart, 1998). While domain-specific self-concept bears a stronger relationship to individuals' achievements with that domain, the global academic self-concept can also have important implications for individuals' overall academic functioning (Marsh and Yeung, 1998).

In a classic study that validated the Academic Self-Concept Scale (ASCS), Reynolds (1988), found that academic self-concept was positively significantly related to GPA, that participants with more internal locus of

control had higher academic self-concepts, and that there was a stronger relationship between academic self-concept and GPA after the freshman year. Participants were 589 undergraduate students from three colleges in New York States. While this study offers an early measure of academic self-concept that many recent studies use, the study provides little information about the colleges in the study and does not include a copy of the measure. Consistent with these results, Gerardi (1990), in a study of 98 first-year engineering students at CUNY, found that academic self-concept was the best predictor of academic success as measured by GPA in minority and low socioeconomic status college students. Specifically, self-concept of ability better predicted academic success than cognitive variables such as college skills assessment examinations and high school GPA. Academic self-concept was measured with the Brookover Self-Concept of Ability Scale (SCA).

Spaights et al. (1986), examined the relationship between self-concept and academic performance, and the successful matriculation and retention of African American students at Predominantly White Institute's (PWI). Participants were 37 male and 81 female African American students at three universities in the University of Wisconsin system who were administered the Tennessee self-concept scale. Academic performance was measured by GPA and retention was measured by the number of semesters enrolled. Researchers found no significant relationship between self-concept and GPA, but for females, as self-concept increased, GPA increased. While these findings are useful, it is important to note that the researchers used a global measure of self-concept, as opposed to measuring academic self-concept, which could account for the results.

While the causal ordering of the correlation between academic self-concept and academic achievement is debatable (Marsh, 1993), researchers have found that a relationship exists. This relationship suggests that academically successful students (or high-achieving African American college students) have a positive or high academic self-concept. Because academic self-concept is socially constructed, it is influenced by the social comparison process, as well as, by the reflected appraisals of significant others and the generalized others. This research sought to understand how these social sources of self-knowledge influenced the academic self-perceptions of high-achieving African American college students at a Predominantly White Institute (PWI).

Academic Achievement and Self-concept

Numerous research studies have been done relating self-concept measures to academic achievement (Hansford & Hartie, 1982; Skaalvick & Hagtvet, 1990). The majority of studies have found positive correlations between self-concept and academic achievement, for example, Sharvelson et al. (1976), reported that self-concept is structured hierarchically and has three identifiable levels. For children and adolescents, at the top is a fairly stable general self-concept; at the middle level are specific sectors of self-concept such as academic self-concept, emotional self-concept, and physical self-concept; at the bottom level are specific sub-areas of self-concept such as mathematics self-concepts, science self-concepts, physical appearance self-concepts and peer relations self-concepts.

Results of a study Crawford (1979), conducted on 38 third graders showed that a positive correlation did exist between reading achievement and

self-concept as measured by the metropolitan achievement test and the vallet myself checklist. Hoge, Smit and Crist (1995), conducted a two-year longitudinal study of 322 sixth and seventh graders that compared the three levels of self-concept (high, middle and low) and studied the effects of self-concept on achievement and achievement on self-concept influences of self-concept on grades were weak but grades had a modest influence on subsequent discipline-specific self-concepts. The researchers concluded that past correlation studies have overstates the influence of self-concept on grades and of grades on self-concept. Self-concept is frequently positively correlated with academic performance, but it appears to be a consequence rather than a cause of high achievement (Baumeister et al., 2003). This suggests that increasing students' academic skills is a more effective means to boost their self-concept than vice versa.

Self-Concept and Learning Disorders

The results of a study by Cooley and Ayres (1988), indicate that pre-adolescence and early-adolescent students with learning disorders have poorer academic self-concepts than their normally achieving peers. This finding was consistent in other studies that focused on academic self-perceptions (Battle, 1979, Chapman & Boersma, 1979, Rogers & Saklofske, 1985).

The studies examined the global self-concepts of students with learning disabilities have largely supported the hypothesis that students with learning disabilities have lower self-concept than normally achieving students. Rosenthal (1973) and Griffths (1975), reported that children identified as dyslexic had poor self-concept scores. However, these findings regarding global self-concept are not universally supported. Cooley and Ayres (1988),

also found a difference in global self-concept between student with learning disabilities and normally achieving peers that statistical analysis indicated that the difference was largely due to the academic component within the Piers-Harris measure of self-concept. When this academic component was removed, the self-concept difference disappeared.

A study conducted by Bender and Golden (1988), compared the adaptive behaviour, problem behaviour and self-perception of behaviour between 54 learning disabled children and 54 non-learning disabled children. Multivariate analysis revealed differences in the first two measures. The groups were different on each subscale of the adaptive behaviour, and analysis of the problem-behaviour scale showed differences between the groups on three of five subscale. In each case the scores of the learning disabled group were higher indicating less desirable adaptive behaviour and more problem behaviour in the classroom. Adaptive behaviour differs from problem behaviour by referring to those aspects of a child's behaviour that are adaptive to the demands of the classroom. It includes classroom behaviour, the ability to use language in classroom social situations and socially cope with the demands of the environment (Weller, 1980; Weller & Strawser, 1981).

Many studies have examined the differences between learning disabled and non-learning, disabled students' self-perception of behaviour (Bender, 1987). Generally the results indicate the learning disabled students demonstrate lower scores in self-perceptions of behaviour. There should be training programmes to prepare teachers to deal with a wider range of behaviours. Only then can mainstreaming be considered a legitimate

placement option for disabled children with adaptive behavioural deficits (Bender & Golden, 1988).

Social self-concept and academic performance

Peer relations are a critically important factor in child development. A child's interaction with peers provides a context for cognitive development, growth of special skills, the evolution of self-concept, and the establishment of moral and social values (Erickson, 1963; Piaget, 1965). A number of investigators have confirmed that childhood problems in peer relations are related to serious maladjustment in adulthood (Parker & Asher, 1987). Children who are unpopular with their peers in one setting often continue to have difficulties making friends in the future (Rubin & Mills, 1988).

Although previous studies have found that high ability students generally get along well with their peers. Cornell, (1990), investigated high ability students who were unpopular with average and popular groups on measures of achievement, family social status, and personality adjustment. Results showed relatively little difference between average and popular students, but unpopular students were distinguished by lower social self-concept and academic self-esteem, as well as by less prestigious paternal occupations. They did not differ on measures of academic achievement, emotional autonomy or anxiety. These findings suggest that the counseling of unpopular students should focus on their social self-concept and perhaps their social skills rather than on academic ability or general personality.

Merrell (1993), studied the relationship between social behaviour as measured by the School Social Behaviour Scales (SSBS), and self-concept, as measured by the Self-Perception Profile for Children (SPPC). Subjects were

41 public school students in grades 5 and 6. These subjects were rated on the SSBS by their classroom teachers and also completed the SPPC as a self-report measure. A number of significant positive relationships were found between the social competence scores of the SSBS and the SPPC self-concept scores. The relationship between the problem behaviour scores of the SSBS and the SPPC scores were very weak, and the coefficients obtained were not statistically significant.

Green, Forehand, Beck, and Vosk (1980), examined the relationship among four measures of children's social competence, teacher completed measure of children's social behaviour, child's self-report measure, behavioral measure and sociometric measure and their relationship to an academic measure. The subjects for this study were 116 third-grade students. The results indicated that children with high academic scores were liked by and interacted positively with their peers. Negative peer interaction was not related to the popularity of the student, while positive peer interaction was negatively correlated with peer dislike. Teacher's ratings show that teachers can identify the children who are liked and disliked by their peers in the classroom. The child self-report measure showed few correlations with other measures. Research also indicated that self-perceptions of social competence may influence interpersonal behaviour in ways that affect the quality of peer relations (Goetz & Dweck, 1980). Few studies have examined the relationship between adolescent peers and their educational outcomes. Findings from the study suggest that, peers may have some influence on adolescents' academic achievements. This has been confirmed by Jordan and Nettles (2000), in their study which states that adolescents who spends greater time hanging out with

peers had lower levels of math and science achievement in the 12th grade than adolescents spending less time with peers.

Until recently, little was known about self-perceptions associated with problematic peer relations. The evidence so far suggests that children experiencing peer problems tend to display a generally negative pattern of self-perceptions, including low perceived special competence, low self-efficacy, and low expectations for social outcomes and peer evaluations (Rymel & Pranke, 1985). Boivin and Begin (1989), conducted a study to evaluate the relations among peer status, self, and other perceptions of social competence among 9 and 11 years old children. Self-esteem, self-perception in various domain and teacher's evaluations was assessed along with peers' status. A cluster analysis revealed that rejected children could be assigned to 1 of 2 groups with respect to self-perceptions, one displaying high self-perception and the other low self-perception. In contrast, popular children showed generally positive self-perceptions. Neglected and average children showed no difference in self-perception scores, whereas controversial children displayed lower self-esteem and perceived competence on the academic and behaviour/conduct dimensions.

Asher and Wheeler (1985), have also shown that both loneliness and social anxiety are likely to be elevated among children who are low in peer acceptance, especially rejected children (Asher, Hymel & Renshary, 1984; Asher, Hymel & Williams, 1990; Williams & Asher, 1987). The generally negative picture of unpopular children as anxious, lonely and depressed suggests that these children may also be expected to report low self-concept.

Exploration of the behavioural and personality characteristics of children who exhibit difficulty with peer relationships has become a research priority.

The amount of research documenting links between adolescents, individual level characteristics and their achievement motivation, only a single longitudinal study was identified that a relationship between adolescents peer networks and their achievement motivation. Ryan (2001), examined the relationship between the level of achievement motivation among adolescents' peers and the change in their own levels of achievement motivation from the beginning to the end of seventh grade in an economically and ethnically diverse sample from an urban middle school. The findings of the study suggested that while intrinsic motivation is declining across the seventh grade, adolescents whose peers were more intrinsically motivated at the start of the seventh grade experienced less of a decline in their own intrinsic motivation between the start and the end of the school of the school year than those whose peers were less intrinsically motivated.

