TEACHERS' MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES AS CORRELATES TO STUDENTS'ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN HOMA BAY COUNTY, KENYA

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my original work and has not been presented in any other University/institution for consideration of any certification. This research project has been complemented by referenced sources duly acknowledged. Where text, data (including spoken words), graphics, pictures or tables have been borrowed from other sources, including the Internet, these are specifically accredited and references cited using current APA system and in accordance with anti-plagiarism regulations.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my beloved wife Angeline Nyaboke, whose unwavering support and encouragement have been my pillars throughout the entire period of my study. Her love and understanding have provided me with the strength and motivation to pursue my academic goals. I also extend my heartfelt gratitude to my son, Adriel Krashen, whose presence has brought immense joy and inspiration to my life. His innocent laughter and boundless curiosity have been a source of constant motivation for me to strive for excellence. Additionally, I am deeply thankful to my father, Edward Owino, for his invaluable guidance and wisdom, which have been instrumental in shaping my academic journey. His beliefs in my abilities and his unwavering support have been a source of immense strength during challenging times.

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Last but certainly not least, I express my profound appreciation to my family for their unwavering understanding and unwavering support throughout this academic pursuit. Their encouragement and sacrifices has been the cornerstone of my success, and I am forever grateful for their love and encouragement.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

GPA	Grade Point Average
IQ	Intelligent Quotient
KCSE	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
NCSTI	National Commission on Science, Technology and Innovation
RAM	Autonomous Motivation
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

ABSTRACT

Active learning and the teacher contribute to meaningful learning. Active participation requires motivation, which is fundamental, especially for learners who view the learning process as a challenging and time-consuming activity. Concerns about the effectiveness of current teacher motivation strategies were issues that were raised considering that teachers were a crucial factor in shaping student performance. This could be achieved through the implementation of motivational strategies to enhance students' performance. This study aimed to establish teacher motivational strategies as correlates to students' academic performance in public secondary schools. The study was guided by the following objectives: to assess the correlation between goal setting and academic performance in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County, Kenya; to establish the relationship between clear performance standards and students' academic performance in Homa Bay County; to evaluate the correlation between timely feedback and students' academic performance in Homa Bay County; and to assess the correlation between a conducive learning environment and students' academic performance in Homa Bay County. This study adopted Maslow's theories of motivation. A correlation research design was used. The study was conducted in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County, Kenya. The research targeted 32 public secondary schools in Homa Bay County, totalling 736 target participants. The study sampled 10 schools and thus a total sample size of 115 that included 32 heads of departments, 19 teachers, and 64 students. Stratified sampling was used to select schools based on the following strata: public boarding secondary schools and mixed day secondary schools. Simple random sampling was used to select heads of departments, teachers, and students. The instruments for data collection included questionnaires for teachers and students, and an interview schedule for heads of departments. Content validity was determined by expert opinion. Reliability was ascertained through the Cronbach's alpha technique. Piloting was done in institutions not included in the final study. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically and presented in thematic summaries and quotes, while quantitative data was analyzed using Spearman rank correlation, frequencies, percentages, means, and was presented in tables and graphs. The study rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative that clearly defined and consistently communicated performance standards significantly enhanced students' academic performance. Specifically, 68% of students agreed or strongly agreed that performance standards for their subjects were effectively communicated, while 59% agreed that well-defined performance standards positively impacted their academic outcomes. Teachers reinforced this perception, with 88% agreeing that adherence to performance standards improved student success. The study found that goal-setting positively impacts students' academic performance and motivation. Although only 15% of students frequently set academic goals, 43% believe goal-setting boosts their motivation. Additionally, 47% of teachers observed a strong positive effect of goal-setting on student outcomes, with 59% linking goal-setting to improved grades. It was recommended that educational policies mandate the establishment of clear and well-communicated performance standards across schools to ensure students are aware of the academic expectations and work toward meeting them. Additionally, policies should promote the integration of goal-setting practices and timely, constructive feedback mechanisms and provide both physical and emotional conducive learning environment to enhance student motivation and academic performance.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the study's background, followed by the statement of the problem, the study's purpose, research objectives, questions, and hypotheses. It discusses the significance of the study, its limitations and delimitations, and underlying assumptions. Additionally, the chapter outlines the theoretical and conceptual frameworks guiding the study, along with definitions of key terms.

1.1 Background to the Study

Education involves gaining knowledge, attitudes, and skills, occurring in formal environments like schools and informal settings as well (Papi & Hiver, 2020). This comprehensive process plays a pivotal role in the holistic development of a nation’s youth, preparing them for the responsibilities and challenges of adulthood. Extensive research has demonstrated that education is vital not only for shaping students' social and economic development within formal educational environments but also for improving overall societal well-being (Mphale & Mhlauli, 2014; Wara, Aloka & Odongo, 2018). Consequently, stakeholders, including parents and educators, emphasize the importance of students achieving academic excellence.

Academic performance signifies the grades students ‘get through summative evaluations in educational institutions. It includes the results of students' abilities to interact with educational material, both quantitatively and qualitatively, during formative and summative assessments (Schilling & Applegate, 2012). Achieving high academic success in secondary school significantly impacts students' prospects for higher education and future employment opportunities (Dev, 2016). Assessing academic performance through exams fulfils several roles, including pinpointing

students' strengths and areas needing improvement, providing feedback on their progress, measuring the attainment of educational objectives, assigning grades, and ranking students based on their capabilities (Wara et al., 2018).

Many African nations are prioritizing investments in education across primary to tertiary levels. However, they face a persistent challenge: students' consistently low academic performance (Miller &Yodar, 2016). In Botswana, for example, the government has introduced free primary education and supports students through secondary education. This commitment is evident in the significant portion of the national budget allocated to the Ministry of Education (Matambo, 2015). Despite these initiatives, there has been a noticeable decline in students' academic performance since 2010 (Luke & Mavins, 2014).

In Tanzania, the government has implemented various policy and structural reforms aimed at ensuring high-quality education (United Republic of Tanzania, 2016). Key among these initiatives are the Education Sector Development Programmes, the National Vision 2025, and the National Science and Technology Policy (URT, 2016). Despite these concerted efforts, there has been a noticeable decline in academic performance in secondary schools. Reports from the United Republic of Tanzania (2018) indicate a declining trend in student academic achievement. For instance, pass rates for divisions I to III were 36.6% in 2017, 31% in 2018, 17.9% in 2019, 11.5% in 2020, and 10.05% in 2021 (URT, 2022).

The Kenyan government has implemented free primary education (FPE) and subsidized secondary education to enhance accessibility. Resources, such as those from initiatives like the Constituency Development Fund (CDF), are allocated to improve teaching materials, infrastructure, and academic standards in secondary

schools, with the goal of enhancing national examination results. Furthermore, the establishment of additional national secondary schools aims to bolster students' academic performance. Despite these efforts, the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MOEST) highlighted concerns in 2010 regarding academic performance in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) (Kenya Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 2010). Homa Bay County, in particular, has encountered persistent challenges in achieving satisfactory academic outcomes, as depicted in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Mean Scores of students in the KCSE Examinations from 2018 to 2022 in Homa Bay Kenya

Year	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**
Mean score (%)	5.34	5.61	5.91	3.91	4.49

Source: Homa Bay County (2018-2022)

In the effort to improve student academic performance, various motivational strategies have demonstrated effectiveness in fostering a conducive learning environment. This research focused specifically on four strategies: timely feedback, goal setting, performance standards, and optimizing the learning environment.

Feedback plays a critical role by providing students with valuable insights into their strengths and areas needing improvement (Hattie & Timperley, 2017). Constructive feedback not only guides students but also promotes a growth mindset, encouraging them to see challenges as opportunities for growth (Dweck, 2016).

Simultaneously, goal setting serves as a pathway to academic success. Setting clear and achievable objectives provides students with purpose and direction, thereby enhancing motivation and persistence (Locke & Latham, 2020). Performance

standards act as benchmarks, enabling educators and students to evaluate progress and adapt strategies as needed (Chappuis et al., 2018). These standards establish a measurable framework, ensuring transparency and achievability in academic expectations.

Moreover, the learning environment itself plays a critical role in shaping academic outcomes. A positive and supportive atmosphere, which includes collaborative learning opportunities and access to resources, significantly enhances student engagement and overall performance (Freeman, Eddy, McDonough, Smith, Okoroafor, Jordt, & Wenderoth, 2017). Together, integrating feedback, goal setting, performance standards, and an enriching learning environment forms a comprehensive approach to optimizing student academic achievement.

To ensure effective implementation of these strategies, schools have adopted various approaches. These include ongoing initiatives such as workshops, training sessions, and mentorship programs designed to enhance teachers' proficiency in utilizing motivational strategies to actively engage students (Jones, 2018; Smith, 2020). The curriculum is also enriched with diverse motivational strategies aimed at capturing students' interest (Brown et al., 2019; Johnson, 2021).

The institution prioritizes the promotion of a positive learning environment through investment in resources, conducive physical infrastructure, and encouragement of collaborative learning (Miller, 2016). Incentive programs, such as scholarships and certificates of recognition, are valued tools to acknowledge outstanding academic achievements or improvements, reinforcing positive behavior (Robinson, 2022). Parental involvement policies are developed to encourage and facilitate parents' active participation in their children's education through regular meetings, workshops, and

effective communication strategies (Davis, 2018). The institution's commitment to staying abreast of the latest research findings on motivational strategies and academic success is evident through research-informed policies, continually adapted to incorporate recent insights into educational practices, while flexibility in teaching approaches allows for the exploration of innovative methods to maintain student engagement (Anderson, 2023; Taylor, 2019). Community engagement and partnerships are actively fostered to create a supportive network for students through mentorship programs, internships, and extracurricular activities aimed at enhancing motivation and strengthening students' connection to their education (Hill & Rogers, 2020). This proposal aims to explore and implement these strategies to create an effective educational framework that nurtures students' intellectual growth and success.

While existing research has illuminated various dimensions such as leadership styles, socio-economic status, student characteristics, academic motivation, and academic self-concept, the specific dynamics of how motivational strategies influence academic performance remained a gap in the current understanding.

Expanding on prior studies by Ogalo (2013) on leadership styles, Barry (2015) on socio-economic status, Ogweno, Kathuri, and Obara (2014) on student characteristics, Tokan and Imakulata (2019) on academic motivation, and Gayen and Bahera (2018) on academic self-concept, this study aimed to deepen understanding by examining the specific context of Homa Bay County. The distinctive socio-cultural aspects of this region justify a targeted exploration of how motivational strategies intersect with academic achievement among high school students.

The policy environment around motivation in schools established guidelines to ensure that strategies used to inspire student engagement and achievement are ethical, inclusive, and aligned with educational standards. Policies emphasized equity, ensuring motivational practices are accessible to all students regardless of background, ability, or socioeconomic status. They promote the use of positive reinforcement methods, such as rewards and recognition, while discouraging punitive or harmful approaches. Anti-discrimination policies further protect students from practices that could marginalize or disadvantage specific groups. Additionally, parental involvement policies ensure that motivational strategies respect cultural and ethical sensitivities. By aligning these approaches with broader educational goals and performance standards, the policy environment fosters a supportive framework that enhances student well-being and academic success.

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between teacher motivational strategies and academic achievement among public secondary students in Homa Bay County.While existing research has illuminated various dimensions such as leadership styles, socio-economic status, student characteristics, academic motivation, and academic self-concept, the specific dynamics of how motivational strategies influence academic performance remained a gap in the current study.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Ministry of Education has made significant efforts to ensure quality education for all children, prompting the government to introduce various initiatives aimed at improving the quality of secondary school education. These measures included improving school infrastructure, increasing learning resources through CDF funds, and implementing policies such as free day secondary education. However, despite these initiatives, public secondary schools in Homa Bay County have consistently

displayed low academic performance, especially in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) exams. This ongoing issue raised concerns about the effectiveness of current teacher motivation strategies, considering that teachers are a crucial factor in shaping student performance.

While teacher motivation has been recognized as a key element in enhancing student achievement, it was unclear whether the existing motivation strategies were having a significant impact on student outcomes. Given that teachers play a pivotal role in supporting students' academic success, the persistent low performance in the region suggested a gap in the effectiveness of these strategies. Therefore, the researcher conducted this study to investigate the correlation between teacher motivational strategies and students' academic performance in the KCSE in Homa Bay County. The study examined the different motivational techniques employed by teachers and assessed how these strategies influenced student engagement and achievement, providing valuable insights into how teacher motivation can be optimized to improve educational outcomes in the region.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to establish how teachers' motivational strategies correlate with students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County, Kenya. This was necessary to establish empirically how the goal setting and feedback mechanisms was useful to enhance student's academic performance.

1.4 Objectives

i. To establish the relationship between clear performance standards and students' academic performance in Homa Bay County.

ii. To assess the correlation between goal setting and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County.

iii. To evaluate the correlation between timely feedback and students' academic performance in Homa Bay County.

iv. To assess the correlation between a conducive learning environment and students' academic performance in Homa Bay County.

1.5 Hypotheses of the study

i. $\mathbf{H_{O1}}$: There is no significant relationship between a clear performance standards and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County.

ii. $\mathbf{H_{O2}}$: There is no significant relationship between goal setting and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Homa-Bay County.

iii. $\mathbf{H_{O3}}$: There is no significant relationship between timely feedback and students' academic performance in Homa Bay County.

iv. $\mathbf{H_{O4}}$: There is no significant relationship between a conducive learning environment and students' academic performance in Homa Bay County.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study could inform the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology in developing policies that focus on learners' motivation levels. The results from the study provide useful facts for understanding the teachers' motivational strategies and thus assisting policy makers such as Teachers Service

Commission to develop policies that are responsive focusing on improving students academic performance.