Self-Concept and Self-Esteem

Teachers, administrators, and parents commonly voice concerns about students' self-esteem. Its significance is often exaggerated to the extent that low self-esteem is viewed as the cause of all evil and high self-esteem as the cause of all good (Manning, Bear, & Minke, 2006). Promoting high self-concept is important because it relates to academic and life success. But before investing significant time, money, and effort on packed programs, principals should understand why such endeavors have failed and what schools can do to effectively foster students' self-esteem and self-concept.

Although the terms self-concept and self-esteem are often used interchangeable, they represent different but related constructs. Self-concept refers to a student's perceptions of competence or adequacy in academic and nonacademic (e.g., social, behavioral, and athletic) domains and is best represented by a profile of self-perceptions across domains. Self-esteem is a student's overall evaluation of himself/herself, including feelings of general happiness and satisfaction (Harter, 1999). Schools are most likely to support student's positive self-esteem by implementing strategies that promote their self-concept.

Components of Self-Concept

Self-esteem, an aspect of self-concept is important because it indicate that it can be modified or changed. Franken (1994), states that there is growing body or research which indicate that it is possible to change the self-concept. Self-change is not something that people can but rather it depends on the process of self-reflection. Through self-reflection, people often come to view themselves in a new, more powerful way, and it is through this new, more powerful way of viewing the self that people can develop possible selves.

There are a several deferent components of self-concept: physical, academic, social, and transpersonal. The physical aspect of self-concept relates to that which is concrete: what we look like, our sex, height, weight, etc.; what kind of cloth we ware; what kind of car we drive; what kind of home we live in; and so forth. Our academic self-concept relates to show how well we do in school or how well we learn. There are two levels: a general academic self-concept of how good we are in math, science, language art,

social science etc. The social self-concept describes how we relate to other people and the transpersonal self-concept describes how we relate to the supernatural or unknowns.

The relationship of self-concept to school 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 moderately to academic success. Specific measures of subject-related self-concept are high related to success in that content area. If academic achievement leads to self-concept, and self-concept is a better predictor of being a low-track or high-track student, it would appear that there is some intervening variable.

Gage and Bertliner (1992), indicate that the relationship between self-concept and school achievement suggest that measures of general or even academic self-concept are not significantly related to school achievement. It is at the level of very specific subject (e.g., reading, mathematics, science) that there is a relationship between self-concept and academic success. This suggests that success in a particular subject area is not really changing one's self-concept but rather is impacting one's expectation about future success based on one's past experience.

There is much discussion about what young people should do in their childhood to prepare them for success in adulthood. Once we have determined the desired end results or the prerequisites for success, we need to determine the means or the conditions by which these can be brought about. Education and schooling are two terms that are often associated with those conditions.

Factors that Influence Self-Concept

The development of self-concept is through the learning process in the childhood. A child's surroundings, experiences and the style of parental upbringing also contribute a significant influence towards the development of self-concept. Children evaluate who they are through the response of their parents in every action they take. If a child lives in a confused and negative parental upbringing, he/she consequently tends to develop negative self-concept (Harter, 1999). Negative parental upbringing can be shown through beating without mercy, neglecting, paying less attention, unfairness, humiliating and unsatisfactory remarks towards the child's attitude. When this occurs, they all assume these as a punishment caused by their fault or stupidity. On the contrary, a positive parental upbringing will develop a positive self-concept.

Self-concept is something very dynamic that can change from time to time. Some aspects of self-concept remain for a long period but others can turn the opposite way in few seconds. There are factors that influence the process of the development of self-concept. The style of parental upbringing that has been mentioned before is a significant factor. Positive parental upbringing and attitude lead by their children can develop a positive thinking and self-appreciation to themselves. Negative parental attitude creates the assumption that a child is not appreciated and loved by his/her parent because of his/her self-weakness (Marshell, 1989). The second factor is continuous failure in a child's life. In their case, failure can be defined as unsuccessfully to please their parent or themselves. Continuous failures in a child's life making him/her feel that he/she is useless. Gradually, negative self-concept is

developed in this child. On the other hand, a positive self-concept is developed if a child sees failure as an opportunity for him to improve himself/herself in every aspect of decision-making (Marshell, 1989).

The next factor is depression. People who suffer from depression tend to think and response negatively towards everything including evaluating themselves. They are wondering whether they can survive throughout their lives. They can be super sensitive to what other people say about them or act towards them. Last and not the least is the internal self-critic which can also influence the process of the development of self-concept. We cannot deny the fact that internal self-critic is not needed to evaluate every action and decision that we take in our life. Internal self-critic functions as a regulator in every action taken and how we behave so that we can be accepted by the society around us and can adept well within the society (Patterson, et al. 1990).

Development of Self-Concept

Students frequently display a decline in self-concept during elementary school and the transition to middle level. This decrease represents an adaptive reaction to the overly positive self-perceptions that are characteristic of childhood. Young children tend to overestimate their competence because they lack the cognitive maturity to critically evaluate their abilities and to integrate information from multiple sources (Marshell, 1989). As students develop, they better understand how others view their skills and better distinguish between their effects and abilities. As a result, their self-perception becomes increasingly accurate (Harter, 1999). As students transit from middle level to high school, their self-concept gradually grows, increasing freedom allows adolescents greater opportunities to participate in

activities in which they are competent, and increased perspective-taking abilities enable them to garner more support from others by behaving in more socially acceptable ways (Harter, 1999).

Developing Positive Self-Concept

According to Marsh, et al. (1985), the self-concept is something very dynamic, there are few steps that can be taken to have a positive self-concept. First, we must behave objectively in knowing ourselves. No matter how small the achievement or positive experience that we possess it must be appreciated. We must try to enhance our talent and self-potential. As it says, 'you can't be all things to all people, you can't do all things at once, and you just do the best you could in every way.'

Secondly, we must know and always appreciate ourselves. There is no other person that can appreciate us more than ourselves. People who know how to appreciate themselves are those who can see all the good and positive things within them and other people. So, if we can appreciate other people, we also can appreciate ourselves (Marsh, et al. 1985).

Thirdly, never be an enemy to us. People tend to blame themselves when conflicts arise between ideal expectation and the real self. When we become the enemy to ourselves, we can hardly see the good and positive side of ourselves. Gradually, they are mentally exhausted, frustrated and develop negative self-concept.

The final step is to have a positive and rational thinking. The Buddha says 'we are what we think. All that we are arises with our thoughts. With our thoughts, we make the world.' How powerful is our mind! The power of our thoughts depends a lot on how we think. If we can develop positive and

rational thoughts, we are developing a positive self-concept (Marsh, et al. 1985). A positive self-concept person usually is a winner but a negative self-concept person is always a loser. (Baumeister, et al., 2003). Many myths and misunderstandings about self-concept and self-esteem persist despite a wealth of empirical evidence that "self-esteem per se is not the social panacea that many people once hoped it was" (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003).

Sources of Self-Knowledge

There are several sources of self-knowledge or ways that people learn about themselves that affect self-concept. According to Brown (1998), people consult three sources of information that affect self-concept. They are the inner or psychological world, the physical world, and the social world. In consulting the inner world, people may look inward at themselves and examine their behavior in the context in which it occurs and draw an appropriate inference to learn about themselves (Brown, 1998). For example, people may use introspection by looking inward and consulting attitudes, feelings, and motives (Brown, 1998).

The physical world can also serve as a source of self-knowledge. For example, people can measure their height in feet and inches. In this case, people can measure their physical height. While consulting the physical world to gain self-knowledge is useful, it is not often the information that people are after (Brown, 1998). However, if people want to know if they are tall or short, they must consult the social world, as meaning is acquired only relative to others.

The third source of self-knowledge that people consult in order to gain knowledge about what they are like and who they are is the social world. In consulting the social world, people gain knowledge about where they stand in relationship to others. In other words, attributes acquire meaning only with respect to the attributes of others (Brown, 1998). Thus, what people think of themselves is based on comparison. People must rely on other sources, such as the social world to provide information about what they are like and who they are. While people may use all or a combination of the three sources of information to gain knowledge about themselves, the current study examines specifically how the social world serves as a source of self-knowledge for the academic self-concept of high-achieving African American college students. Within the social world, two processes are important in gaining self-knowledge. They are the reflected appraisals of others and social comparison (Brown, 1998). These two theories serve as a lens to understand how social influences, such as particular individuals and society influence the academic self-concept of high-achieving African American college students.

Reflected appraisal

The self is a social structure and arises from social experiences (Mead, 1934). Cooley as cited by Schubert (1998), is first credited with developing the idea of a "looking glass self". According to this concept, other people serve as a mirror in which we see ourselves reflected, we then appraise ourselves based on what we see reflected. These reflected appraisals are a source of self-knowledge. A self idea of this sort seems to have three principle

elements: the imagination of our appearance to the other person; the imagination of his judgment of that appearance; and some sort of self-feeling, such as pride or mortification (Cooley, 1998). For example, person A makes an appraisal of person B. Person B perceives what person A thinks of him or her. From this perception, person B then appraises himself or herself. It is from the perceptions of person A that person B's self-concept is then developed and affected. Mead (1934), extended the notion of the looking glass self and reflected appraisals to not only include a particular, or a significant other, but to include the generalized other, meaning the society and culture in which one lives.

If the given human individual is to develop a self in the fullest sense, he/she must also, in the same way that he/she takes the attitudes of other individuals toward himself/herself and toward one another takes the attitudes of the organized social group to which he belongs toward the organized, co-operative social activity or set of such activities in which that group as such is engaged, does he develop a complete self or possess the sort of complete self he has developed (Mead, 1938). In other words, the self is only truly developed when a person can take the attitude of society and culture (generalized other) and particular individuals (significant other).