Moreover, the findings can serve as a basis for designing and implementing capacity building programs focused on teachers' motivational strategies. This would allow them to develop plans for more effective ways to inspire their students and improve the school's overall output. As a means of providing feedback to educators regarding the impact of their involvement on student performance, this research will also be highly relevant to the school systems involved in the study. This is crucial since studies have shown that receiving useful feedback may really boost one's own levels of intrinsic drive.

In their capacity as implementers of the curriculum, teachers are burdened with the responsibility of motivating their students to learn. Because of this, they will gain a great deal from any approach of motivating action that turns out to be successful. The findings of this study will aid in devising more efficient strategies to motivate students in public secondary schools, resulting in enhanced academic performance and educational achievements.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

1.7.1 Unwillingness of Respondents to Participate

The participants were reluctant to take part in the study due to concerns that it was primarily aimed at evaluating the performance of their institutions. This concern stemmed from fears of negative consequences for their schools based on their responses. To address this limitation, the researcher provided a clear and comprehensive explanation in the informed consent section of the survey instrument, assuring respondents that the study did not focus on the specific achievement of their

institution. Emphasizing the confidentiality of responses and the aggregated nature of the data alleviated concerns and encouraged participation.

1.7.2 Recall Bias

Participants may have found it challenging to recall previous events preciously or experiences, potentially leading to recall bias in their responses. To mitigate recall bias, the researcher framed questions in a way that focused on recent and salient experiences, minimizing the need for extensive recall. Additionally, the questionnaire included prompts to aid respondents in recalling specific information.

1.7.3 Data Collection Constraints

Practical limitations such as resources affected the capacity to gather extensive data from a large pool of respondents. The researcher prioritized data collection by focusing on essential variables and ensured that the sample size was sufficient for meaningful analysis. Additionally, the researcher made efforts to maximize response rates through clear and concise survey invitations, reminders, and follow-ups.

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

1.8.1 Geographic Delimitation

This study focused specifically on students attending public secondary schools in Homa Bay County, Kenya, and did not encompass students from other regions or counties. Therefore, the findings were not directly applicable to students in different geographic areas.

1.8.2 Secondary School Level Delimitation

This study was restricted to secondary-level students, specifically those enrolled in public secondary schools. It did not encompass students from primary or tertiary education institutions.

1.8.3 Timeframe Delimitation

The data collection and analysis for this study was conducted within a specific timeframe. It did not extend beyond the predetermined research period. As a result, the study did not capture long-term trends or changes over extended periods.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

1.9.1 Data Availability

The study assumed that all required data, including academic records and survey responses, were readily available.

The assumption was that the required data were available for analysis within the defined research timeframe.

The study also operated under the assumption that there existed a correlation between teacher motivational strategies and students' academic performance.

1.9.2 Respondent Honesty

It was assumed that respondents provided honest and accurate responses to the survey questions. The assumption was based on the belief that respondents reflected their genuine academic motivation and performance in their responses.

1.9.3 Lack of External Interference

The study assumed that external factors, such as significant educational policy changes or major events, did not unduly influence academic motivation and performance. It was anticipated that external factors might significantly impact the academic motivation and performance of students during the study.

1.0 Theoretical Framework

This investigation was informed by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, which Abraham Maslow proposed in 1943 and further elaborated in his scholarly work "A Theory of Human Motivation" published in the Psychological Review; this theory extends to include his observations on human curiosity. According to Maslow, human motivation is rooted in the fulfilment of specific needs. Once a particular level of need is met, it no longer serves as a motivator, and the next level of need becomes the primary driver. Maslow delineated five levels within this hierarchy of need.

Physiological Needs; these needs are critical for human survival and encompass essentials such as food, clothing, shelter, air, water, and other fundamental necessities. They are vital for sustaining life and profoundly influence human behaviour. These physiological needs must be adequately fulfilled before higher-level needs can emerge. Once these basic needs are satisfied, they no longer serve as motivators (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Safety Needs: Once physiological needs are met, individuals begin to prioritize safety and security needs. These encompass the desire for economic stability and protection from physical harm. To fulfil these needs, individuals frequently aim to increase their earnings, which encourage them to strive harder (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Similar to physiological needs, safety and security needs cease to be motivating once they are sufficiently satisfied.

Social Needs: Humans are inherently social beings. This innate aspect of our nature compels us to seek social interactions, companionship, and a sense of belonging within a community. The urge to socialize and connect with others is not merely a

preference but a fundamental aspect of our existence, shaping our behaviours, emotions, and overall well-being.

Esteem Needs: These needs involve self-esteem and self-respect, including the desire for self-confidence, achievement, competence, knowledge, and independence. Fulfilling these needs promotes self-assurance, resilience, and a sense of competence and worth within an individual. Conversely, neglecting these needs can result in feelings of inadequacy, vulnerability, and dependency (Deci & Ryan, 2017; Reeve, 2018).

Actualization Needs: At the peak of the hierarchy of needs model lies self-actualization, which integrates all lower, intermediate, and higher human needs. This concept, originally introduced by Kurt Goldstein, signifies the realization of one's potential and fulfillment in areas where one excels. In essence, self-actualization is the drive to actualize one's self-concept into reality.

Maslow suggested that human needs emerge in a particular order of priority. A higher-level need only becomes relevant once the preceding need has been sufficiently met-for example, the second need arises after the first is satisfied, and the third only after the first two are fulfilled. Moreover, human needs are infinite and constantly changing. Despite its influence, Maslow’s theory of hierarchical needs has been subject to critique (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

The Strength of the Theory. Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory has gained widespread recognition, especially among practicing managers. This can be attributed to the theory's intuitive logic and easy-to-understand framework.

Application of the Theory

Maslow's theory suggests that individuals pursue higher-level needs only after their lower-level needs are satisfied. Aligning goal-setting with Maslow's concept of self-actualization, where individuals strive to fulfill their potential, can inspire students by providing clarity and purpose. When students set academic goals, they aim to fulfill their need for achievement and self-actualization, thereby enhancing their motivation. Performance standards play a crucial role in this context, as Maslow's theory posits that once basic needs are met, individuals seek recognition and esteem from others. These standards serve as benchmarks for students to assess their progress and achievements. Meeting these standards can satisfy students' need for recognition and esteem, motivating them to excel academically and gain approval from teachers, peers, and parents.

Feedback is also essential in Maslow's framework as it promotes growth and self-improvement. Constructive feedback helps students identify strengths and areas for improvement, aligning with the goal of self-actualization. Positive feedback reinforces desirable behaviors and accomplishments, while constructive criticism helps students overcome challenges and reach their academic potential.

Maslow emphasized the importance of a supportive environment for individuals to thrive. A positive learning environment that fosters safety, belonging, and self-esteem can significantly enhance students' motivation and academic performance. Students who feel secure, respected, and valued in their learning environment are more likely to actively engage in studies, collaborate with peers, and seek assistance when needed, resulting in improved academic outcomes. Addressing these needs effectively contributes to students' satisfaction and sets the stage for academic success.

1.11 Conceptual Framework

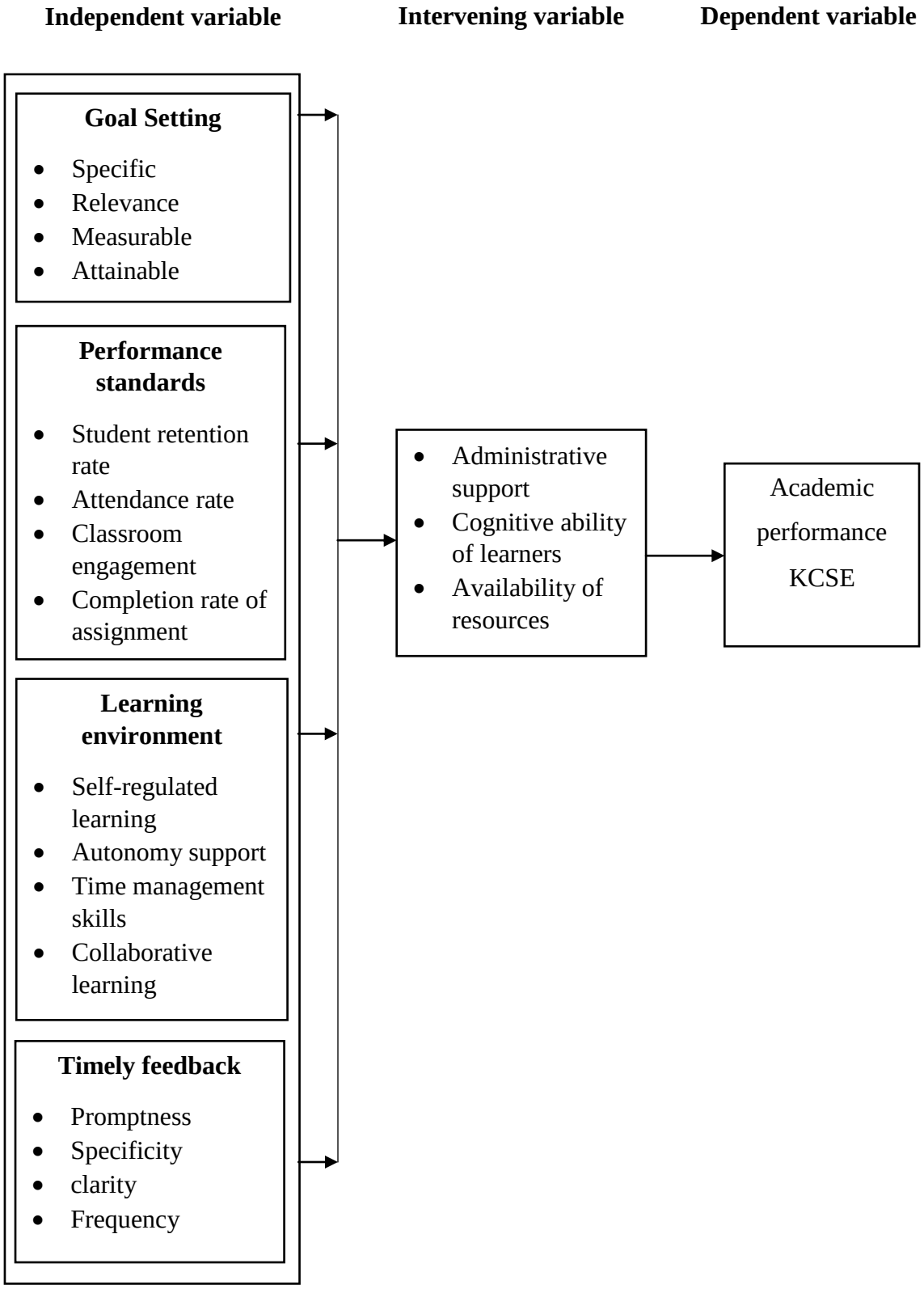

Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework on the relationship between motivation and student performance adopted from John Lathan 1997

Optimizing Academic Performance

This conceptual framework posits that the incorporation of motivational strategies by educators during instruction can significantly amplify, enhance, and sustain intrinsic motivation in learners, consequently contributing to improved academic performance. According to Ryan and Deci (2020) and Reeve (2018), students with high intrinsic motivation consistently engage in challenging tasks without the need for external rewards or incentives. Contemporary scholars such as Vallerand (2012) and Vansteenkiste and Ryan (2021) also emphasize this point. An intrinsically motivated learner approaches tasks with enthusiasm and excels in navigating the inherent complexities of the learning domain.

Setting goals (specific, relevance, measurable, and attainable).These set direction and purpose for learning .Specificity encourages focus, relevance connects with real world application, measurability, allows progress tracking and attainable enhance the commitment towards the goals.

Performance standards such as retention rate, attendance rate, completion rate, and classroom engagement serve as crucial indicators of student satisfaction and academic success. A high retention rate signifies that students find their learning experience engaging and beneficial, leading them to continue their studies. Regular attendance is essential for academic achievement, with high attendance rates demonstrating active participation in learning activities and an appreciation for the classroom environment. Classroom engagement, marked by attentiveness and active participation, fosters better understanding and retention of material. Similarly, a high completion rate of assignments reflects students' motivation, organization, and commitment to their studies, showcasing their dedication to completing tasks promptly and effectively.

In an environment that fosters self-regulation, students often show increased engagement, motivation, and academic success. When students have autonomy in learning, they tend to feel more motivated, engaged, and empowered. Strong time management skills enable students to effectively prioritize tasks, dedicate ample time to studying, and meet deadlines. Collaborative learning, where students work together toward shared learning objectives, is also beneficial.

Timely feedback (promptness, specificity, clarity, frequency). Feedback loops are crucial. Promptness aids quick adjustments, specificity gives clear insights, and clear communication eliminates ambiguity and confusion, enabling individuals to focus their efforts on specific areas for development.

Intervening variables in this study linked to teachers' motivational strategies for example: Administrative support influences the availability of resources that would enable sound set policies and creation of an environment conducive for learning. Cognitive ability influences learner's capacity to learn and this would improve student academic performance.

The dependent variable academic performance is the outcome influenced by these interplaying factors. A well-defined goal setting, aligned performance standards, a supportive learning environment, timely feedback and adequate intervening variables collectively contribute to academic success. This interplay showcases the complexity and interconnectedness of the educational system.

1.12 Operational Definition of Terms

Academic Performance: Refers to the goal setting, performance standards and timely feedback exhibited by an individual learner or an institution that operates in a conducive learning environment.