Significant others

In terms of academic self-concept, reflected appraisals come from a variety of sources, such as family, friends, classmates, and faculty and can be positive or negative. For example, appraisals can come from an encouraging and supportive (or non-supportive) parent or friend. For high-achieving African American college students, having a supportive peer group consisting

of other high-achieving African American college students and supportive faculty are important for their success (Fries-Britt, 1998, 2000). The appraisals from particular individuals can also have the opposite effect. Such that if a person sees himself or herself reflected by a particular other negatively or in the case of this study as a non-achiever, the person may also begin to think of himself or herself in the same manner

Generalized others

What the society and culture in which a person lives communicates also affects academic self-concept, particularly for people who have been historically stigmatized. The generalized other can take the form of the appraisals a group of individuals (i.e., one's peers) it can also take the form of stereotypes, which are a reflection of the generalized other. Two theories that examine the reflected appraisals of others, particularly, the generalized other (as stereotypes are a reflection of the generalized other) are stereotype threat and stigma consciousness. Stereotype threat is the threat of being viewed through the lens of a negative stereotype, or the fear of doing something that would inadvertently confirm that stereotype (Steele, 1999). Stigma consciousness refers to the extent to which individuals focus on their stereotyped status and believe it pervades their experiences (Pinel, 1999).

Stereotype threat affects people who identify with a domain and in this case, the domain is academics. The theory proposes that a test of diagnostic ability combined with a stereotype cause a threat that, in turn, causes an individual's performance to decrease. Performance decrease is possibly the result of several factors, such as anxiety, evaluation apprehension, or frustration (Steele, 1997). Consciousness for African American and Latino

students upon arriving at predominantly white institution's, resulting in different outcomes based on gender (Pinel, Warner, & Chua, 2005). In the domain of academics, one possible negative effect of stereotype threat is disidentification, the psychological disengagement from achievement hypothesized to help students cope with stereotype threat and underperformance in a given domain (Aronson, Fried, & Good, 2002).

Long term, disidentification can affect individuals such that they no longer value the threatened domain and as such, it is no longer a part of their self-identity. With academics, it is implied that academic self-concept is low because academics is no longer a part of the person's self-concept. When the domain is academics, the psychological relief disidentification can be a very high price to pay (Steele, 1999), leading to lower academic performance and possibly resulting in decreased persistence to graduation. To combat disidentification, Steele and his colleagues propose "wise schooling". Wise schooling calls for situational changes in school design such that students will not believe that they are held under the suspicion of negative stereotypes about their group (Steele, 1999). This theory was tested primarily with African American students at an Ivy League institution. These students can be considered high-achieving and are domain identified with academics therefore; it is particularly relevant to the current study of high-achieving African American college students.

Stigma consciousness

Another theory that examines the effects of stereotypes on people is stigma consciousness (Pinel, 1999). People high in stigma consciousness believe that stereotypes about their group permeate their interactions with

outgroup members and that they cannot escape their stereotyped status. Those low in stigma consciousness are aware of their stereotyped status but do not believe it plays a role in their life experiences. In contrast to stereotype threat, in which an individual is concerned with one's own behavior in confirming a stereotype, stigma consciousness refers to the expectation that one will be stereotyped, regardless of one's behavior (Pinel, 1999). Increases in levels of stigma for males, increases in stigma consciousness predicted lower academic performance and increased disengagement from academics. For females, self-esteem suffered and those with low increases in stigma consciousness disengaged. In addition, researchers found that for females, academic performance was low regardless of changes in stigma consciousness.

Stigma consciousness and stereotype threat are useful theories in explaining differences in the academic performance of African American students based on the reflected appraisals of a generalized other in the form of stereotypes. However, they do not specifically examine how the reflected appraisals of the generalized other in the form of stereotypes influence the academic self-concept of high-achieving African American college students. The current research posits such a theory.

The Importance of Self-Concept

Self-concepts refer to the perceptions, attitudes, and feelings we hold about ourselves (Marshall, 1989). Since self-concept appear to be vitally linked to individual's psychological well adjustment versus maladjustment, it is little wonder that so many studies have been conducted to enhance individuals' self-concepts; especially during later childhood (e.g., Craft & Hogan, 1985), Parish & Philip (1982), adolescence (e.g. Niedemthal &

Mordkoff, 1991), on a group of second grade students who were assessed on the Noasexis Personal Attribute Inventory for Children (NPAIC).

Psychologically, it is extremely important that a child feels loved, wanted and accepted by his parents as they are his main source of security. Parental rejection fosters a distorted and devalued self-concept and self-image for the younger. He frequently attempts to gain acceptance and positive social relationships through a variety of attention seeking behaviours. The attention-seeking behaviours may be either positive or negative depending on the motivational aspects and the nature of the desired goals (Gervirtz, 1956). Within a classroom setting, children may fight, kick, bite or display other aggressive or destructive attention-seeking behaviours which are disruptive in attaining pupil success in learning and teacher success in teaching (Dereon, 1962; Peretti, 1980).

Parental rejection jeopardizes the child's feelings of security, undermines their self-esteem and induces feelings of being unloved, unwanted, and unaccepted. The rejection may be overt or covert, it may be characterized by indifference and unconcern for the child's welfare or by active dominance and conspicuous hostility. Result of a study (Peretti, Clark, & Johnson, 1980), indicated a significant influence of parental rejection on negative attention-seeking classroom behaviours. Patterson, Kupersmidt, and Griesler (1990), studied the relations among children's reports about their own competence, objective measures of their competence, and their views of significant relationships with others as a function of sociometric status. Five hundred and fifteen third and fourth grade students responded to questions about aspects of their personal competence and about their relationship with

father, mother, teachers and best friends. There were several major findings about children's perceptions of self and of their relationships with significant others. Rejected aggressive children reported the least supportive relationship with their fathers of any group studied; they also reported the most conflict with friends. The neglected though not rejected children reported the least companionship from best friends and also the lowest perceived social competence with peers. The subjective reports of rejected aggressive children significantly overestimated those given about them by other people on both social and behavioural competence. No other group of children consistently overestimated their own level of competence relative to information from other reliable sources. The subjective reports of rejected but not neglected children overestimated their social competence as rated by peer.

Physical self-concept and academic performance

In most schools across the United States of America, physical education has been substantially reduced, and in some cases completely eliminated in response to budget concerns and pressures to improve academic test scores. Yet the available evidence shows that children who are physically active and fit tend to perform better in the classroom, and that daily physical education does not adversely affect academic performance. (Dwyer, et al. 2001). According to Field, et al (2001), evidence supporting the association between physical activity and enhanced academic performance is strengthened by related research that found higher levels of physical fitness to be linked with improved academic performance among children. Darley et al, (2000), also indicate that two large national studies in Australia and Republic of Korea together with two smaller studies conducted in United States of America

found physical fitness scores to be significantly and positively related to academic performance.

Introducing physical activity has been shown to improve cognitive performance and promote on-task classroom behaviour. It is therefore important to note that the cognitive and behaviourial responses to physical activity breaks during the school day, have not been systematically investigated among middle or high school students (Tremblay, et al. 2000).

Conclusion

The literature review focused on both theoretical and empirical review of self-concept in general and academic performance of students. In the review, self was seen as a central construct which develops through interactions with others. It was technologically conceived that it is the locus of the experience that represents the total being whose physical, psychological and spiritual dimensions cannot be separated except artificially. Besides, it is was further reviewed that self is the part of the experience that a person identifies as 'I' 'me' or 'myself' which includes 'what I am' and 'what I can do'. In view of this, teachers, parents/guardians, and indeed all stakeholders have it as a duty to consider various factors that can influence the development of positive self-concept among children when dealing or interacting with them.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology the researcher used for the study that investigated self-concept and academic performance of students in six (6) Junior High Schools in Elmina township.

The chapter covers a wide range of areas viz:

- Research design
- Population
- Sample and sampling procedures
- Instrumentation
- Pilot-test
- Procedures used in collecting data
- Data analysis procedure

Research Design

The design adopted by the researcher for the study was the Ex Post Facto research design. In the context of Social and Educational Research, the phrase Ex Post Facto means 'after the fact' or 'retrospectively'. It is concerned primarily with those studies which investigate possible cause and effect relationships by observing an existing condition or state of affairs and searching in-back in time for plausible causal factors (Cohen, Manion &

Morrison, 2004). Kerlinger (1970), defines Ex Post Facto research more formally as that which the independent variable or variables have already occurred and in which the researcher starts with the observation of a dependent variable or variables.

Ex post facto designs are appropriate in circumstances where the more powerful experimental method is not possible. These would arise when, for example, it is not possible to select, control and manipulate the factors necessary to study cause – and - effect relationships directly. It can also be used when the control of all variables except a single independent variable may be unrealistic and artificial, preventing the normal interaction with other influential variables; or when laboratory controls for many research purposes would be impractical, costly or ethically undesirable. Ex post facto researcher is particularly suitable in the social and, educational and to a lesser extent psychological context where the independent variable(s) lie outside the researcher's control. The research design was suitable for the study for two reasons which were:

- The data needed for the study was already available in all the schools selected for the study.
- The researcher did not have to manipulate any independent variable as is found in experimental studies.

Population

According to Polit and Hungler (1996), population is the entire aggregation of cases that meet a designated set of criteria. In other words, it is the target group about which researchers are interested in gaining information

and drawing conclusions. For the purpose of this study, the population comprised all the Junior High School form three students in Elmina township of the Central Region. The accessible population however comprised all the Junior High School form three students from six out of the 12 schools in the Elmina township.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

In view of the fact that time, money, efforts and other resources involved in research do not permit the researcher to study all possible cases to probably understand the phenomenon under consideration, sampling is conducted to enable the researcher to study a relatively small number of units in place of the target population and to obtain data that are representative of the whole target population. In that respect, sampling is referred to as the process of selecting a portion of the population to represent the entire population. (Polit et al, 2001). However, Nwana (1993), is of the view that including the entire population in a study would make the findings command a lot of respect. A sample was therefore considered relevant. A sample consists of a carefully selected subset of the units that comprise the population.