Academic Motivation: The desire of students to engage in the learning process.

Extrinsic Motivation: A student's drive to participate in academic tasks or learning activities primarily influenced by external factors such as rewards or consequences.

Intrinsic Motivation: A student's self-motivated desire to engage in academic tasks or learning activities based on inherent interest, personal satisfaction, and curiosity about the subject matter.

Public Secondary Schools: Schools established by the community for community benefit, which receive policy directions from the Ministry of Education and are staffed, financed, and administered by the government.

Teacher's Support and Feedback: The level of assistance, guidance, and interaction provided by educators to students within an academic setting.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This section presents several key components: an introduction, motivational strategies, goal setting, performance standards, the learning environment, timely feedback, motivation and academic performance, an empirical review, a summary of the literature review, and the research gap guided by the research objectives.

2.1 Empirical Review

Ismail (2006) conducted a study examining the methods employed by teachers to foster and sustain motivation in Lafayette, India. The research revealed that creating a controlled environment within the classroom, characterized by enthusiasm, framing positive feedback, and incorporating humour, can significantly enhance motivation. Clearly stated objectives were identified as effective tools for guiding student learning, thereby encouraging focused engagement. Ismail further suggested that teachers should implement various strategies to manage classroom dynamics in a way that promotes student motivation and learning.

Mwanahamisi (2014) conducted an examination of public secondary schools in Nyamagana, Tanzania, aiming to assess how pedagogical methods influence students' motivation and academic performance. The study focused on Advanced Level (A-level) students in the Nyamagana District of Mwanza, Tanzania. Employing a combined qualitative and quantitative approach within a descriptive research framework, the study revealed that demonstration was the most effective instructional method, followed by question and answer, and brainstorming. It also emphasized the importance of teachers understanding and utilizing various instructional strategies, suggesting regular training and workshops on these strategies.

Cristina (2012) conducted a study examining the interplay between students' learning preferences, teaching approaches, and motivational levels within the context of higher education, exemplified by Arusha University, and was investigated. Using subject design analysis of survey results, the study found that visual content representation was the most effective instructional approach for students in educational sciences and economics, enhancing motivation and academic performance.

Local research, exemplified by Mose (2015), has largely focused on motivating educators. Mose explored the impact of teachers' enthusiasm on student academic achievement using K.C.S.E. test results. The study identified various factors affecting educators' drive, such as education, job stability, academic performance, and career advancement. It highlighted the significance of intrinsic motivation over external rewards for teachers, while acknowledging the importance of extrinsic motivators like money and praise.

Kihika and Mbindyo (2017) explored how teachers' internal motivation influences students' academic outcomes in public secondary schools located in Kiambu County, Kenya. Their research highlighted effective teaching methods such as setting clear objectives, personalized instruction, celebrating student achievements, and fostering a positive classroom atmosphere.

Similarly, Gichuru (2017) explored teacher motivation and its impact on student academic performance in public secondary schools across Kenya. The study identified strategies employed by teachers, such as providing individualized attention, setting goals, offering positive reinforcement, and creating supportive learning environments.

Njoroge, J. K. (2015) evaluated instructional methods used by instructors in selected secondary schools in Nairobi, Kenya, to motivate their students. The study found that

integrating student' interests into lessons, providing positive feedback, and involving students in decision-making were common tactics employed by educators.

2.2 Clear Performance Standards and Students' Academic Performance

Performance standards or levels are essential in shaping students' academic performance, providing a framework for assessing and evaluating progress. Clear performance standards serve as benchmarks that allow students to measure their achievements and set goals. When students are aware of the expectations set by performance standards, it can motivate them to strive for excellence and enhance their academic performance.

Research shows that well-defined performance standards are fundamental for establishing a supportive study space for learners.(Brookhart, 2008). These standards offer clear guidance, reducing anxiety and uncertainty while helping students concentrate on meeting specific criteria. In contrast, ambiguous or inconsistent standards can cause confusion and impede students' ability to accurately assess their progress.

Furthermore, clear performance standards assist teachers in planning and delivering instruction effectively, thereby maximizing instructional quality and improving student learning outcomes (Kim, 2022). Ensuring assessments are aligned with these standards enhances the credibility and consistency of evaluations, offering equitable and impartial assessments of students' academic achievements (Pellegrino, Chudowsky & Glaser, 2001).

Clear performance standards enable effective feedback and self-assessment, which promote the growth of metacognitive skills and self-regulated learning (Brown, 2020; Jones & Lee, 2017). Additionally, they support equity and fairness in the classroom

by ensuring all students have equal opportunities to comprehend and meet expectations, thereby minimizing achievement gaps and potential biases (Lee, 2021).

Moreover, performance standards serve as a framework for educators to offer constructive feedback to students (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Feedback aligned with these principles allows students to recognize both their competencies and areas for development, promoting a growth-oriented mind-set and motivating them to view challenges as avenues for personal and academic advancement. (Johnson, 2018). Clear standards also help students set goals and comprehend how their actions contribute to their academic advancement (Smith & Jones, 2019).

Furthermore, clear standards foster accountability and goal-setting among students, empowering them to take ownership of their learning (Martinez & Garcia, 2019). This empowerment cultivates a growth mindset and encourages students to prioritize effort and continual improvement (Patel & Nguyen, 2018).

Intrinsic motivation among students is critical, and effectively integrating challenges into educational environments acts as a catalyst for enhancing this motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Amabile, 1996). Challenges not only energize individuals but also build resilience and essential skills necessary for lifelong success (Locke & Latham, 2002; Duckworth, 2007). Therefore, embracing challenges contributes to improved academic outcomes and the development of crucial skills.

Tayag (2020) conducted a study examining the relationship between students' achievement and their scores on performance tasks in mathematics, specifically focusing on fourth-grade pupils. Using a descriptive correlational research design, the study explored this relationship through achievement tests and performance tasks as assessment tools. The study noted potential errors in performance tasks that could

lead to discrepancies between students' scores and their actual achievement levels. The findings revealed a significant correlation between mathematics achievement scores and performance task scores.

In line with the key role performance standards play in students' academic performance and fostering a positive learning environment, it becomes imperative for educational institutions to prioritize the establishment and communication of clear and consistent standards. However, many institutions still face challenges in effectively implementing such standards across various facets of education. Working on these challenges requires concerted efforts to fine tune the existing standards, provide comprehensive training to educators on their implementation, and ensure alignment with evolving educational goals and best practices. By dealing with these gaps, secondary schools can better support student success and enhance overall educational outcomes.

2.3 Goals Setting and Students' Academic Performance

Although numerous studies have explored the relationship between goal setting and academic achievement, there remains a gap in understanding how different types of goals impact various aspects of student achievement. Specifically, while research has explored the effects of setting specific and challenging goals, there is limited exploration into finding the optimal balance between goal difficulty and attainability across different academic contexts. Moreover, few studies have investigated how individual differences, Personality traits and motivational factors can moderate the relationship between goal setting and academic performance. Addressing these gaps could provide valuable insights for creating effective interventions to maximize the benefits of goal setting for students from diverse educational backgrounds.

Locke and Latham's goal-setting theory (1990) suggests that clearly defined and demanding goals can enhance performance—a concept that directly informs teachers' approaches to motivation and its impact on students' academic outcomes in public secondary schools. Educators are instrumental in guiding students to establish and strive toward both immediate and future academic targets, thereby cultivating motivation and promoting success. Short-term goals, such as completing assignments, preparing for exams, or developing specific skills, provide students with immediate, manageable targets that sustain focus and engagement. Meanwhile, long-term goals, such as achieving a desired GPA, graduating with honours, or pursuing higher education, offer students a vision for sustained effort and future success. By integrating goal-setting principles into their motivational strategies, teachers create an environment that encourages students to stay committed and perform better academically, highlighting the strong correlation between motivation and achievement in educational contexts.

Zimmerman and Kitsantas (2007) emphasize the importance of goal setting in academic self-regulation. They argue that students who establish specific and challenging goals are more likely to engage in effective self-regulatory processes such as planning, monitoring progress, and adjusting their learning strategies accordingly.

Bandura's social cognitive theory (1997) highlights the critical role of self-efficacy, asserting that individuals who possess strong beliefs in their capabilities are more inclined to establish and accomplish challenging goals. Consequently, students who have confidence in their ability to reach academic goals are more inclined to put in the effort and persist in the face of challenges.

Ryan and Deci’s self-determination theory posits that intrinsic motivation arises when individuals satisfy their psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Utilizing goal setting as a motivational tool nurtures these needs by enabling students to take control of their educational journey, enhance their abilities, and connect meaningfully with their aspirations. When learners pursue goals that resonate with their personal interests and values, they experience a deeper sense of satisfaction and drive to succeed. This approach is consistent with the SMART goal framework, which advocates for objectives that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (Miller, 2022).By adopting the SMART framework, students can establish clear and structured academic objectives that enhance focus, encourage effective planning, and improve overall performance, ultimately fostering both intrinsic motivation and positive academic outcomes.

The findings from Idowu, Chibuzoh, and Madueke's (2014) study strongly resonate with the concept of goal setting as a motivational strategy in enhancing academic performance, as outlined by Locke and Latham's goal-setting theory. The study's results highlight the effectiveness of structured goal-setting interventions in improving student outcomes, particularly in English language performance. By employing a quasi-experimental design, the research demonstrated that students who received goal-setting training were better able to focus, plan, and execute strategies for academic success compared to those in the control group. This aligns with the theory’s assertion that setting specific, challenging goals can positively influence performance. In the context of teachers' motivational strategies, these findings underline the value of incorporating goal-setting skills into instructional practices to drive student engagement and achievement in public secondary schools.

However, setting goals that are overly broad or unattainable can potentially harm academic performance. Locke and Latham (2002) found that excessively challenging or unrealistic goals may lead to frustration and diminished motivation. Moreover, unclear objectives can leave students uncertain about how to proceed, hindering their ability to plan effectively for success (Mega, 2019). This lack of clarity often results in procrastination and ineffective study habits (Gross, 2020). Additionally, striving for perfection across all subjects can quickly demotivate students when they realize such goals are unattainable (Smith and Jones, 2018), leading to disengagement and reduced effort in academic pursuits (Johnson, 2021).

Furthermore, pursuing excessively challenging goals can heighten frustration as students repeatedly fall short, eroding their confidence and self-esteem (Brown & Miller, 2017). This frustration can foster negative self-evaluation and doubt in their abilities (Choi & Lee, 2020), contributing to heightened stress and anxiety levels among students, thereby impairing academic performance and overall well-being (Thompson, 2019). These stressors may manifest in physical and psychological symptoms such as headaches, anxiety disorders, and depression (Garcia & Martinez, 2016).

Research by Du and Martinez (2015) on Achievement Goals, Learning Strategies, and Language Learning Outcomes confirms that mastery goals and performance goals have distinct impacts on learners' language learning strategies and success sense of autonomy and competence, fostering intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

2.4 Timely Feedback and Students' Academic Performance

Offering effective feedback is key for the academic advancement and achievement of students, with educators playing a pivotal role. Hattie and Timperley (2007) underscore the significance of timely, precise, and actionable feedback, stressing the need for immediate responses following tasks, pinpointing specific areas for improvement, and providing clear guidance. Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) also highlight the importance of tailoring feedback to offer constructive advice rather than simply pointing out errors.

Studies show that impact feedback can notably improve student performance, potentially raising it by up to 30 percentile points (Hattie and Timperley, 2007). This corroborates earlier research by Black and Wiliam (1998), indicating that teacher feedback can elevate student performance by as much as two grade levels. Hasan (2024) conducted research on the influence of teacher feedback on student performance in education, primarily utilizing quantitative data collection methods. The study uncovered a robust correlation between feedback and student achievement.

Constructive feedback serves as a motivational tool, encouraging students to strive for betterment and realize their full potential. By recognizing strengths and offering guidance, teachers can instill confidence in students, positively impacting their overall performance.

Different forms of feedback, including written, verbal, peer, and self-assessment, influence student performance in various ways. Written feedback, often given on assignments, allows students to revisit and deeply reflect on the feedback, reinforcing learning and prompting them to take areas for improvement seriously (Shute, 2008).

Research also supports the positive influence of effective written feedback on writing skills (Carless & Boud, 2018).

Verbal feedback, delivered through individual discussions or group sessions, provides immediacy and personalization. This interactive approach fosters connection and active engagement in the learning process, offering real-time guidance and support for continuous improvement (Keil & Johnson, 2002).

Peer feedback, whether in small groups or larger classroom settings, encourages collaboration, communication, and critical thinking skills (Topping, 2003). It prompts students to evaluate their peers' work actively, promoting a deeper insight into the main issue and creating a supportive study atmosphere.

Self-assessed feedback involves students evaluating their own work and progress. Encouraging self-assessment through written prompts for reflection empowers students to identify strengths and weaknesses, establish improvement goals, and take an active role in their learning journey (Carless & Boud, 2018).

Effective feedback is the cornerstone of academic growth and success, with educators wielding a vital influence in guiding students towards improvement. Timely, precise, and actionable feedback, as emphasized by Hattie and Timperley (2007), along with tailored constructive advice, as advocated by Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006), can significantly enhance student performance, potentially boosting it by substantial margins. By recognizing strengths, providing guidance, and utilizing various forms of feedback such as written, verbal, peer, and self-assessment, educators not only foster motivation but also empower students to take an active role in their learning journey, ultimately contributing to their overall development and achievement.

While several studies recognize the fundamental role of teachers in providing effective feedback, there is still a challenge on teacher training and ongoing professional development in enhancing feedback practices. Equipping teachers with the important and required skills and knowledge to deliver high-quality feedback is crucial for maximizing its influence on student learning.

2.5 Conducive Learning Environment and Students' Academic Performance

When a conducive learning environment is lacking, motivational strategies are unlikely to fulfill their intended roles. Effective learning necessitates students taking responsibility for their learning and feeling uninhibited when expressing themselves in class. Teachers play a pivotal role in fostering autonomy by encouraging active student participation in all classroom activities.

It is essential to prioritize students' perspectives by involving them in problem-solving, engaging them in decision-making processes, and offering opportunities for innovation (Koestner, Ryan, Berneiri, & Hott, 1994).

Boggiano's research in 1988 indicated that students, when aware of their autonomy in learning, exhibit a preference for tackling more challenging tasks. Positive peer relationships within the classroom setting enhance intrinsic motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Students who feel supported by their peers are motivated to enhance their mastery of content, thereby improving their competence in the subject matter. Additionally, students' intrinsic motivation increases when they feel a connection with educators who demonstrate or value their efforts (Deci and Ryan, 2006). The level of the student-teacher engagement significantly impacts students' motivation to learn. Students' level of motivation may improve if they view their teachers as positive and

caring, whereas those who feel neglected by their teachers may experience a decline in intrinsic motivation (Ryan and Grolnick, 1986).

Self-regulated learning emphasizes students' capacity to establish their learning objectives, assess their advancement, and improve on their strategies as required. This approach fosters the development of metacognitive skills such as reflection and self-assessment, which are essential for effective learning (Zimmerman, 2002). Teachers perform a critical function in supporting this process by providing a conducive environment for goal-setting, providing constructive feedback, and teaching strategies to handle distractions and sustain concentration.

Effective time management is also highlighted as a fundamental skill for academic achievement and overall well-being. In supportive learning environments, teachers guide students in developing and refining their time management skills by assisting them in setting priorities, breaking tasks into manageable segments, and allocating time efficiently. This may involve teaching strategies for planning and organizing study schedules, along with providing resources and support to mitigate procrastination tendencies.

Collaborative learning significantly enriches the learning experience by promoting active engagement, critical thinking, and social interaction among students (Slavin, 1995). In supportive environments, teachers structure activities that foster cooperation, such as group projects, peer review sessions, and cooperative learning tasks. By fostering a sense of community and shared responsibility, collaborative learning helps develop communication skills, empathy, and teamwork abilities.

Nwaobia (2016) researched how the learning environment affects the academic performance of secondary school students in the Local Government Areas of Abia

State, confirming its significant impact. Likewise, Ezieke (2018) examined the connection between the classroom environment, students' academic interests, and achievements among senior secondary chemistry students in selected public secondary schools. The study found significant correlations between the classroom environment and academic achievement, with the combined influence of the classroom environment and academic interest also being significant.

While the literature that exist underscores the role of conducive environment, motivational strategies, and teacher-student dynamics in promoting effective learning, a notable gap still exist regarding the function of cultural diversity in shaping these dynamics. Few studies have delved into how cultural backgrounds, norms, and values influence students' perceptions of autonomy, motivation, and the relationship quality between teacher and student.

Understanding the interplay between cultural factors and educational practices is crucial for developing inclusive learning environments that takes care of the different needs of learners. By investigating how cultural differences impact students' engagement, motivation, and sense of belonging in the classroom, future studies can give valuable understanding in developing culturally responsive teaching strategies.

2.6 Research Gap

The literature highlights a clear disparity between theoretical models and empirical research on motivational strategies in educational settings, especially in terms of how teacher strategies affect student academic performance. Despite established theoretical foundations, there remains a notable scarcity of comprehensive studies on effective teacher motivational strategies in schools. This study aimed to address this

gap by examining the relationship between teacher motivational strategies and student academic performance in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County.

Furthermore, the distinct socio-cultural and economic context of Homa Bay County enhances the importance of this research. Much of the existing literature overlooks county-specific complexities within the Kenyan educational landscape, thereby neglecting potential influences of local socio-cultural and economic factors on the effectiveness of motivational strategies. By concentrating on Homa Bay County, this study aimed to bridge this geographical gap and offered insights into the contextual relevance of motivational strategies within the county's educational framework.

Additionally, a methodological gap existed in this area. Many prior studies on motivational strategies had relied predominantly on either qualitative or quantitative approaches, which limited the depth and breadth of the findings. By adopting a mixed-methods approach, this study provided a more holistic understanding of the interplay between teacher motivational strategies and student academic performance, thereby addressing this methodological limitation and offering a richer and more perspective on the subject.

2.7 Summary of Literature Review

The section on learning goals emphasizes the critical role of goal setting in academic performance, drawing on theories like Bandura’s social cognitive theory and Locke and Latham’s goal setting theory. It highlights the importance of establishing specific, challenging, and achievable goals that adhere to SMART criteria. The conclusion highlights the complex correlation between goal setting and academic performance, emphasizing its diverse impact on self-regulation, motivation, and overall academic outcome.

The performance standards segment discusses the pivotal function of well-defined performance standards in shaping students' academic performance. It explores how clear standards provide a framework for assessment, motivate students, reduce anxiety and guide educators in offering constructive feedback. The conclusion emphasizes that establishing and communicating performance standards contribute to a positive learning environment that supports students on their educational journey.

The learning environment section stresses the role of conducive learning environment for effective motivational strategies. It discusses how autonomy, positive teacher-student relationships and a supportive atmosphere enhance intrinsic motivation and student competence. It emphasizes the significance of considering student's perspectives and involving them in decision making.

The timely feedback section explores the crucial of effective feedback in student learning and academic success. It underlines the importance of timely, specific and actionable feedback aligning with research by Hattie and Timperely. Various forms of feedback, such as written, verbal, peers and self-assessed and discussed, highlighting their diverse impacts on students' performance.

The section on motivation and academic performance provides an overview of the psychological aspects of motivation and its connection to academic success. It discusses the role of intrinsic motivation in improving academic achievement and emphasizes the need for inspiration within the education system. Research by Kukusar et al. and Arulmoly and Branavan exemplifies the different methodologies employed to investigate the connection between motivational strategies and academic achievement.

The empirical review summarizes several studies that examine the impact of pedagogical practices, learning styles, instructional approaches, and teachers' motivation on students' motivation and academic achievement. These studies, conducted in diverse contexts, underscore the role of effective teaching methods, teacher enthusiasm, and intrinsic motivation in influencing student performance.

The aim is to evaluate how goal setting, performance standards, feedback systems, and the influence of the learning environment on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County, Kenya.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents on the following topics: introduction, research design, study variables, study location, target population, sample size and sampling method, research instruments, validity, reliability, pilot study, data collection procedure, data analysis, and logistical and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

According to Creswell (2014), a correlational research design is a quantitative method used to determine the degree and direction of relationships between two or more variables without establishing causation. The primary aim of this study was to examine the relationships between performance standards, goal setting, timely feedback, and the learning environment and how these factors related to students' academic performance. It was well-suited for evaluating the strength and direction of these associations.

The study relied on quantitative data collection, which aligned with its objective of measuring these relationships. This approach was objective and did not infer causation, allowing researchers to understand how changes in the independent variables (performance standards, goal setting, timely feedback, and a conducive learning environment) affected the dependent variable (academic performance).

For a comprehensive study involving numerous public secondary schools in Homa Bay County**,** correlational research proved to be suitable. This method allowed researchers to gather data from a sizable sample, enabling broader conclusions about the relationships between independent and dependent variables

3.2 Study Variables

The study examined several variables, categorized as independent, intervening, and dependent. The independent variables included timely feedback, goal setting, performance standards, and the learning environment. The intervening variables encompassed administrative support, the learner's cognitive ability, and the availability of resources. Academic performance was the dependent variable of this study.

3.3 Locale of the Study

Homa Bay County is strategically situated in the south western region of Kenya, along the shores of Lake Victoria. This region is bordered by Migori County to the south and Kisumu County to the north. The main gap the researcher aimed to fill was the scanty study in Homa Bay County on the relationship between teachers' motivational strategies and students' academic achievement. Additionally, the county is home to all types of public secondary schools, such as day, mixed, single-sex, and boarding schools, which enhanced this study. Thus, this study has given a National outlook. Additionally, the area has shown varying levels of academic performance, as depicted in the table below.

Over the past five years, the performance trend in Homa Bay County showed a fluctuating pattern in mean scores, as presented in Table 3.1. Notably, there was a significant drop in performance in 2021, followed by a slight recovery in 2022. This inconsistency in performance prompted the investigation.

Table 3.1: KCSE Performance for the Last Five Years

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Mean score (%)	5.34	5.61	5.91	3.91	4.49

Source: Homa Bay County (2018-2022)

3.4 Target Population

3.4.1 Schools

This research targeted a total of thirty-two (32) public secondary schools in Homa Bay County, as specified by the Ministry of Education in 2020. The schools were classified based on type and gender as follows:

Table 3.1: Overview of Target Population of schools

School type	Gender	Total
Mixed day		28
Boarding	Boys	1
	Girls	3
Total		**32**

3.4.2 Respondent

The study targeted a total of 736 respondents. This comprised 32 HOD'S, 64 teachers and a total of 640 students. Teachers and heads of departments were responsible for implementing motivational strategies in the classroom and thus need to be targeted. Their practices and approaches significantly influenced students' motivation and, consequently, their academic performance. By studying their perspectives and strategies, the researcher was able identify effective methods for enhancing motivation and improving learning outcomes.

Table 3.3 provided a summary of the respondent distribution.

Table 3.2: Target Population for HODs, Teachers and Students

County	Schools	HODs	Teachers	Students	Total
Homa Bay	32	32	64	640	
Total	**32**	**32**	**64**	**640**	**736**

3.5 Sample Procedure and Sampling size

The study employed a combination of simple random sampling and stratified techniques to identify participants. Stratified sampling involved dividing the population into distinct sub-groups, or strata, based on specific criteria Kothari (2004).A comprehensive sample then was arrived at after drawing random samples from the strata.

Following the guidelines of Kothari (2004) and Fraenkel & Wallen (2010), the study divided the target population into distinct strata to enhance representation. Schools were categorized into three main strata: Extra County, County, and Sub-County schools. Additionally, each of these categories was further classified into boarding and mixed-day schools to ensure a well-distributed sample across different learning environments.

Beyond school classification, stratification was also applied to the selection of participants. Within the sampled schools, Heads of Departments (HODs), teachers, and students were further categorized based on their roles to capture diverse educational perspectives. This approach allowed the study to account for variations in experiences and viewpoints within the school system.

To maintain fairness and eliminate bias, simple random sampling was applied within each stratum, as recommended by Kombo & Tromp (2006). This method provided equal chance to every school and participant to be selected.

For school selection, a 30% sample was drawn from a total of 32 schools, resulting in 10 schools being chosen. The selection maintained proportional representation across the different school categories: Extra County Schools: Out of 2 schools, 1 boys' and 1 girls' school were selected. County Schools**:** Out of 2 schools, 1 boys' and 1 girls' school were selected. Sub-County Schools: Out of 28 schools, 8 mixed-day schools were selected. As a result, the final selection consisted of 8 mixed-day schools and 2 boarding schools.

For HODs, teachers, and students, simple random sampling was applied within the selected schools. This ensured that each individual had a fair chance to participate, as supported by the recommendations of Denzin & Lincoln (2017).

Random sampling and stratified sampling were used together to enhance the reliability and generalizability of the study. Stratified sampling ensured that all school types and participant roles were proportionally represented, leading to a more comprehensive understanding of academic performance. Meanwhile, simple random sampling minimized bias, ensuring that every teacher, student, and HOD had an equal chance of inclusion. By integrating both techniques, the study produced a balanced and representative sample, strengthening the validity of the findings within the educational context of Homa Bay County.

3.5.1 Schools

The sampled schools were in three strata: Extra County, county and sub county schools

Table 3.4: Sample size for schools by category (Extra County, County and Sub County

	Mixed	Boys	Girls	Total
Extra County		1	1	2
County		1	1	2
Sub County	28	-	-	28
Total	28	2	2	32
Actual number sampled (30%)	8	1	1	10

The sampled schools were in two strata: mixed day and boarding schools.

Table 3.5: Sampled size for schools by category

Number of schools	Mixed day	Boarding	Total
Actual number of schools	28	4	32
Sampled (30%)	8	2	10

3.5.2 Respondents

Fraenkel and Wallen (2010) explained that the accessible population, from which a sample is drawn, is a subset of the target population. They noted that while the target population represents the 'ideal' group for research, the accessible population is a more 'practical' subset. In this study, the sample was taken from the accessible population. Denzin and Lincoln (2017) underscored the importance of identifying and defining the target population first. They stressed the need for a sample that accurately

represented this population to make valid inferences. They also warned that an inadequate sample size could make generalizations both meaningless and impossible.

This study determined an appropriate sample size based on the recommendations of Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), who suggested that for large populations, a 10% sample size is sufficient, while a 30% sample size is more appropriate for smaller populations. Applying these guidelines, different sampling proportions were used for students and teachers in public secondary schools within the county.

Since the total number of teachers in public secondary schools was relatively small, a 30% sample size was selected to ensure adequate representation. As a result, 19 teachers were included in the study. In contrast, the total student population in public secondary schools was significantly larger, totaling 640 students. Following the recommended 10% sampling rate for large populations, 64 students were selected for participation.