With regard to this study, the researcher used the simple random sampling technique to select six schools out of twelve junior high schools in the Elmina township. In selecting the six schools, the researcher constructed sampling frames. Subsequently, the names of all the twelve Junior High Schools Junior High Schools in the Elmina township were written on slips or pieces of paper and put in a container. They were mixed up very thoroughly after which the researcher picked the slips one after the other until the six schools were finally selected. Any slip picked and recorded was put back into

the container. The selected schools were: Methodist A and B, Municipal Assembly model, Anglican, Bantuma Akyinim and Elmina Municipal Assembly, Junior High Schools. There were in all 280 students in the schools. In order to have a clear understanding of the problem under investigation, the researcher used the census technique to select all the students in the schools who numbered 280. They comprised 114 females with the remaining 166 being males (see Table 1 for summary).

Table 1

Distribution of Sample From Selected Schools.

SCHOOLS	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Methodist A Jnr. High School	28	23	51
Methodist B. Jnr. High School	31	22	53
Anglican Jnr. High School	37	20	15
Municipal Assembly Model School	24	18	42
Bantuma Akyinim Jnr. High School	22	15	37
Elmina Municipal Assembly Jnr. High School	24	16	40
Total	166	114	280

Research Instrument

According to Gay (1992), research studies involve data collection. In a cross sectional Ex Post Facto survey, data may be obtained through a variety of techniques. These include questionnaires, interview schedule, observation

test and attitude scale. For the purpose of this study, the questionnaires were used to elicit relevant data for the study. According to Kerlinger (1973), the questionnaire is widely used for collection of data in educational research for a simple reason that it is very effective and efficient for securing factual information about practices and conditions, and for enquiring into the opinions and attitudes of the subjects. However, it often registers low return rate.

For the purpose of this study, the type of questionnaire used was in the form of summated scales (or Likert type of scales) (see appendix A). This instrument was developed by utilizing the item analysis approach where a particular item is evaluated on the basis of how well it discriminates between those persons whose total score is high and those whose score is low. Those items or statements that best meet this sort of discrimination test are included in the final instrument.

Thus, summated scales consist of a number of statements which express either a favourable or unfavourable attitude towards the given object to which the respondent is asked to react. The respondent indicates his/her agreement or disagreement with each statement in the instrument. Each response is given a numerical score, indicating its favourableness or unfavourableness, and the scores are totaled to measure the respondents attitude. In other words, the overall score represents the respondent's position on the continuum of favourable – unfavourableness towards an issue. Furthermore, in a Likert scale, the respondent is asked to respond to each of the statement in terms of several degrees, usually five degrees (but at times 3 or 7 may also be used) of agreement or disagreement. For example, when asked to express opinion whether one considers his or her academic

performance pleasant, the respondent may respond in any one of the following ways: (i) strongly agree (ii) agree (iii) undecided, (iv) disagree (v) strongly disagree. These five points constitute the scale. At one extreme of it, there is strong agreement with the given statement and at the other, strong disagreement, and in between them lie intermediate points.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

The questionnaire for the study was made up of seven main sections i.e. A to G, with a total number of 40 items. Section A had four items which elicited exclusively background information about the subjects. Issues considered in this section included name, form/class, gender and age. The subsequent sections considered the religious self-concept, physical self-concept, self-esteem, social self-concept, economic self-concept and educational orientation respectively of the respondents. Each section comprised six items. The possible maximum obtainable score for each section was 30 with possible minimum obtainable score for each respondent being six. The model for interpreting the grades was the higher the score the more desirable the trait and vice versa. Finally the academic achievement comprised respondent's average scores for the three terms in the core subject (English Language, Mathematics, integrated science and social studies) for 2006/7 academic year.

Pilot-test

A pilot study of the questionnaire was conducted at the University Junior High School and Kakumdo Metropolitan Assembly School, all in Cape Coast Metropolis. The rationale behind the selection of the two schools

stemmed from their proximity to the main study area. It was therefore hypothesized that they could share certain common characteristics.

According to Gay (1992), a pilot test could be used to revise questions in the instrument that are apparently unclear or may produce negative reactions in subjects. Hence the need for the pilot test before the main work. The pilot-test was analyzed using the procedure in Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to determine Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient and validity of the questionnaire.

Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire

To ensure that the questionnaire was valid, responses from the respondents were edited for consistency and completeness. Item by item scrutiny of the response did not show any evidence of the respondents misunderstanding of any of the items. All the questionnaires administered to respondents were responded to appropriately. No student ticked more than one for each of the scales, an indication that the design of the instrument was well done. In effect, the pilot study was very useful as it ensured that the statements in the questionnaire conveyed the appropriate meaning as well as measure the variables accurately.

Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient is a measure of a scale's internal consistency. This statistic varies from zero to one, and though alpha has several interpretations, the cut off value is more useful in determining whether a scale is reliable. The closer the coefficient is to 1.0, the higher the reliability. The standard rule of thumb is that alpha must be greater than approximately .70 to conclude that the scale is reliable. Indeed, Darren and

Mallery, (2001), suggest that a rule of thumb that applies to most situations is: α >.9 - Excellent; α > .8 - Good; α >.7 - Acceptable, α >.6 - Questionable, α >.5 - Poor, α <.4 - Unacceptable. Ideally then, Cronbach alpha coefficient of a scale should be above .7. Therefore, in this study the internal consistency reliabilities were examined for each of the six self-concept dimensions in the study instrument. Since items were worded in both positive and negative directions, negatively worded items first were reversed coded so that a higher score would indicate a more positive response in all cases.

The reliability analysis procedure in the Statistical Product for Service Solutions (SPSS) was used to determine whether the set of survey questions, items, or statements form a reliable scale. This means that the items measure a single concept with reasonably high intercorrelations. The key value is the Cronbach's alpha as indicated in Table 2. Each of the six self-concept dimensions that make up the survey was found to have an acceptable reliability (defined as a Cronbach's alpha greater than or equal to .70), with reliability coefficients ranging from .71 to .79 and an overall Cronbach's alpha of .81 which can be described as good.

Table 2

Reliability Analysis

Scale Self-concept	Scale items	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha	Rule of Thumb (Decision)
Religion	B1-B6	6	.71	Acceptable
Physical	C1-C6	6	.79	Acceptable
Esteem	D1-D6	6	.74	Acceptable
Social	E1-E6	6	.76	Acceptable
Economic	F1-F6	6	.79	Acceptable
Educational orientation	G1-G6	6	.76	Acceptable
Overall	B1-G6	6	.81	Good

Source: Computed from Field Survey Data, 2008

Data Collection Procedure

Letters for permission to conduct the study were first written to the head teachers of the six selected schools viz Methodist A and B; Anglican: Municipal Assembly Model; Elmina Municipal Assembly and Bantuma Akyinim Junior High Schools in Elmina township. Though the contents of the letters were the same, each of them bore different dates for the administration of the questionnaire (See Appendix B). This was because the researcher wanted to administer the items personally for two main reasons. The first reason was to enable him to take the respondents through the items himself to enhance their understanding of the items so as to make it easier for them to respond. The second reason was to ensure a high return rate of questionnaires. Data from all the six schools were collected within a month and that was in the

month of October 2008. The return rate of the questionnaire was very high that is 100%.

In obtaining data on the respondent's academic performance, the researcher requested for their examination scores. These comprised the end of the three terms examination results in their second year on only the core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Integrated science and Social Studies). On the whole, the exercise was successful since the head teachers and the respondents in all the six schools visited for the study were very cooperative.

Data Processing and Analysis Procedures

Data gathered from the field were first checked to ensure their consistency and completeness. Next, some items in the scales which were marked negatively were reversed before scoring. The data were entered into the computer using the Statistical Products and Service Solutions (SPSS) soft ware. Using the SPSS procedures, including a descriptive statistics the minimum and maximum possible item mean score and the range were generated. These descriptive statistics were then used to determine the levels of self-concepts and academic performance of respondents. In generating both the minimum and maximum possible items mean score and range, the minimum possible item mean score was 1.00 whereas the maximum possible items mean score was 5.00. Hence, the closer the observed items mean score to 5.00, the higher the self-concept and academic performance. Nominal scale was used to classify both self-concept items mean scores and the academic performances mean scores. The scores were then sorted into categories after which ordinal scale was used to rank the observed on a continuum as follows:

Very low, low, moderate, high and very high. (Thurstone & Clave, 1929)

Next, using minimum and maximum possible item mean scores the interval for the scales were determined as: maximum possible item mean score minus minimum possible item mean score. Given the interval for the self-concept scale and the academic performance scale, the scale equal interval of widths were determined. As regards the categorization of the ranking of the self-concept item mean scores, the arithmetic progression value was arrived at using the following formula by Herzon and Hooper (1976).

$$\frac{\text{Maximum possible mean score} - \text{minimum possible mean score}}{\text{Number of Categories}}$$

Therefore with a maximum possible mean score of 5.00, a minimum possible mean score of 1.00 over the number of categories being 5, the arithmetic progression was 0.80. Hence the mean for determining levels of self-concept and academic performance is shown in Table 3;

Table 3

Levels of Self-Concept and Academic Performance

Category	Range	Ranking
1	1.00 – 1.79	Very Low
2	1.80 – 2.59	Low
3	2.60 – 3.39	Moderate
4	3.40 – 4.19	High
5	4.20 – 5.00	Very High

Given these ranges and rankings, common knowledge suggests that item with mean scores falling in the median (i.e. range 2.60 – 3.39) would be

treated as normal and as such one view as not having a significant effect on academic performance. However, such levels of academic performance would be discussed where they have very strong relationship with some of the self-concept (i.e. range 1.00 and 5.00).