Overall, sample size used in this study was 115 participants, which included 32 Heads of Departments (HODs), 19 teachers, and 64 students. This approach ensured that the sample was representative and aligned with established research sampling guidelines.

Table 3.6: Summary of HODs, Teachers and Students sampled size in Homa Bay County

Homa bay County	**Mixed Day**	**Boarding**	**Total**
Number of schools sampled	8	2	10
Number of HODs sampled	28	4	32
Number of teachers sampled (30%)	17	2	19
Number of students sampled (10%)	46	8	64

3.6 Research Instrument

The researcher utilized questionnaires for students and teachers, along with an interview guide for department heads. According to Borg and Gall (2007) and Creswell (2014), questionnaires were an effective tool for gathering substantial data from a large group of participants. This approach was not only cost-efficient but also standardized, making data collection more straightforward. Additionally, Smith (2018) pointed out that interviews could capture detailed insights, emotions, and personal stories, offering a deeper comprehension of the research topic that other methods might not have provided.

3.6.1 Students' Questionnaire

The students' survey encompassed various aspects of student motivation and academic performance. Part I collected basic demographic data, such as school name and gender, aiding in response categorization. Part II delved into motivational strategies, starting with Section A, which evaluated the communication and influence of performance standards on academic performance. Section B explored students' engagement in goal setting and its perceived influence on motivation, recognizing its importance in self-regulated learning. Section C assessed the frequency and motivational effect of constructive feedback, crucial for guiding learning. Section D examined the learning environment and teacher-student relationships, known drivers of motivation and academic success. Finally, Section E allowed students to self-assess their academic performance, providing insights into their perceptions of abilities and achievements.

3.6.2 Teachers' Questionnaire

The teacher's questionnaire was designed to collect important information on how motivational strategies impact academic performance. Through two main parts, it delved into the implementation and perception of motivational techniques among educators. The first section gathered general information regarding the school and the teacher's gender. The subsequent sections (A, B, and C) focused on specific motivational strategies: goal setting, performance standards, and feedback mechanisms within the learning environment. Questions within each section probed into the frequency and impact of these strategies on student performance together with the teachers' view on their effectiveness. Furthermore, it explored how teachers incorporated these strategies into their teaching methods, how they provided feedback, and their observation of any relationships between these strategies and students' academic success. The questionnaire sought to collect data to enhance public secondary schools' academic performance, maintaining confidentiality and highlighting the importance of honest feedback for educational improvement.

Recognizing the significance of goal setting in academic progress was especially vital for Homa Bay County public secondary schools.. Goal setting provided students with direction, motivation, and focus, essential elements in an environment where resources may have been limited. Clear goals helped students prioritize their efforts and make the most of available resources. Similarly, effective communication of performance standards was essential for fostering a sense of accountability and helping students gauge their progress. Utilizing various channels such as regular updates and meetings with students and parents ensured that expectations were clearly understood.

Timely feedback was crucial, particularly in environments with educational challenges. It helped students recognize their strengths and areas needing improvement, allowing them to stay focused and promptly address any difficulties. Creating a conducive learning environment involved various strategies, including providing necessary resources, promoting inclusivity, and fostering a positive school culture, all of which greatly impacted academic performance by creating an atmosphere where students felt supported and motivated to learn. Additionally, supporting students facing socio-economic or community-related challenges through adapted teaching methods and personalized attention ensured equal opportunities for success.

The learning environment itself significantly influenced student engagement and outcomes, with factors such as classroom atmosphere and teacher-student relationships playing crucial roles. Collaborations and partnerships with other educational institutions and community organizations provided valuable resources and support for improving academic performance. Incorporating student feedback into teaching practices reflected a dedication to student-centered education and empowered learners be in control of their studies.

3.6.3 HODs Interview Schedule

Incorporating student feedback into teaching practices reflected a dedication to student-centred education and empowered students to take control of their studies. They covered topics ranging from the importance of goal setting, communication of performance standards, and timely feedback to creating conducive learning environments, supporting students facing challenges outside of school, and leveraging collaborations for positive impact. The questions also explored the significance of student engagement, incorporating feedback into teaching practices, motivating

students, and identifying potential areas for additional support and resources. Through these inquiries, the interview aimed at gathering insights and strategies from Heads of Departments to address the diverse needs and challenges within the educational context of the region, ultimately aiming to uplift academic outcomes.

3.7 Validity

The accuracy of a research tool lies in its capacity to measure the intended aspects effectively (Golafshani, 2003). In this study, content validity assessment was used to establish validity of the questionnaire, which aimed to find out whether the items appropriately represented the study variables. This process involved a thorough review and evaluation of each question to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with the objective of the study.

To enhance validity, experts in education management were consulted to provide professional insights into the questionnaire items. These specialists examined the questions to verify that they were well-structured, unbiased, and sufficiently addressed key study variables, such as performance standards, goal setting, timely feedback, and the learning environment in relation to academic performance. Based on their feedback, necessary adjustments were made, including modifying unclear wording, eliminating redundant questions, and ensuring comprehensive coverage of essential topics. This rigorous validation process strengthened the reliability of the questionnaire, ascertained that the data collected was accurate and aligned with the objective of the study.

3.8 Reliability

The researcher determined the reliability of the instrument using the Cronbach's Alpha method**,** which was appropriate as it required only a single administration of the questionnaire. This method allowed for an assessment of internal consistency, ensuring that the questionnaire items produced stable and consistent responses. To further validate this, a pilot study was conducted, and Cronbach's Alpha values were calculated to measure internal consistency reliability.

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016)**,** a Cronbach's Alpha value close to 1 indicates high reliability, while a value of 0.8 or 0.7 is considered good and acceptable. Conversely, a value of 0.6 or lower is viewed as poor (Kothari & Garg, 2014). The reliability of different dimensions goal setting, performance standards, learning environment, and feedback was assessed, and their respective Cronbach's Alpha values were presented in a table to demonstrate the overall reliability of the questionnaire items

$$\alpha = \frac{N * \overline{c}}{\overline{v} + (N-1) * \overline{c}}$$

Where:

N =the number of items

$\overline{c}$ = is the average covariance between items.

$\overline{v}$ = is the average variance of items.

(Bonnet and Wright, 2014)

3.9 Pilot Study

Conducting a pilot test helped identify errors, limitations, or other weaknesses in the research questions and provided an opportunity for revisions before the main study. Orodho (2004) suggested that a pilot study could also assist in coding open-ended questions by reviewing participants' responses and noting the most common ones.

To pilot the instruments, the researcher administered the questionnaire in two public secondary schools in Homa Bay County, one boarding and one mixed day, which were selected randomly. This diversity in school type allowed a comprehensive understanding of how the interventions in different settings, student demography, resources, and organizational structure affected the results. The pilot study was conducted, and the comments that were received helped in improving the instruments (questionnaire) for both the students and teachers. In the pilot process, the researcher ensured that the selected institutions had the same characteristics as the sampled population.

3.10 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher carried out this process in three phases: pre-logistic phase, field work logistic phase, and post-field logistic phase (Orodho, 2009).

Phase one: The researcher began by obtaining a formal authorization letter from the Kenyatta University Graduate School, which granted the necessary approval to conduct research activities. With this letter, the researcher then applied for research permits from the National Council of Science and Technology (NACOSTI) to meet regulatory requirements. After obtaining the permits, the researcher informed the County Director of Education in Homa Bay County about the planned study. Permit letters were issued to both the researcher and the principals of the schools where the

research took place. Additionally, the researcher carefully planned and drafted a budget to ensure all necessary resources were accounted for, facilitating the smooth execution of the research process.

Phase two: In this stage, the researcher engaged extensively with the educational community by visiting multiple schools and building meaningful relationships with principals, teachers, and students. Furthermore, the researcher formally issued permits to the respective principals, authorizing the research to be conducted in public secondary schools located in Homa Bay County. To efficiently cover the extensive study area, research instruments were administered in collaboration with trained research assistants. It was imperative for these assistants to comprehend the objectives behind the research initiative, ensuring clarity on the purpose and significance of the study. Furthermore, thorough training was provided to enumerators to ensure their proficiency in handling the research instruments, thereby minimizing the likelihood of errors during data collection.

3.11 Data Analysis

In this study, both quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed systematically to ensure accuracy, consistency, and completeness, following the recommendations of Orodho (2009). The quantitative data were examined using Spearman rank correlation, Pearson correlation coefficient, frequencies, percentages, and mean calculations to assess the relationships between independent variables (performance standards, goal setting, timely feedback, and a conducive learning environment) and the dependent variable (academic performance). These statistical methods were selected because they effectively determine the strength and direction of associations between variables, providing numerical evidence to support the study's findings. The

results were then presented using charts, graphs, and tables, allowing for clear visualization and easy interpretation of data trends.

For qualitative data, thematic analysis was applied to identify recurring themes and patterns in participants' responses. Findings were presented through direct quotations and narrative descriptions, ensuring that respondents' views and perspectives were accurately captured. This approach provided in-depth explanations and contextual understanding of the relationships observed in the quantitative analysis, adding depth and meaning to the numerical data.

The Pearson correlation coefficient was the primary statistical tool for quantitative analysis as it measures the degree and direction of the relationship between two continuous variables. Since the study aimed to examine the strength of association between factors such as performance standards, goal setting, and timely feedback with academic performance, Pearson correlation was the most appropriate choice. Additionally, frequencies and percentages were used to summarize and compare data, making it easier to identify trends across different groups.

For qualitative analysis, thematic analysis was chosen as it enabled the systematic categorization of data into meaningful themes, offering deeper insights into students' academic experiences. By including direct quotations, the study preserved the authenticity of participants' responses, complementing the numerical findings with rich, descriptive insights.

The combination of quantitative statistical analysis and qualitative thematic analysis provided a comprehensive and well-balanced interpretation of the study's findings. The selected statistical techniques were ideal, as they allowed for both objective

measurement of relationships and subjective exploration of underlying factors, ultimately enhancing the credibility and reliability of the study's conclusions.

The analysis was aligned with the study's objectives:

Table 3.7: Data Analysis Plan

Objective	Nature of data	Statistical technique	Data Presentation
To establish the Relationship between Clear performance standards and students' academic Performance in public secondary	quantitative	Pearson correlation coefficient	percentages charts, graphs
	qualitative	thematic analysis	thematic summary
To assess the correlation Goal setting and students' Academic performance in Public secondary	quantitative	Pearson correlation coefficient	graphs and tables
	qualitative	thematic analysis	thematic summary
To evaluate the correlation Between timely feedback coefficient and students' academic performance	quantitative	Pearson correlation coefficient	graphs and tables
	qualitative	thematic analysis	thematic summary quotes
To assess the correlation between conducive learning environment and students' academic performance.	quantitative	Pearson correlation coefficient	graphs and tables
	qualitative	thematic analysis	thematic summary quotes

3.12 Logistical and Ethical considerations

The researcher commenced the study in Homa Bay County by obtaining an introductory letter from the university, clearly defining the research's purpose and scope. Subsequently, the researcher diligently obtained necessary research permits from regulatory bodies, including the National Commission on Science, Technology, and Innovation (NCSTI) and the Homa Bay County Education Office. This thorough approach ensured compliance with regulatory standards and facilitated a smooth start to the study in the designated area. The researcher also coordinated logistics for data collection, including transportation, scheduling, and communication with participating

schools to ensure the timely and efficient execution of the study. This careful planning helped address any logistical challenges that arose during the research process.

To address ethical considerations during data collection, several measures were implemented. Firstly, all participants received detailed information about the research objectives, procedures, potential risks, and benefits before agreeing to participate. Informed consent forms were provided, outlining voluntary participation and the right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences. Confidentiality and anonymity of participants were strictly maintained throughout the research process. Data was coded and securely stored, accessible only to authorized research personnel. Personal identifiers were removed to prevent individual identification in any study reports or publications. Additionally, ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional review board or ethics committee, ensuring adherence to ethical standards and guidelines.

On the human relations front, the researcher made efforts to build positive rapport with participants, including teachers, students, and administrators. These efforts were essential for creating an atmosphere of trust and cooperation, which in turn facilitated smooth data collection. Effective communication with the school staff and participants helped ensure that the research process was clear, transparent, and respectful of everyone's time and contributions. The researcher also addressed any concerns raised by participants, ensuring that they felt supported and valued throughout the study.

These measures aimed to protect participants' rights and well-being while upholding ethical research principles, logistical efficiency, and positive human relations throughout the process.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

The chapter focuses on data analysis, presentation and discussion of the findings. The chapter contains demographic analysis, descriptive analysis, inferential findings and discussions of the analysis. The analysis was done using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 25. The general objective of the study was to assess the effect of teacher's motivational strategies as correlates to students 'academic performance among public secondary schools in Homa Bay County, Kenya. Specifically, the study sought to; establish the relationship between clear performance standards and students' academic performance in Homa Bay County, assess the relationship between goal setting and student's academic performance in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County, evaluate the correlation between timely feedback and students' academic performance in Homa Bay County and assess the correlation between a conducive learning environment and students' academic performance in Homa Bay County. The research findings are presented in form of tables, pie charts and bar graphs.

4.1 Response Rate

The sample size of the study was 115 respondents comprising of 32 Heads of Departments (HODs), 19 teachers, and 64 students from public secondary schools in Homa Bay County. Questionnaires were distributed to all the anticipated respondents of the study. This section presents the response rate as presented in table 4.1 below

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Target Group	Sampled No. of respondents	No. of Questionnaires Returned	No. of Interviews Conducted	Response Rate (%)
Students	64	59		92
Teachers	19	17	0	89
Heads of Department	32	0	29	91
Total	**115**	**76**	**29**	**91**

Of the heads of departments, 29 individuals (91%) actively engaged in the interview process and provided responses for analysis. Likewise, 17 teachers (89%) completed and returned their questionnaires. Among the student participants, 59 (92%) successfully filled out and submitted their questionnaires for evaluation. These response rates meet the threshold outlined by Babbie (2012), who contends that a minimum response rate of 50% is adequate for meaningful analysis.

4.2 Demographic Information

The researcher collected demographic information regarding the gender and grade/ form of the student. The researcher also collected demographic data regarding the gender of teachers and years of teaching experience the findings are as shown here in.

4.2.1 Gender of the Respondents

The researcher aimed to examine the gender distribution of the student participants involved in the study. The results are illustrated in Figure 4.1.

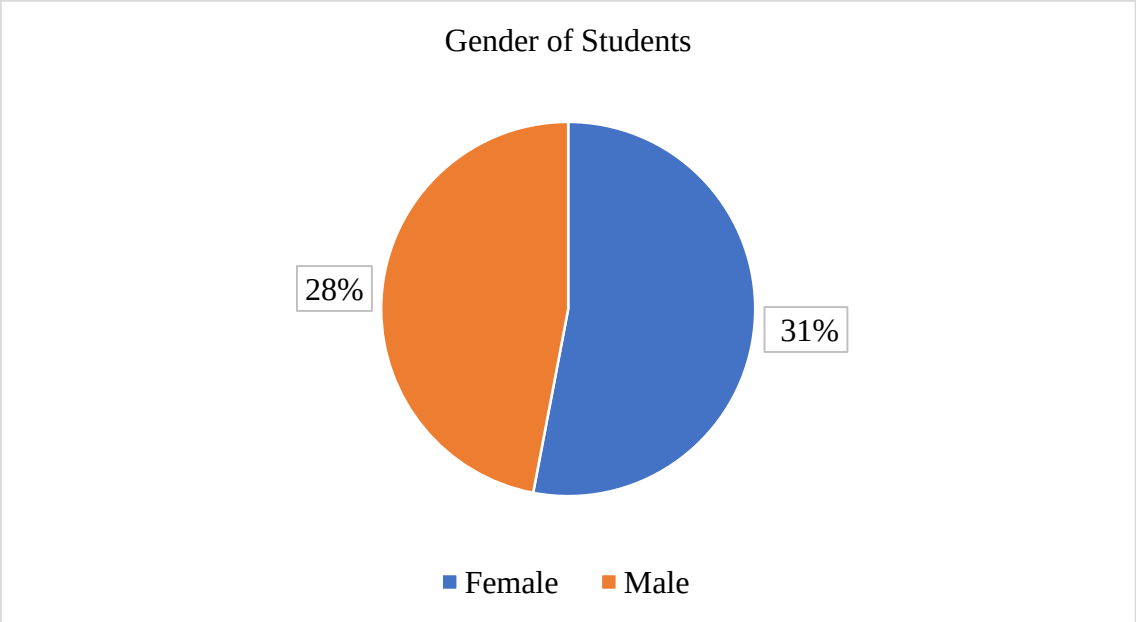

Figure 4.1: Gender of the Students

From the figure 4.1 it is evident that 31(53%) of the students were female while 28(47%) were male. This implies that majority of the students in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County were female. This trend reflects the success of policies and initiatives promoting girl child education in Homa Bay County, addressing historical gender disparities. In the context of motivational strategies, teachers might need to tailor their approaches to ensure that both genders are equally engaged and motivated, particularly in light of different learning needs and socio-cultural factors that could affect girls' or boys' performance differently.

The researcher also sought to assess the gender of the teachers the findings are as indicated in table 4.2

Table 4.2: Gender of the Teachers

Gender	**Frequency**	**Percentages**
Male	7	41
Female	10	59
Total	**17**	**100**

The analysis on the gender of the teacher revealed that 7(41%) were male while 10(59%) were female. This implies that majority of the public secondary school teachers in Homa Bay county were female. This could influence the adoption of motivational strategies, as female teachers may bring unique perspectives or approaches to student engagement. Additionally, female teachers might serve as role models for female students, potentially contributing positively to their academic performance.

4.2.2 Grade/Form of the Students

The researcher sought to find out the grade/form of the student the findings are as indicated in figure 4.2

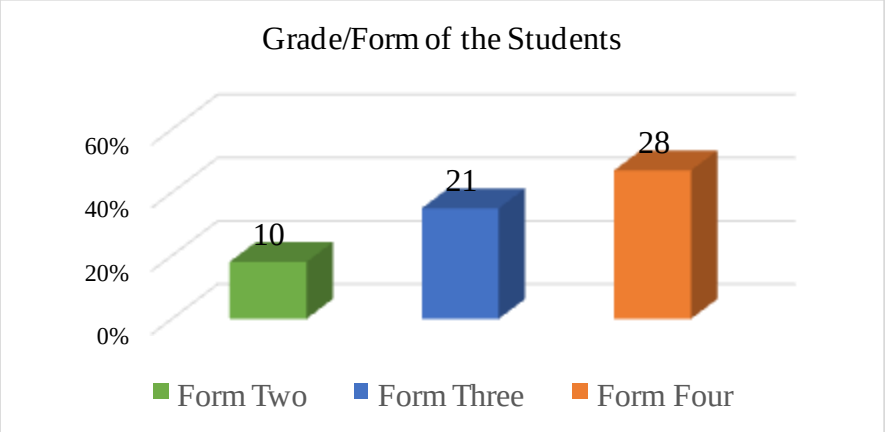

Figure 4.2: Grade/Form of the Students

The findings in figure 4.2 revealed that 10(18%) of the students were in form two, 21(35%) of the students were in form three while 28(47%) of the students were in form four. This implies that majority of the students who participated in the study were from form four and form three. The study's findings are largely reflective of older students preparing for national examinations, where academic performance is critical. Motivational strategies identified in the study could be particularly impactful if targeted at these groups, as they are under the most academic pressure. Teachers

might prioritize strategies like goal setting, career counselling, or exam preparation techniques for these students.

4.2.3 Subjects Taught

The researcher sought to assess the subjects taught by the teachers. The findings are as indicated in table 4.3

Table 4.3: Subjects Taught

Subject	**Frequency**	**Percentages**
Sciences	4	24
Arts	6	35
Languages	7	41
Total	**17**	**100**

The analysis regarding the subject teachers taught revealed that 4(24%) of teacher were teaching sciences, 6(35%) were teaching arts while 7(41%) were teaching languages. This implies that majority of teachers who responded were language teachers. The predominance of language teachers may reflect a strong focus on foundational skills like reading and writing, but it also implies a potential gap in the availability of science teachers, which could affect students' performance in STEM fields. This calls for motivational strategies to encourage both teachers and students in underrepresented subject areas, particularly sciences, to enhance academic outcomes across disciplines.

4.2.4 Teachers Years of Experience

The researcher sought to find out the teacher years of experience, the findings were as indicated in figure 4.3

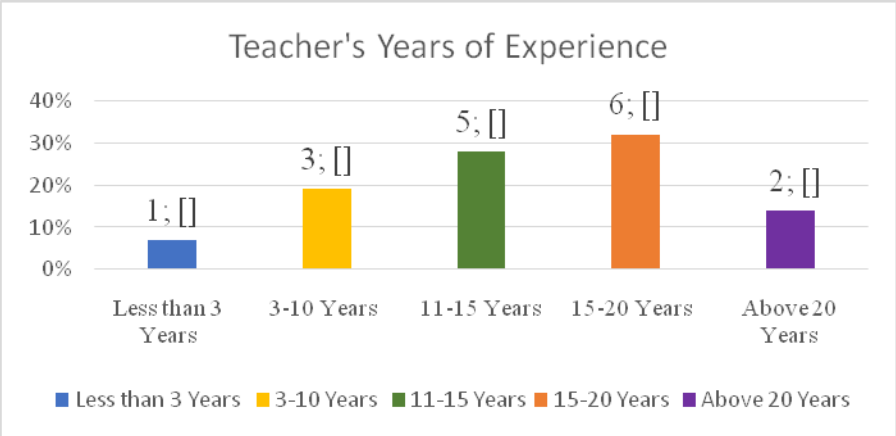

Figure 4.3: Teachers Years of Experience

The findings regarding the distribution of teaching experience among public secondary school teachers in Homa Bay County reveal a workforce primarily composed of highly experienced teachers, with a significant proportion having 11-20 years of teaching experience. This aligns with literature emphasizing the importance of teacher experience in shaping effective instructional practices and fostering student success.According to Darling-Hammond (2000), teachers with extensive experience are more likely to demonstrate strong subject knowledge, effective classroom management, and the flexibility to tailor instructional strategies to accommodate a variety of student needs. Similarly, Rivkin, Hanushek, and Kain (2005) suggest that teacher effectiveness improves with experience, particularly during the initial years and stabilizes as teachers refine their strategies.

The predominance of experienced teachers in Homa Bay County indicates a robust foundation for delivering quality education. Experienced teachers are more likely to use evidence-based motivational strategies and maintain a stable learning

environment, both of which are critical for enhancing student performance. Their extensive years in the profession may also contribute to a deeper understanding of curriculum implementation and student assessment, as highlighted by Berliner (2004).

However, the low proportion of younger teachers (7% with less than three years of experience) presents challenges in integrating contemporary teaching techniques and technologies. Younger teachers often bring innovative approaches and are more adept at leveraging modern tools such as digital platforms, gamified learning, and data-driven teaching strategies, as highlighted in Koehler and Mishra's (2009) research on Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK), the absence of younger teachers may hinder schools in Homa Bay County from effectively adopting modern, 21st-century instructional approaches.

4.3 Clear Performance Standards and Students' Academic Performance

First objective of this study was to establish the relationship between clear performance standards and students' academic performance in Homa Bay County. This section explores how students perceive and respond to the communication of performance standards, the extent to which they believe these standards impact their academic success, and the role of teachers in setting, communicating, and reinforcing these standards. The study also investigates the teaching strategies employed by educators to ensure that performance standards are effectively integrated into the learning process. Insights from Heads of Departments (HODs) further emphasize the importance of clearly communicated performance expectations in enhancing student motivation and performance.

4.3.1 Students response on Performance Standards

The researcher sought to assess the level of agreement on the performance standards, the findings were as indicated in figure 4.4

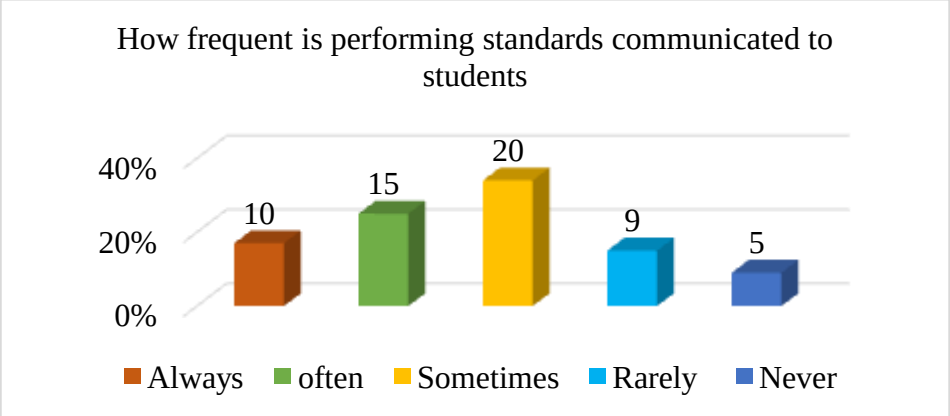

Figure 4.4: How Frequent is Performing Standards Communicated to Students

The findings indicate that performance standards are inconsistently communicated to students by teachers in Homa Bay County. A significant portion of respondents10 (17%) reported that performance standards are always communicated, and 15 (25%) indicated they are often communicated. However, the majority20 (34%) revealed that communication of performance standards occurs only sometimes, while 9 (15%) said it rarely happens, and 5 (9%) stated it never occurs. This inconsistency affects motivation by creating confusion and uncertainty among students regarding academic expectations. When expectations are not clearly and consistently communicated, students may feel frustrated, disengaged, or demotivated**,** as they are unsure of what is required to succeed.

Research underscores that effective communication of performance standards is a critical component of teaching. For instance, Marzano (2007) highlights that students perform better when they clearly understand the expectations and criteria for success. Regular communication of standards fosters accountability, provides students with a

sense of direction, and enables teachers to offer targeted feedback and support. Conversely, sporadic communication, as suggested by the findings, may lead to confusion about academic goals and hinder students' ability to align their efforts with desired outcomes.

Furthermore, Hattie (2009), in his meta-analysis on factors influencing student achievement, emphasizes the importance of teacher clarity in enhancing learning achievements. Teachers who consistently articulate performance standards can help students set realistic goals, develop self-regulation skills, and take ownership of their learning. The lack of regular communication, as seen in the data, risks undermining these benefits and creating an environment where students are less motivated and less likely to meet academic expectations.