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This part of the study presents the demographic characteristics of results and discussion on the findings based on the self-administered questionnaire given to the students by the researcher.

Demographic data

Table 4 presents descriptive data on gender differences of the participants selected for the study. Table 4 reveals that out of 280 respondents, 166 representing 59% were males while the remaining 114 also representing 41% were females.

Table 4

Descriptive Data on gender difference among Participants (N- 280)

Gender	No	Percentage
Male	166	59
Female	114	41
Total	280	100

Table 5 presents a comprehensive description of age distribution among respondents for the study. It further reveals that majority of the

respondents fell within the ages of 13 – 15 years, comprising 147 students representing 52.5% of the entire sample. However, those at the age of 19 years and above constituted only 4 respondents representing 1.43%.

Table 5

Age distribution of respondents (N-280)

Age	No	Percentage
10 – 12	6	2.14
13 -15	147	52.50
16 - 18	123	43.93
19yrs and above	4	1.43
Total	280	100

Source: (Field data, 2008)

Analysis of Main Research Questions

Guided by the research objectives, research questions and the research hypotheses, the data analysis is in two parts. The first part presents the results of multiple regression analysis to determine the following:

1. How well do the six measures of self-concept (religious, physical, social, economic, esteem and educational orientation self-concepts) relate with total academic performance (i.e., Maths, English, Social Studies and Science)?
2. How much variance in total academic performance (i.e., Maths, English, Science and Social Studies) can be explained by the scores on the six self-concept scales (religious, physical, social, economic, esteem and educational orientation self- concepts)?
3 Which is the best predictor of total academic performance: Is it

religious or physical or social or economic, or esteem or educational orientation self-concept?

Results of the Research questions (Multiple Regressions)

The Multiple Regression Analysis indicates that all the six predictors met the entry requirement to be included in the equation (variable (s). The multiple R shows a moderate correlation between the overall score of all the six predictive variables (religious, physical, social, economic, esteem and educational orientation self-concepts) and the dependent variable (i.e. Academic performance) (R=.455). The R-square value indicates that about 20.7 % of the variance in academic performance is explained by the predictor variables (religious, physical, social, economic, esteem and educational orientation self-concepts). The β value indicates the relative influence of the entered variable, that is, the variable has the greatest influence on academic performance (β= .455), expressed in percentage form as 20.7%. The direction of the influence for the variable is positive.

Table 6

Results of multiple regression analysis of predicator variables

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.455	.207	.190	38.74988

Source: Computed from Field Data, 2008

a. Predictors: (Constant), Total score educational orientation self-concept, Total score social self-concept, Total score Self-esteem concept, Total score economic self-concept, Total score physical self-concept, Total score religious self-concept.

b. Dependent Variable: Overall academic performance

The ANOVA test the null hypothesis that multiple R in the population equals 0. The model in this study reaches a statistical significance (Sig. =.000, this really means P<.005).

Table 7

One way analysis of variance; overall self-construct on overall academic performance.

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between	106966.524	6	17827.754	11.873	.000
Within	409924.044	273	1501.553		
Total	516890.568	279			

Source: Computed from Field Data, 2008

a. Predictors: (Constant), Total score educational orientation self-concept, Total score social self-concept, Total score Self-esteem concept, Total score economic self-concept, Total score physical self-concept, Total score religious self-concept

b. Dependent Variable: Overall academic performance

The next thing that this study sought to determine was which of the variables included in the model contributed to the prediction of the independent variable. This information can be found in Table 8, labeled coefficients. To compare the different variables, the standardized coefficients are used. "Standardized" means that the values for each of the different variables have been converted to the same scale, so that comparison can be

made. Table 8 shows that the largest beta coefficient is .338, which is for total educational orientation self-concept, followed by total physical self-concept (-.231), then total self-esteem (.168). This means that each of these variables makes the strongest unique contribution to explaining the dependent variable, when the variance explained by all other variables in the model is controlled. The Beta value for total religious self-concept, (.014), total social self-concept (-.054), and total economic self-concept (.084) were considerably lower, indicating that they made less contribution. Therefore, this study has revealed that total educational orientation self-concept makes the strongest unique contribution to explaining the variance in academic performance.

Table 8

Co-efficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	85.588	29.156		2.936	.004
Total religious self-concept	.199	.857	.014	.233	.816
Total physical self-concept	-2.540	.626	-.231	-4.056	.000
Total Self-esteem	2.298	.801	.168	2.868	.004

Table 8 continued

Model	Unstandardized	Standardized

	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Total social self-concept	-.593	.618	-.054	-.961	.338
Total economic self-concept	1.090	.723	.084	1.507	.133
Total educational orientation self-concept	4.415	.727	.338	6.069	.000

Dependent Variable: Overall academic performance

Source: Computed from Field Data, 2008

Results of the Hypotheses - One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to determine the influence of levels of self-concept on academic performance, as measured by six self-concept scales. The Junior High School graduates were divided into three groups according to their level of self-concept (Group1: low; Group 2: moderate; and Group3: high).

The results of the descriptive statistics for Total academic performance as a result of the various self-concepts, one-way between-groups and within group's analysis of variance with post-hoc tests (where the overall ANOVA indicates a significant difference) are presented.

The tables labeled descriptive statistics provide information about the means, standard deviations, while the tables on the One-Way Analysis of Variance provide information about both between-groups and within-groups, sums of squares, and degrees of freedom, and where the overall ANOVA indicates a significant difference (That is, if Sig. was equal to or less than .05), the post-hoc test (multiple comparisons) is presented to tell exactly where the differences among the groups occur. Therefore, the results of the hypotheses using the One-Way Analysis of Variance are as follows:

Hypothesis One: There is no significant influence of religious self- concept on academic performance of the Junior High School form three students in the Elmina township.

Table 9 shows an overall mean score of 201.96 and a standard deviation of 43.04. This means that given the samples drawn from the study population, 95% of the means for these samples will fall between the lower and upper values. By way of details, the descriptive statistics in Table 9 indicate that the mean scores and standard deviations for the three groups were: Group 1 (M=174.00, SD=2.65), Group 2 (M=195.45, SD=45.22) and Group 3 (M=202.55, SD=43.16). This clearly shows that the means are different from each other. Indeed, the mean and standard deviations for group 1 are different from group 2 and different from group 3 and group 2 is also different from group 3. But these do not tell whether the differences are statistically significant or not, therefore, the need to conduct the One-Way Analysis of Variance. The means and the standard deviations suggest that students with moderate religious self-concept and students with high religious

self-concept, both scored significantly higher on the academic performance test than those students with low religious self-concept.

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics on Total Academic Performance as a Result of Religious Self- concept

Religious self-concept	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Low	3	174.00	2.65	1.53
Moderate	11	195.45	45.22	13.64
High	266	202.55	43.16	2.65
Total	280	201.96	43.04	2.57

Source: Field Survey data, 2008

With regard to hypothesis one, the data in Table 10 shows the results of the ANOVA. By way of analysis, the F-ratio value of .782 with 2 and 277 degrees of freedom (df) has a probability of occurrence by chance of .459, an indication that there is no significant influence on academic performance across the three different levels of religious self-concept. Put differently, the results in Table 10 indicate that based on a probability value of p= .459, no marginally significant difference (s) exists within comparisons of academic performance scores across the three different levels of religious self-concept. Therefore, there was no need to conduct the Tukey post-hoc test. In view of this, it can be concluded that there is no statistically significant influence on

academic performance scores across the three different levels of religious self-concept. The result supported the hypothesis.

Table 10

One-Way Analysis of Variance: Total Academic Performance as a Result of Religious Self-concept

Variable	Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Religious self-concept	Between groups	2901.882	2	1450.941	.782	.459
	Within groups	513988.686	277	1855.555		
	Total	516890.568	279			

Predictor: (Constant), Religious self-concept; Dependent Variable: Academic performance. Source: Field Survey data, 2008

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant influence of physical self- concept on academic performance of the Junior High Schools form three students in the Elmina township.

Table 11 presents the descriptive statistics of the total academic performance as a result of physical self-concepts. As indicated in Table 11, the mean score and standard deviation for the three groups are group 1 (M= 212.00 and SD= 43.43), group 2 (M=209.62 and SD= 46.31) and group 3 (M=197.86 and SD 41.24). Indeed these means are different from each other while the standard deviations for group 1 is different from group 2 and from group 3, and group 2 is also different from group 3. The question now is, are

these differences statistically significant? The ANOVA provides the answer as shown in Table 12.

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics: Total Academic Performance as a Result of Physical Self-concept

Physical self-concept	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Low	18	212.00	43.43	10.24
Moderate	76	209.62	46.31	5.31
High	186	197.86	41.24	3.02
Total	280	201.96	43.04	2.57

Source: Field Survey data, 2008

Data in Table 12 indicate that the ANOVA results with F-ratio value of 2.565 with 2 and 277 degrees of freedom (df) has a probability of occurrence by chance of .079, indicating that there is no significant influence on academic performance across the three different levels of physical self-concept.

Table 12

One-Way Analysis of Variance: Total Academic Performance as a Result of Physical Self-concept

Variable	Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Physical self-concept	Between groups	9398.268	2	4699.134	2.565	.079
	Within groups	507492.300	277	1832.102		
	Total	516890.568	279			

Predictor: (Constant), Physical self-concept; Dependent Variable: Academic performance. Source: Field Survey data, 2008

In other words, based on the probability value of p= .079, no marginally significant difference (s) exists within comparisons of academic performance scores across the three different levels of physical self-concept, hence, the Tukey post-hoc test was not conducted. Therefore, null hypothesis two which states: "there is no significant influence on academic performance as a result of physical self- concept among graduates of the Junior High Schools in the Elmina township", cannot be rejected.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant influence of esteem self- concept on academic performance of the Junior High Schools form three students in the Elmina township.