Table 4.4: Students Response of Performance Standards

Statement	**N**	**SA**		**A**		**N**		**D**		**SD**		**Mean**	**Std. Dev**
		F	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**		
Do you think that having well-defined performance standards positively impacts your academic performance?	59	15; 25		20; 34		12; 20		8; 14		4; 7		3.732	0.943
The performance standards for my subjects are clearly communicated to me.	59	18; 31		22; 37		10; 17		6; 10		3; 5		3.915	0.874
Do you attend class regularly?	59	20; 34		25; 42		7; 12		5; 9		2; 3		4.119	0.812

Impact of Well-Defined Performance Standards on Academic Performance

The findings reveal that the majority of respondents45 (59%) either strongly agreed (15 or 25%) or agreed (20 or 34%) that well-defined performance standards positively impacted their academic performance. A smaller proportion12 (20%) remained neutral, while 8 (14%) disagreed, and 4 (7%) strongly disagreed. The mean score of 3.732 and standard deviation of 0.943 further affirm that most students viewed well-defined performance standards as instrumental in improving their academic progress.

These findings are supported by educational literature emphasizing the importance of clear performance standards in enhancing student outcomes. Ramuel (2020) asserts that well-defined performance benchmarks enable students to focus their efforts effectively and align their work with expected academic outcomes. This clarity fosters a goal-oriented learning environment, where students are better equipped to measure their progress and seek necessary support.

Additionally, Marzano (2007) underscores the role of clear performance standards in creating a structured learning environment. According to Marzano, when students understand the criteria for success, they are more likely to take part in self-regulated learning, build intrinsic motivation, and achieve higher levels of academic performance. The data aligns with these insights, suggesting that the most of the students in this research recognize the positive impact of defined standards.

The minority of respondents 8 (14%) who disagreed and 4 (7%) who strongly disagreed may reflect challenges in the implementation or communication of these standards. This inconsistency might result from unclear articulation, lack of teacher support, or insufficient alignment between the standards and instructional practices.

Hattie (2009) emphasizes that while clear standards are critical, their effectiveness depends on consistent communication and reinforcement by teachers.

Communication of Subject Performance Standards

The finding demonstrate that a majority of students 45 (68%) perceived subject performance standards as clearly communicated, with 20 (31%) strongly agreeing and 25 (37%) agreeing. A smaller group remained neutral (7 or 17%), while only 5 (10%) disagreed and 3 (5%) strongly disagreed. The mean score of 3.915 and a standard deviation of 0.874 indicate that students generally acknowledged effective communication of performance standards. These outcomes together with existing literature emphasizing the key role of clarity in the communication of academic expectations.

Effective communication of performance standards plays a critical role in fostering student success. Karanja and Mwangi (2018) found that when academic expectations are clearly articulated, students are better equipped to plan their learning, understand assessment criteria, and align their efforts with desired outcomes. This structured approach to learning reduces confusion, enhances focus, and improves overall academic achievements. The outcome from this study resonate with these conclusions, as the majority of students reported positive perceptions of how well performance standards were communicated.

Moreover, Marzano (2007) and Hattie (2009) emphasize that clarity in communication is a cornerstone of effective teaching. Marzano posits that clear performance standards help students internalize expectations, encouraging self-regulated learning and a goal-oriented mindset. Teacher clarity is very important as a high-impact strategy for improving student outcomes, suggesting that students who

understand what is expected of them are more likely to succeed academically Hattie(2009). The high mean score in this study supports the assertion that clear communication positively influences students' academic experiences.

The findings suggest that schools are successfully communicating subject performance standards to students, which likely contributes to a supportive and organized learning environment. However, the minority of students who disagreed or strongly disagreed with this perception highlights a potential gap in consistency. Some students may not fully comprehend the standards due to variations in teacher communication styles or a lack of reinforcement.

Class Attendance

The majority of respondents45 (76%) reported attending class regularly, with 20(34%) strongly agreeing and 25(42%) agreeing. Only7 (12%) were neutral, 5(9%) disagreed, and 2(3%) strongly disagreed. This statement had the highest mean score of 4.119 and a standard deviation of 0.812, underscoring the priority students placed on regular class attendance. The findings suggest that the majority of students prioritize regular class attendance, as indicated by the high percentage of agreement and the highest mean score (4.119) among the responses. This highlights a strong connection between students' behavior and their motivation to engage with their studies. The low percentage of neutral or negative responses further reinforces the importance placed on attendance.

Regular class attendance reflects students' commitment and proactive attitude toward their education. Motivated students are more likely to attend classes consistently, which aligns with Chen's (2019) findings that link regular attendance with improved

academic performance. This means that motivation plays an important role in fostering behaviors that contribute to academic success.

4.3.2 Teachers Response on Performance Standards

The researcher asked teachers to indicate their level of agreement on the following statements of performance standards, the findings were as indicated in table 4.5

Table 4.5: Teachers Response on Performance Standards

Statement	n	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev
		F %	F %	F %	F %	F %		
To what extent do you agree that students benefit from clearly communicated performance standards?	17	9; 53	5; 29	2; 12	1; 6	0; 0	3.732	0.943
Have you ever noticed a correlation between adherence to performance standards and academic success among students?	17	7; 41	6; 35	3; 18	1; 6	0; 0	3.915	0.874
How strongly do you believe adherence to performance standards influences student performance?	17	10;59	6; 35	1; 6	0; 0	0; 0	4.119	0.812
Do you think the communication of performance standards is effectively executed?	17	8; 47	7; 41	2; 12	0; 0	0; 0	3.525	1.005
Do you think that having well-defined performance standards enhances students' performance?	17	8; 49	7; 39	2; 9	1; 3	0; 0	3.814	0.891

According to the finding, 9(53%)of the respondents strongly agreed,5(29%)agreed, 2(12%)were neutral,1(6%) disagreed, and none of the respondents strongly disagreed that students benefit from clearly communicated performance standards. This resulted in a mean of 3.124 and a standard deviation of 1.245. These results suggest that most teachers believe that clear communication of performance standards plays a crucial role in student success. Regarding the correlation between adherence to performance standards and academic success, 7(41%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 6 (35%) agreed, 3(18%) were neutral, and 1(6%) disagreed, with no one strongly disagreeing. This produced a mean of 3.231 and a standard deviation of 1.080. This indicates that a majority of teachers observe a positive relationship between adherence to performance standards and student success. These findings align with the study by Jones and Lee (2020), who highlighted that students who consistently follow well-established performance standards tend to exhibit better academic outcomes due to clearer goals and expectations.

For the statement about how strongly teachers believe adherence to performance standards influences student performance, 10(59%) strongly agreed, 6(35%) agreed, and 1(6%) were neutral, with no disagreement. The mean for this statement was 3.731, with a standard deviation of 0.832. This high mean value suggests that teachers strongly believe that adherence to performance standards has a significant positive impact on student performance. These results are consistent with findings by Zimmerman, (2019) who noted that strong adherence to performance standards correlates with improved academic performance as students gain a clear understanding of how to meet expectations.

In relation to the communication of performance standards, 8(47%) of respondents strongly agreed, 7(41%) agreed, and2 (12%) were neutral, with no one disagreeing. The mean for this statement was 3.271 with a standard deviation of 1.000. This indicates that teachers generally agree that performance standards are communicated effectively, although a small percentage were neutral. Lastly, when asked if well-defined performance standards enhance student performance, 8(49%) strongly agreed, 7(39%) agreed, 2(9%) were neutral, and 1(3%) disagreed, with no one strongly disagreeing. The mean was 3.475, and the standard deviation was 0.986. These findings suggest a strong belief among teachers that having well-defined performance standards positively affects student performance. This is in agreement with the research by Clark and Wilson (2021) found that clearly defined and systematically organized performance standards enhance student achievement by offering learners a clear framework of academic expectations.

The researcher further sought to assess how teachers integrate performance standards into their teaching methods, form the analysis majority of the teachers revealed that integrating performance standards into teaching methods is crucial for improving student outcomes and ensuring that educational goals are met. Based on the responses from the teachers, three key strategies were identified for integrating performance standards into their teaching methods: regular assessments, classroom discussions on expectations, and other personalized methods such as providing written guidelines or offering one-on-one feedback.

One of the most commonly mentioned strategies for integrating performance standards was the use of regular assessments. Teachers noted that frequent quizzes, tests, assignments, and other forms of evaluation were essential in monitoring student progress toward meeting academic standards. Furthermore, regular assessments are

effective in aligning students' understanding with the defined performance standards, as they provide concrete evidence of achievement. When students are continuously tested on specific criteria, they gain a clearer understanding of what is expected of them, leading to improved performance (Guskey, 2019). Teachers who use this method report better student outcomes because assessments give students a sense of direction and help them focus on the areas that need improvement.

Another strategy identified was classroom discussions on expectations. Teachers emphasized the importance of clearly explaining the performance standards to students and ensuring that they understand what is required of them. This can be achieved through group discussions, individual conferences, or class-wide meetings where performance standards are outlined in detail.

Research on the importance of teacher-student interaction has found that clear and consistent communication of expectations enhances students' self-regulation and goal-setting abilities. It also fosters a collaborative classroom environment where students feel confident in asking questions and seeking clarification, which ultimately helps them perform better academically (Butler & Winne, 2019). Teachers who incorporate these discussions regularly into their teaching practices enable students to align their personal goals with the performance standards set for them.

In addition to regular assessments and classroom discussions, some teachers mentioned other personalized methods, such as providing written guidelines or offering one-on-one feedback. Written guidelines can help clarify expectations, particularly for students who may not fully understand verbal instructions or who need additional time to process information. This method is consistent with research

on the effectiveness of written feedback, which has been shown to improve student comprehension and achievement by making standards more accessible (Shute, 2018).

Moreover, one-on-one feedback provides students with tailored advice on how to meet performance standards. This personalized approach is grounded in the principles of individualized instruction, where teachers give specific, actionable feedback that targets students' unique learning needs. These results align with Hattie (2019), who demonstrated that individualized feedback boosts student motivation and performance by clarifying their strengths and highlighting areas needing development.One-on-one sessions allow students to ask specific questions about their performance and clarify any doubts, promoting deeper learning.

The researcher sought to understand how HODs ensure that clear performance standards are effectively communicated to students to boost their academic performance. One of the HODs noted,

"*We ensure clear communication by displaying performance standards prominently in classrooms. We also go over them with the students at the start of every term to avoid any confusion and to reinforce the expectations*" (HOD, from County girls' day School). Meanwhile, another HOD explained,

"*For our boarding school students, we often hold orientation sessions at the beginning of the term, where performance standards are discussed in detail. This proactive approach helps students understand exactly what is expected from them*" (HOD from Extra County girls' boarding school).

4.4 Goal Setting and Student's Academic Performance

The second objective of this study was to assess the correlation between goal setting and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County. This section examines the extent to which students engage in setting personal

academic goals, their perceptions of how goal setting influences their motivation, and the relationship between goal-setting behaviours and academic outcomes. Additionally, the section explores teachers' practices regarding goal setting, including how often they guide students in establishing achievable goals, and their views on the impact of goal setting on student performance. Insights from Heads of Departments (HODs) further highlight the role of goal-setting strategies in enhancing student commitment and overall academic success.

4.4.1 Students' Response on Goal Setting

The researcher sought to assess the whether students take part in setting their own academic goals. The findings are as indicated in figure 4.5

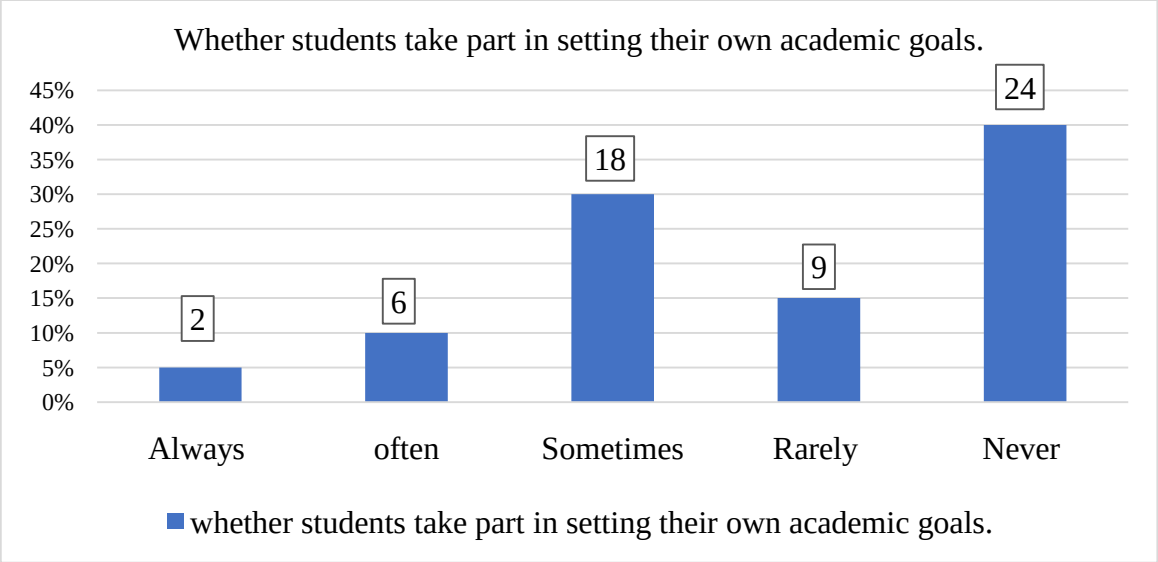

Figure 4.5: Whether students take part in setting their own academic goals

The findings in figure 4.5 revealed that 1(5%)of the students revealed that they always take part in setting their own academic goals, 2(10%)of students revealed that they often take part in setting their own academic goals,6(30%)revealed that sometimes they part in setting their own academic goals, 3(15%)stated rarely while 8(40%)of the students revealed that they never take part in setting their own

academic goals. This implies that majority of the students never take part in setting their own academic goals. When the majority of students are not involved in setting their own academic goals, it can negatively impact their motivation in several ways. A lack of participation in goal-setting often leads to a reduced sense of ownership, causing students to feel disconnected from their learning process and less invested in their efforts. Additionally, without the opportunity to set their own goals, students lose a sense of autonomy, which is a critical driver of intrinsic motivation. Goals determined without student input may also fail to align with their interests or aspirations, making them feel irrelevant and further decreasing engagement. This exclusion can hinder the development of self-efficacy, as students miss the chance to recognize their progress and build confidence in their abilities. Ultimately, the lack of involvement fosters a passive approach to learning, where students become reliant on external direction instead of cultivating proactive and self-driven habits.