Table 13 presents the descriptive statistics on total academic performance as a result of self-esteem. The descriptive statistics in Table 13 indicate that the mean scores and standard deviations for the three groups

were: Group 1 (M=188.09, SD=36.78), Group 2 (M=192.72, SD=39.30) and Group 3(M=206.38, SD=44.21). It is clear that the means are different from each other. Indeed, the mean and standard deviations for group 1 are different from group 2 and different from group 3 and group 2 is also different from group 3. These differences are not statistically significant, hence, the result of the One-Way Analysis of Variance.

Table 13

Descriptive Statistics for Total Academic Performance as a Result of Self-esteem.

Self-esteem	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Low	11	188.09	36.78	11.09
Moderate	76	192.75	39.30	4.51
High	193	206.38	44.21	3.18
Total	280	201.96	43.04	2.57

Source: Field Survey data, 2008

The means and the standard deviations suggest that students with moderate esteem self-concept and students with high esteem self-concept, both scored significantly higher on the academic performance test than those students with low self-esteem.

The results of the One-Way Analysis of Variance in scores across the three groups or levels of self-concept in Table 11 shows that [F (2, 277) = 3.385, p=.35)] the F-ratio is large enough to suggest that the actual difference in mean scores in academic performance across the three groups or levels of

self-concept was statistically significant at the p<.05 level. In other words, there was a statistically significant difference at the p<.05 level in academic performance scores for the three different levels of self-esteem [F (2, 277) = 3.385, p=.035)]. Consequently, hypothesis three which states that there is no significant influence on academic performance as a result of esteem self-concept among graduates of the Junior High Schools in the Elmina township is rejected in favour of the alternative which states that indeed, there is a significant influence on academic performance as a result of esteem self-concept among graduates of the Junior High Schools in the Elmina township.

Table 14

One-Way Analysis of Variance: Total Academic Performance as a Result of Self-esteem

Variable	Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Esteem self-concept	Between groups	12330.020	2	6165.010	3.385	.035
	Within groups	504560.548	277	1821.518		
	Total	516890.568	279			

Predictor: (Constant), Esteem self-concept; Dependent Variable: Academic performance. Source: Field Survey data, 2008

Having discovered that a statistical significant difference exist (that is, the sig. value was equal to or less than .05) then it becomes necessary to look at the Post Hoc Test to locate exactly where the differences among the

different levels of self-concept occur. The statistical significant difference labeled multiple comparisons of the Post Hoc Test in Table 15 reveals that the overall sig. value is .03, and this is less than .05. This indicates that a statistical difference lie somewhere amongst the different levels of esteem self-concept.

With regard to the Post-Hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test the asterisks (*) indicate that there are two pairs of groups whose means differ significantly (at the $p < .05$ level) from each other. From Table 15, Group 2 (Students with moderate esteem self-concept) and Group 3 (Students with high esteem self-concept) both scored significantly higher on the academic performance test.

Table 15

Results of Post-Hoc Multiple Comparisons Using the Tukey HSD Test

Dependent variable: Academic Performance

(I) Esteem	(J) Esteem	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Group 1	Group 2	-4.66	13.77	.94
(Low)	Group 3	-18.29	13.23	.35
Group 2	Group 1	4.66	13.77	.94
(Moderate)	Group 3	-13.63*	5.78	.05
Group 3	Group 1	18.29	13.23	.35
(High)	Group 2	13.63*	5.78	.05

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Source: Field Survey data, 2008.

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant influence of social self-concept on academic performance of the Junior High Schools in the Elmina township.

Table 16 shows an overall mean score of 201.96 and a standard deviation of 43.04. This means that given the samples drawn from the study population, 95% of the means for these samples will fall between the lower and upper values. By way of details, the descriptive statistics in Table 16 indicate that the mean scores and standard deviations for the three groups were: Group 1 (M=212.52, SD=47.83), Group 2 (M=202.25, SD=45.06) and Group 3 (M=199.54, SD=40.64). This clearly shows that the means are different from each other. Indeed, the mean and standard deviations for group 1 are different from group 2 and different from group 3 and group 2 is also different from group 3. But these do not tell whether the differences are statistically significant or not, therefore, the need to conduct the One-Way Analysis of Variance. The means and the standard deviations suggest that students with moderate social self-concept and students with high social self-concept, both scored significantly higher on the academic performance test than those students with low social self-concept.

Table 16

Descriptive Statistics for Total Academic Performance as a Result of Social Self-Concept

Social self-concept	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Low	33	212.52	47.83	8.33
Moderate	92	202.25	45.06	4.70
High	155	199.54	40.64	3.26
Total	280	201.96	43.04	2.57

Source: Field Survey data, 2008

The ANOVA results in Table 17 with F-ratio value of 1.241 with 2 and 277 degrees of freedom (df) has a probability of occurrence by chance of .291. Based on these two statistics, it can be justified that there is no significant influence on academic performance across the three different levels of social self-concept; hence, the Tukey post-hoc test was not conducted. Therefore, hypothesis four which states that there is no difference in academic performance as a result of social self- concept among graduates of the Junior High Schools in the Elmina township is accepted.

Table17

One-Way Analysis of Variance: Total Academic Performance as a Result of Social Self-concept

Variable	Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Social self-concept	Between groups	4590.598	2	2295.299	1.241	.291
	Within groups	512299.970	277	1849.458		
	Total	516890.568	279			

Predictor: (Constant), Social self-concept; Dependent Variable: Academic performance. Source: Field Survey data, 2008

Hypothesis Five: There is no significant influence of economic self-concept on academic performance of the Junior High Schools form three students in the Elmina township.

Table 18 presents the descriptive statistics on the mean scores and standard deviations on academic performance for the three groups as follows: The overall mean score is 201.96 and the standard deviation is 43.04, while Group 1 (M=192.12, SD=40.92), Group 2 (M=195.02, SD=40.64) and Group 3 (M=206.72, SD=44.07). Again, it is clear that the means are different from each other. Indeed, the mean and standard deviations for group 1 are different from group 2 and different from group 3 and group 2 is also different from group 3. But it is not clear whether these differences are statistically significant. This calls for further analysis, hence, the result of the One-Way Analysis of Variance.

Table 18

Descriptive Statistics for Total Academic Performance as a Result of Economic Self-concept

Economic self-concept	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Low	16.00	192.12	40.92	10.23
Moderate	94.00	195.02	40.64	4.19
High	170.00	206.72	44.07	3.38
Total	280.00	201.96	43.04	2.57

Source: Field Survey data, 2008

Again, the ANOVA results in Table 19 with F-ratio value of 2.713 with 2 and 277 degrees of freedom (df) has a probability of occurrence by chance of .068. This is enough evidence to suggest that no significant influence on academic performance across the three different levels of economic self-concept exist.

Table19

One-Way Analysis of Variance: Total Academic Performance as a Result of Economic Self-concept.

Variable	Source of variation	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig
Economic self-concept	Between groups	9930.855	2	4965.427	2.713	.068
	Within groups	506959.713	277	1830.179		
	Total	516890.568	279			

Predictor: (Constant), Economic self-concept; Dependent Variable: Academic performance. Source: Field Survey data, 2008

For this reason the Tukey post-hoc test could not be conducted. Consequently, hypothesis five which states that there is no significant influence on academic performance as a result of economic self- concept among graduates of the Junior High Schools in the Elmina township is accepted.

Hypothesis Six: There is no significant influence of educational orientation self-concept on academic performance of the Junior High Schools in the Elmina Township.

The descriptive statistics in Table 20 indicates that the mean scores and standard deviations of the three groups were: Group 1 (M=182.50, SD=12.02), Group 2 (M=180.22, SD=39.81) and Group 3(M=205.46, SD=42.74). It is clear that the means are different from each other. Indeed, the mean and standard deviations for group 1 are different from group 2 and

different from group 3 and group 2 is also different from group 3. But are these differences statistically significant?, hence, the result of the One-Way Analysis of Variance.

Table 20

Descriptive Statistics for Total Academic Performance as a Result of Educational Orientation Self-concept

Educational orientation self-concept	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Low	2	182.50	12.02	8.50
Moderate	37	180.22	39.81	6.54
High	241	205.46	42.74	2.75
Total	280	201.96	43.04	2.57

Source: Field Survey data, 2008

The results of the One-Way Analysis of Variance in Table 21 indicate that there is a statistically significant difference at the $p<.05$ level in academic performance scores across the three groups or levels of self-concept [$F (2, 277) = 5.925$, $p=.003$)], In fact the F-ratio is large enough to suggest that the actual difference in mean scores between the three groups or levels of self-concept was quite large.

Table 21

One-Way Analysis of Variance: Total Academic Performance as a Result of Educational Orientation Self-concept

Variable	Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Educational orientation self-concept	Between groups	21203.922	2	10601.961	5.925	.003
	Within groups	495686.646	277	1789.482		
	Total	516890.568	279			

Predictor: (Constant), Educational orientation self-concept; Dependent Variable: Academic performance. Source: Field Survey data, 2008

Again, having discovered that a statistical significant difference exist (that is, the sig value was equal to or less than .05) then, the Post Hoc Test was performed to locate exactly where the differences among the different levels of educational orientation self-concept occur. Thus, the Post Hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test suggest that students with moderate educational orientation self-concept and students with high educational orientation self-concept, both scored significantly higher on the academic performance test.

The asterisks (*) indicate that there are two pairs of groups whose means differ significantly (at the $p < .05$ level) from each other with regard to academic performance test due to educational orientation self-concept. Consequently, hypothesis six which states that there is no significant influence of academic self-concept on academic performance of the Junior High Schools

in the Elmina township is rejected in favour of the alternative which states that indeed, there is a there is a significant influence of academic self-concept on academic performance of the Junior High School form three students in the Elmina township.

Table 22

Results of Post-Hoc Multiple Comparisons Using the Tukey HSD Test

Dependent variable: Academic Performance

(I) Education	(J) Education	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Group 1	Group 2	2.28	30.71	1.00
(Low)	Group 3	-22.96	30.04	.73
Group 2	Group 1	-2.28	30.71	1.00
(Moderate)	Group 3	-25.24*	7.47	.00
Group 3	Group 1	22.96	30.04	.73
(High)	Group 2	25.24*	7.47	.00

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Source: Field Survey data, 2008

Hypothesis Seven: There is no significant influence of academic performance on overall self-concept of Junior High School form three Students.

The descriptive statistics in Table 23 indicate that the mean scores and standard deviations for the three groups were: Group 1 (M=175, SD=2.83), Group 2 (M=194.47, SD=38.98) and Group 3 (M=201.22, SD=41.40). Again,

it is clear that the means are different from each other. Indeed, the mean and standard deviations for group 1 are different from group 2 and different from group 3 and group 2 is also different from group 3. But it is not clear whether these differences are statistically significant. This calls for further analysis, hence, the result of the One-Way Analysis of Variance.

Table 23

Descriptive Statistics for Total Academic Performance as a Result of Overall Self-concept

Overall self-concept	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Low	2	175.00	2.83	2.00
Moderate	19	194.47	38.98	8.94
High	109	201.17	45.79	4.39
Total	130	201.22	41.40	3.63

Source: Field Survey data, 2008

All in all, it was also hypothesized that there is no significant influence on academic performance as a result of overall self-concept among graduates of the Junior High Schools in the Elmina township. The ANOVA results in Table 23 with F-ratio value of 1.133 with 2 and 277 degrees of freedom (df) has a probability of occurrence by chance of .341 lend support to this hypothesis. Indeed, there is enough evidence to suggest that no significant influence on academic performance across the three different levels of the overall self-concept exist. No Tukey post-hoc test was conducted. Consequently, this hypothesis is also accepted.

Table 24

One-Way Analysis of Variance: Total Academic Performance as a Result of Overall Self-concept

Variable	Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Overall self-concept	Between groups	8397.641	2	2099.410	1.133	.341
	Within groups	505994.234	273	1853.459		
	Total	514391.874	277			

Predictor: (Constant), Overall self-concept; Dependent Variable: Academic performance. Source: Field Survey data, 2008

Summary of Findings

On the whole, the constructs (religious, physical, self-esteem, social, economic and educational orientation self-concepts) were used to determine whether they have influence on academic performance of form three Junior High School students in the Elmina township. The results obtained established that there was no significant influence on academic performance as a result of religious, social, economic and overall self-concepts. However, it was found that physical, self-esteem, and educational orientation self-concepts have a significant influence on academic performance of students.

Discussions of findings

This section is focused on discussing information obtained from the results of the research questions and the hypotheses formulated and tested for the study.

Research question one

How well do the six measures of self-concepts (religious, physical, social, economic, self-esteem, and educational orientation self-concept) relate to total academic performance in (Maths, English, Social Studies and Science)? Results obtained indicated that the overall score of the self-concepts showed a moderate relationship with total academic performance. However, individual constructs such as religious, economic, social self-concepts did not show any relationship with academic performance. In relation to the religious self-concept, the finding is in support of a study by Wood (1989) which states that years in fellowshipping programme could undermine academic self-concepts which can also lead to poor academic performance.

Research question two

How much variance in total academic performance (Maths, English, Social Studies and Science) can be explained by the scores on the six self-concept scales (religious, physical, social, economic, self-esteem, and educational orientation self-concept). The results obtained also indicated that $R=0.455$, $R^2 = .207$ representing 20.7% of the variance in total academic performance is explained by the total score of the six constructs. This clearly explains that there are other variables which the study did not capture but can determine the remaining 79.3%.

Since self-concept in general is acquired through learning but not born with, it emerges gradually in the early months of life which is shaped and reshaped through repeated perceived experiences, particularly with significant others (Cornall, 1990). For this reason, parents, teachers, and indeed all the educational stakeholders should not leave any stone unturned in the process of promoting all the components of self-concepts to boost academic performance among students.

Research question three

Which is the best predictor of the total academic performance? Is it religious or physical or social or economic or self-esteem or educational orientation self-concepts? Results obtained indicate that out of the six constructs, educational orientation was found to be the best predictor of the total academic performance of students. This finding confirms earlier work by Gerardi, (1990), in a study of 98 first-year engineering students at CUNY. According to the finding, academic orientation was found to be best predictor of academic success as measured by GPA in minority and low socio-economic status college students. In support of this finding, Dienstbier (1990), points out that academic orientation is linked to adolescent motivation to succeed in school or perform academically. In view of this, it is considered as an essential component of an adolescent educational wellbeing (Marsh et al, 1999).

Religious self-concept on academic performance

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant influence of religious self-concept on academic performance of Junior High School form three students. Result obtained indicates that no significant relationship existed between students' religious self-concept and their academic performance. This

finding means that religious self-concept cannot be considered as a construct that accounts for academic performance among students in Junior High School. This could further imply that no matter how one becomes very religious, he or she cannot achieve academic laurels if real learning does not take place. The reason for this finding could be that religious activities in general and academic work are two different entities and that none of them can be held directly accountable for the other and this might explain the rationale behind the finding. This means that academic performance in class cannot be attributed to religious activities.

In view of this, the idea or popular notion among students and even some fanatic religious personalities that devoting much time in fellowshipping and observing all-nights vigils in churches and prayer camps in order for God to help one to be successful should not be encouraged by teachers/counsellors. This notion confirms a study by Wood (1989), which states that years in fellowship programme could undermine academic self-concepts leading to poor academic performance among students. However, fellowshipping alongside with conscious efforts of being studious could yield good academic performance**.**

Physical self-concept and academic performance

The null hypothesis states that physical self-concept has no significant influence on academic performance of Junior High school form three students. Result obtained indicated that a significant influence of physical self-concept on academic performance existed. This finding appears to be in line with the general perception or impression people have that well-looking students' do well academically in school. That apart, it also confirms a study by Daley, et

al. (2000), which states that physical fitness of students has a positive correlation with academic performance. Again, the finding supports that of Dwyer, et al. (2001), which also states that children who are physically active and fit tend to perform better in class, and that daily physical education does not adversely affect academic performance of students. In effect, the finding could be explained that much attention is being given to physical education in schools within Elmina township for the development of fitness and sound mind, which are sine qua non for academic performance. In view of these, students physical self-concept should always be taken care of by all educational stakeholders especially parents, right from the onset of a child's development. Besides, physical educational programmes in schools should be fully enforced to promote sound minds and physical fitness for academic performance. By this finding, if this is well done, children will grow up to have high physical self-concept for positive academic performance.

Self-esteem concept and academic performance

The null hypothesis states that self-esteem has no significant influence on academic performance among Junior High School form three students. Results obtained indicated that a significant influence of self-esteem on academic performance of students existed. According to Bandura (1997), self-esteem is constructed by one's conscience reflections, and for this reason, educators and parents are expected to provide experiences that students can master, rather than attempting to boost self-esteem directly through other means.

In relating this view to the finding, it could be explained that both educators and parents of Elmina township are providing the kind of

experiences that augur well for and are also conducive to the construction of conscious reflection for meaningful academic performance. This finding is in support of earlier study by Lill, et. al, (1992), which states that self-esteem both influences and is influenced by academic achievement. This clearly implies that the construct self-esteem can conveniently be held accountable/responsible for a students' academic performance in school. In addition to this, Manning, Bear, and Minke (2006), also indicate that the significance of self-esteem is often exaggerated to the extent that low self-esteem is always viewed as the cause of all evil, while high self-esteem as the cause of all good, and so promoting high self-esteem is of great importance since it relates to academic and life success.

Since self is a portion of the individual's phenomenological field that becomes differentiated and symbolized (Rogers 1951), and can be modified or changed, (Franken 1994), children's self-esteem should not be compromised for anything, rather it be given a strong foundation at home before they start schooling. By implication, the finding suggests that in any attempt to look out for constructs which can positively affect students' academic performance in school, the level of self-esteem should not be left out, instead be given serious attention.

Social self-concept and academic performance

The null hypothesis states that social self-concept has no significant influence on academic performance of Junior High School form three students. Results obtained indicate that no significant influence of social self-concept on academic performance existed. This finding means that students' levels of social self-concepts (high, moderate or low) cannot account for their

academic performance in school. The reason might be that the social interactions that go on in the area of study between students and their significant others including other peers at home, may not have any bearings on classroom work. This is in line with earlier study by Jordan and Nettles (2000), which showed that adolescents who spent greater time hanging out with their peers had lower levels of math and science achievement in the 12th grade than their counterparts who spend less time with peers. In contrast, Boy and Pine (1968), illustrating child's view point in their theory about perception and school achievements, emphasized that an individual builds' his/her social self-concept which influences his/her academic performance from the way he/she perceives and interacts with others or his/her peers.

From the above view point, one cannot say that the fact that the study did not establish any relationship between social self-concept and student academic performance, the former should completely be ignored in any attempt to counsel students to improve on their academic performance in school. As self-concept of an individual is built through interactions with peers and has influence on academic performance, social self-concept which is an aspect of self-concept also formed through interaction with peers out of which a total personality of an individual can be determined, should be considered in counseling sessions since it (personality) affects academic performance of students.

Economic self-concept and academic performance

The null hypothesis states that economic self-concept has no significant influence on academic performance among Junior High School form three students. The result obtained indicates that no significant influence of economic self-concept on academic performance of student existed. This finding also contradicts earlier study by Gettscholk, McLanahan and Sandefur (1994), which states that lower levels of education or academic success and skills are associated with lower levels of economic success. The likely reason for this finding could be that economic success cannot be a significant construct accounting for the general performance of students in Elmina township. Indeed, it has been a popular notion that, children from affluent homes or with sound economic background have the tendency to perform academically. This is because, securing all the requisite educogenic materials to enhance learning, not to talk of the ability to pay for children to be enrolled in extra classes for better performance will not be a problem. But this has not been supported by the finding of the study. For this reason, in considering constructs or variables which affect academic performance of students, economic self-concept cannot be considered. In view of this, parents, teachers, counsellors and indeed all stakeholders should go beyond economic self-concept in an attempt to look for solutions for low performance among students.

Educational self-orientation and academic performance

The null hypothesis states that educational orientation self-concept has no significant influence on academic performance of Junior High School form three students. The result obtained indicates that, a significant influence of academic self-concept on academic performance of students existed. This

might be due to the fact that both educational orientation and academic work share certain characteristics which intelligence is one, so that any student with education orientation self-concept should automatically perform well in school. That apart, it is also possible that much attention is placed on the development of students' educational orientation self-concept by teachers for the alternative reason of performing well in school. This finding supports or confirms earlier study by Gettlieb, Rosemary, Rogers and Janet (2002), which showed that academic self-concepts and achievement are strong predictors of each other, and that individuals with low academic self-concepts have shown low commitment to school work. However, the finding contradicts another study by Gage and Bearliner (1992), which showed that measures of general or even academic self-concept are not significantly related to school achievement. Since academic self-concept relates to how well one does in school or how well one learns, to bring about a positive relationship between it and academic performance (Cooley, 2000), conscious and concerted efforts must be made at all times by teachers to assist students to form good study habits to enhance their general academic performance. Besides, extra classes can be formalized and made compulsory in all schools to help students build high academic self-concept to bring about high academic performance.

Overall self-concept and academic performance

The null hypothesis states that overall self-concept has no significant influence on academic performance of Junior High School form three students. The result obtained indicates that there was no significant influence of overall self-concept on academic performance. This finding is not in support of earlier studies by Baumeister et al, (2003), which states that self-

concept is frequently positively correlated with academic performance, but it appears to be a consequence rather than a cause of high achievement. This is backed by another study by Boulter, (2002), which also states that a strong self-concept acts as a predictor of good academic achievement.

The most likely reason for the finding of this study is that students' self-concept in general is not strong or weak enough to inhibit or enhance academic performance. In this sense, high or low academic performance of students cannot be attributed to high, moderate, or low self-concept but some other variables which the study did not cover. For this reason counsellors in particular, should be guided by the finding of this study to explore other constructs other than self-concept in their bid to assist clients who are students to over come their academic problems in schools.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The concluding chapter of this study comprises the summary, conclusions, recommendations made for the study and suggestions for further studies.

Summary

The research design used for the study was the Ex Post Facto design which was basically to find out the effects that self-concepts such as religious, physical, self-esteem, social, economic, educational orientation and overall self-concept have on students' academic performance of Junior High School form three students in Elmina township. The data to test the hypotheses were obtained through administration of researcher's constructed questionnaire which was administered on the respondents used in the study. The data was consequently analyzed using the frequency and percentages for answering the research hypothesis, while psychometric properties of the respondents' data, in the form of mean and standard deviations were computed, using one-way analysis of variance statistics and multiple regression analysis. The under listed findings were established:

1. No significant relationship was found to exist between students' religious self-concept and their academic performance.
2. A significant relationship was found to exist between physical self-concept and academic performance of students.

3. A significant relationship was found to exist between student's self-esteem and their academic performance.
4. No significant relationship was found to exist between student's social self-concept and academic performance.
5. No significant relationship was found to exist between students economic self-concept and their academic performance
6. A significant relationship was found to exist between students' academic self-concept and their academic performance.
7. No significant relationship was found to exist between students' self-concept and their academic performance.

Conclusions

The study has established that out of the seven constructs including overall self-concepts, only three namely physical, self-esteem and academic self-concept have influence on students' academic performance in schools. By implication, counsellorss are expected to put much premium on these constructs in any attempt to counsel students to overcome their academic challenges.

However, the fact that the study did not establish any relationship between the remaining construct (religious, social, economic, and overall self-construct) and academic performance of students does not mean that they should be relegated to the background in counselling, since other works in the literature established their correlation with students' academic performance.

Recommendations

In the light of the research findings and conclusions drawn for this study, the following recommendations have been made to facilitate counselling services to clients especially students:

1. In an attempt to assist students to overcome their academic problems, physical and academic self-concepts should be given much attention since the study found a significant influence of the two constructs on academic performance of students.
2. Students should always be guided by counsellors to form good study habits so that much time is not spent on religious activities since the study found no significance influence of religious self-concept on academic performance.
3. Since "Self" is the central construct which develops through interactions with others, (Rogers 1951), it is said to be the part of experience that a person identifies as "I", "Me" or "Myself" and that includes "what I am", "Who I am" "What I can do", and "What I cannot do". Since this construct (self) can have effects on academic performance, it must be given prominent attention by both teachers and counsellors when counselling or dealing with students.
4. Even though the study found no significant influence of economic self-concepts on academic performance of students, counsellors should be abreast with knowledge about various sources where students who are financially handicapped can apply to have access to financial support.

5. Since other constructs other than the six selected ones for the study, can be held accountable for students academic performance, Districts, Municipal and Metropolitan Directorate of Education Service should revisit their strategies to adapt more pragmatic and alternative strategies to intensify and enrich counselling programmes in schools.
6. Even though peer group is conceptualized as an agent of education, students should not be encouraged in counselling sessions to over indulge themselves in peer group activities to the detriment of their academic work, since the study did not establish any significant influence of social self-concept on academic performance.
7. As the finding of the study contradicts the general notion that students from affluent homes do better than their counterparts from poor homes, parents, especially those below the poverty line should be counselled to desist from the erroneous impression that their children cannot excel academically because of their impoverishment.
8. Since the study indicates a significant influence of physical self-concept on academic performance, parents and guardians should be counselled to see the need of giving children a balanced diet to enhance their growth and physic in order to have sound minds for their academic work in school.
9. Since the study established that there is a significant relationship between academic self-concept and academic

performance of students, counsellors in various schools should be more proactive and innovative to design very comprehensive educational programmes for their students to enhance their study habits.

Suggestions for further studies

The main objective of this study was to determine the effects of constructs (religious, physical, self-esteem, social, economic, educational attainments and overall self-concepts) have on students' academic performance in the Junior High Schools. The researcher could not extend the study to cover other equally important constructs that can have effects on academic performance. For this reason, the researcher deemed it worthwhile that future research/further studies by other graduate students and researchers focus on the following areas.

1. The effects of Social environment self-concept on academic performance of students.
2. The effects of Physical activities self-concepts on academic performance of students.
3. The effects of Motivational self-concepts on academic performance of students.
4. The effects of Academic environment self-concepts on academic performance of students.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE ON SELF-CONCEPT AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Dear Participant,

This is a questionnaire that is meant for research purpose only. I know how busy you are, but you will be contributing greatly to this study if you answer the underlisted questions as frankly as possible.

Please, be informed that it is not a test so feel free to provide responses to all the items in the questionnaire. The response you give shall be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Ekow Laryea

Instruction

Please, you are required to answer all questions in all sections A to F.

SECTION A

1. Name of respondent ……
2. Form / Class……
3. Gender: [ ] Male [ ] Female.
4. Age range: [ ] 10 - 12 [ ] 13 - 15 [ ] 16 - 18

   Any Other (Specify): ……

SECTION B

Below are some statements on a five-point Likert scale. You are to select or tick (√) only one response from each statement. Please, the symbols have the following interpretations:

SD: Strongly Disagree

D: Disagree

Un: Undecided

A: Agree

SA; Strongly Agree

Religion

Statement	SD	D	Un	A	SA
God is everything in life.					
Prayers can solve all problems.					
You have to be religious to be successful					
Reading a lot of religious materials and being regular in Church/Mosque or any place of worship alone is important in life					
I am very religious					
Religion is not good for me					

SECTION C

Physical

I believe that a person's level of fitness is what helps him / her to succeed.	SD	D	Un	A	SA
I believe that one's physical appearance determines how clever one is.					
I believe that very weak pupils find it difficult to cope in school					
I am physically fit.					
I am proud of my physique					
I wish I could be more handsome/beautiful					

.

SECTION D

Esteem

I am confident about myself	SD	D	Un	A	SA
I feel miserable most of the time.					
If I have the choice, I will not like to be born as I am					
I am successful in everything that I do					
I am a failure in life.					
I am a never-do-well person.					

SECTION E

Social

Friends always cluster around me	SD	D	Un	A	SA
I like to stay alone most of the time					
I am born a natural leader.					
Friends are always seeking my opinion in every issue					
I like to stay around people most of the time					
I feel sad when I have no one to talk to.					

SECTION F

Economic

I am financially sound	SD	D	Un	A	SA
I engage in economic work to make ends meat					
Money has been a major source of problem in my family					
I wish I have enough money to cater for my needs					
I am always broke					
I regret for God not making me financially sound like some friends of mine.					

SECTION G

Educational Orientation

To pass examination has always been my problem	SD	D	Un	A	SA
I thank God that I easily pass my exams					
I know that my success in life will come through education					
My teachers always have positive remarks about my success.					
Going to school is not for people like me.					
Tackling academic problems has always been easy for me.					

Thank you.

APPENDIX B

COVERING LETTER

Department of Educational

Foundations Counselling

Centre University of Cape Coast

Cape Coast

20th September, 2008

Dear Sir/Madam,

PERMISSION TO ADMINISTER QUESTIONNAIRE IN YOUR SCHOOL

I wish to write to inform you that your school is among schools in Elmina Township which has been selected through simple random sampling method for a research work on students' self-concepts and their academic performance.

In view of that, I would be very grateful to you if I could be granted permission to administer questionnaires to your students as respondents for the study.

Thank you very much in anticipation of positive response.

Yours faithfully,

SIGNED:

JOHN EKOW LARYEA