The researcher further sought to assess the perception of students on how setting personal academic goals would enhance their motivation. The findings are as indicated in figure 4.6

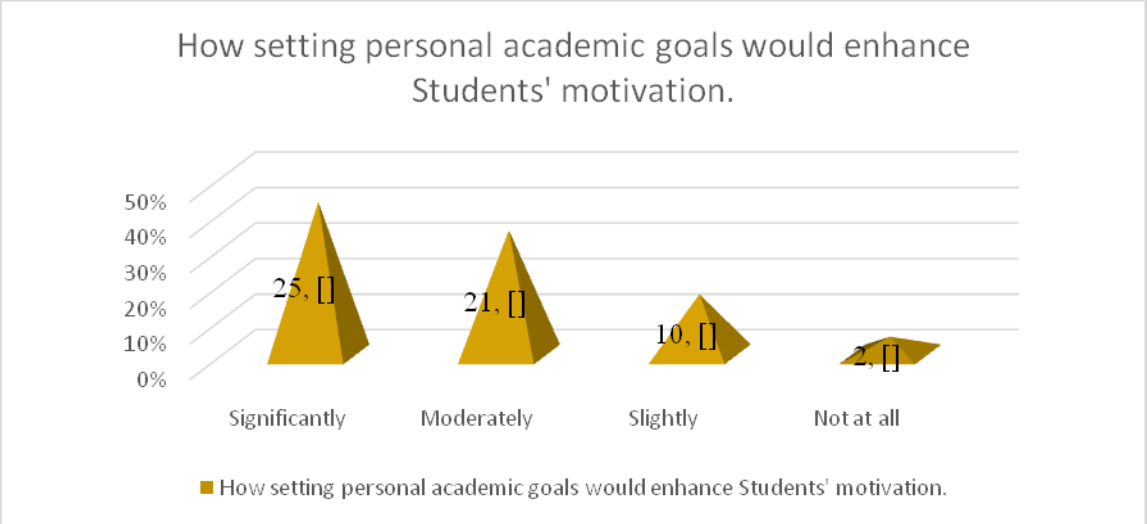

Figure 4.6: How Setting Personal Academic Goals Would Enhance Students' motivation.

The findings in figure 4.6 it was evident that 8(43%) of students indicated that setting personal academic goals would significantly enhance their motivation, 7(35%) of the students indicated that setting personal academic goals would moderately enhance their motivation 3(17%) indicated that setting personal academic goals would slightly enhance their motivation while 1(5%) indicated that setting personal academic goals will not enhance their motivation. This implies that setting personal academic goals would significantly enhance their motivation. The findings underscore the importance of involving students in goal-setting as a motivational strategy to boost their focus, engagement, and drive to achieve academic success.

Table 4.6: Goal Setting and Student's Academic Performance

Statement	**N**	**SA**	**A**	**N**	**D**	**SD**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev**
		F %	**F %**	**F %**	**F %**	**F %**		
Do you frequently set specific goals for the academic year?	59	15;25	18; 30	9;15	12;20	6;10	3.451	0.918
Do you think your goals are achievable within the given time frame?	59	13;22	20;34	7;12	11;18	8;14	3.322	1.001
Do you agree setting academic goals leads to success?	59	18;30	17;28	6;10	12;20	7;12	3.443	0.927
Are you provided with resources to help achieve academic goals?	59	11;18	15;26	8;14	14;24	11;18	3.044	1.050

The findings revealed that 15(25%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 18(30%) agreed, 9(15%) were neutral, 12(20%) disagreed, and 6(10%) strongly disagreed that they frequently set specific goals for the academic year. The statement recorded a mean of 3.451 and a standard deviation of 0.918. This implies that while many students actively engage in setting academic goals, a significant portion remains indifferent or uncertain. This variability points to differing levels of motivation among students regarding goal-setting practices. Motivation plays a critical role in goal-setting, as it drives students to define, pursue, and achieve their academic objectives. For the 55% of students who agree or strongly agree with frequent goal-setting, this behavior likely reflects intrinsic or extrinsic motivation, contributing to their ability to focus, prioritize tasks, and maintain accountability for their learning.

Conversely, the 45% who are neutral or disagree suggest potential barriers to motivation. This group may struggle with self-discipline, lack a clear understanding of the benefits of goal-setting, or face external challenges that hinder their ability to set and pursue goals. Neutral responses, in particular, may indicate ambivalence, where students recognize the value of goal-setting but are unsure how to implement it effectively. These results align with the findings of Kamau (2020), who reported that goal-setting behaviors among high school students are influenced by individual motivation and the clarity of future aspirations.

On whether the respondents think their goals are achievable within the given time frame,13(22%) strongly agreed, 20 (34%) agreed, 7(12%) were neutral,11(18%) disagreed, and 8(14%) strongly disagreed. This statement had a mean of 3.322 and a standard deviation of 1.001, indicating that perceptions of goal achievability are moderate but varied among students. These findings are in agreement with those of

Njoroge and Kibe (2019), who noted that the perceived achievability of goals is often tied to students' time management skills and support systems.

Regarding the statement on whether setting academic goals leads to success, 18(30%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 17(28%) agreed, 6(10%) were neutral, 12(20%) disagreed, and 7(12%) strongly disagreed. This statement had a mean of 3.443 and a standard deviation of 0.927. This suggests that most students perceive a positive relationship between goal setting and academic success. These findings are consistent with those of Oduor (2021), who observed that structured goal-setting practices improve academic performance by fostering focus and resilience among students.

On whether students are provided with resources to help achieve their academic goals, 11(18%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 15(26%) agreed, 8(14%) were neutral, 14(24%) disagreed, and 11(18%) strongly disagreed. The statement recorded a mean of 3.044 and a standard deviation of 1.050, reflecting a relatively mixed perception of resource availability among students. These findings are supported by a study by Wambua (2018), which concluded that resource provision significantly enhances goal attainment, but disparities in access can hinder consistent progress for some students.

4.4.2 Teachers' Response on Goal Setting

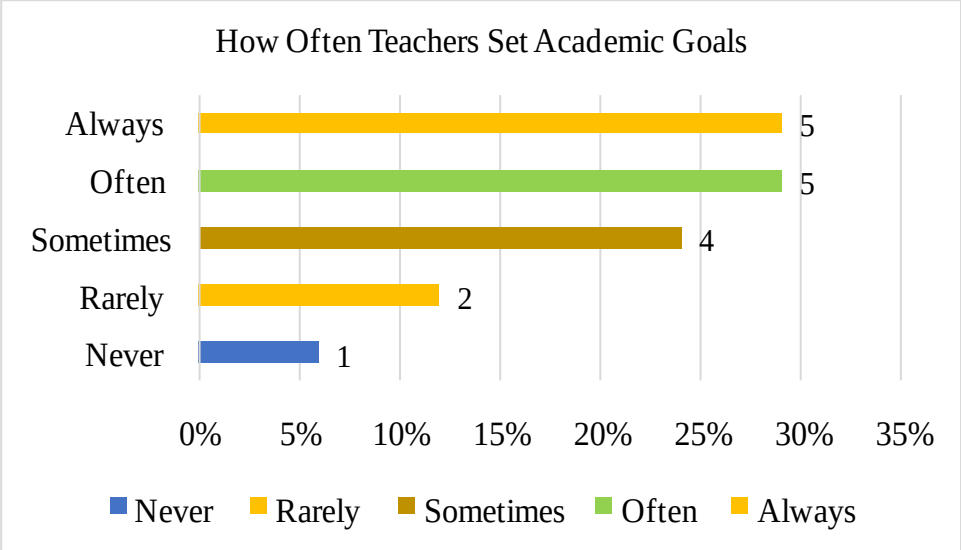

Figure 4.7: How Often Teachers Set Academic Goals

From the figure above**,** 58 % (12) of teachers set academic goals frequently, with 29% (6) stating they always do so and another 29% (6) reporting they often set goals. This indicates that a majority of teachers recognize the importance of structured planning in driving student outcomes. Additionally, the 24% (5) who sometimes set goals highlight room for greater consistency across the teaching body in integrating goal-setting into their routine practices. However, 12% (2) and 6% (1) of those who rarely or never set goals suggest that some teachers may face barriers such as time constraints or limited understanding of goal-setting frameworks. These findings reveal a significant emphasis on the practice of goal setting among teachers in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County.

The researcher also sought to assess whether setting goals impact students' academic performance. The findings were as indicated in table 4.7

Table 4.7: Whether Setting Goals Impact Students' Academic Performance

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly negative	2	12
Somewhat negative	3	18
No influence	4	24
Strong positive influence	8	47
Total	**17**	**100**

The study also aimed to evaluate the perceived impact of academic goal-setting on student performance, which was generally viewed positively. According to the findings, 2 respondents (12%) indicated a strongly negative effect, 3 (18%) reported a somewhat negative effect, 4 (24%) perceived no effect, while 8 (47%) identified a strong positive impact of goal-setting on academic achievement. These results suggest that nearly half of the participants recognized a significant positive influence, highlighting the powerful role goal-setting can play in improving student outcomes. The data underscores how setting academic goals can enhance students' focus, motivation, and overall achievement. Consequently, educators are encouraged to actively support and guide students in establishing and pursuing academic goals to optimize their performance.

The researcher further sought to assess how often teachers offers guidance to students in establishing academic goals that are both realistic and attainable. The findings were as indicated in table 4.8

Table 4.8: How Often Teachers Offers Guidance to Students

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Never	1	6
Rarely	2	12
Sometimes	5	29
Often	5	29
Always	4	24
Total	**17**	**100**

The findings indicate that only 1(6%) of teachers reported never offering guidance to students in establishing academic goals, 2(12%) noted that they rarely offer guidance, 5(29%) represented teachers who sometimes provide guidance, similarly, 5(29%) of teachers reported often offering guidance to students. Lastly, 4(24 %) of teachers indicated that they always offer guidance. This cohort exhibits the strongest dedication to providing students with the support needed to establish and accomplish their academic goals.Their consistent efforts are likely to contribute significantly to improved student performance and motivation. The findings suggest that most teachers provide some level of guidance to students, with many often or always offering support. This implies that while most recognize the importance of mentoring in goal setting, those who rarely or never engage highlight the need for targeted interventions to ensure consistent student support.

Further the researcher sought to assess how teachers evaluate the effectiveness of goal setting in enhancing academic performance. The evaluation of goal setting's effectiveness in enhancing academic performance reveals several key areas of impact, as indicated by teacher.

Regarding grade improvement 11(59%), indicated that grade improvement was a key indicator of the effectiveness of goal setting. This suggests that teachers often see a direct correlation between setting academic goals and improvements in students' academic performance. The focus on grades underscores the importance placed on measurable outcomes, and it is likely that these teachers track progress through assessments and exams.

Regarding increased motivation 15(76%) of teachers, highlighted increased motivation as a key outcome of goal setting. This suggests that teachers believe setting clear and achievable goals motivates students to engage more deeply with their studies, stay focused, and persist in the face of academic challenges. Motivation is a crucial factor in enhancing academic performance, as it drives students to put in more effort and maintain consistent study habits.

Regarding better engagement 10(53%) of teachers reported that better engagement is another indicator of goal setting's effectiveness. Engagement is often tied to how invested students are in their learning. Teachers who observe improved student participation in class, active involvement in assignments, and a general interest in their academic growth likely view these behaviors as a result of effective goal setting. The data suggests that goal setting may help students feel more connected to their learning processes, leading to enhanced engagement.

In addition, 3(18%) of teachers mentioned other ways to evaluate the effectiveness of goal setting. These might include aspects like time management, student confidence, or academic behavior, which are important but perhaps more difficult to quantify. These responses highlight that, in addition to academic performance, there are other dimensions to the benefits of goal setting that some teachers value.

The researcher asked the HODs to provide their insights on the significance of goal setting for enhancing academic performance, some of the respondents emphasized the importance of goal setting, stating that,

"*Goal setting is a cornerstone for academic success. In our school, we make it a point to have students set both short-term and long-term academic goals. This not only guides them in their daily tasks but also gives them a vision of where they are headed*" **(**Two HODs from extra county boy school**)**. Another respondent added that,

"*When students have specific goals to work towards, they become more committed to their studies. This is especially crucial for our female students, many of whom are first-generation learners*" (HOD, from sub county mixed school).

4.5 Timely Feedback and Students' Academic Performance

Third objective of this study was to examine the correlation between timely feedback and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County. This section presents an analysis of different dimensions of feedback, including its frequency, speed, specificity, clarity, and motivational influence, and how each factor contributes to students' academic achievements. The analysis delves into students' perceptions of the feedback they receive and explores the relationship between these perceptions and their academic outcomes. In addition, the study explores teachers' perspectives on the efficacy of feedback systems and their influence in cultivating a supportive learning environment and fostering student achievement.

4.5.1 Students Response on Timely Feedback and Students' Academic Performance

The researcher sought to assess how frequently do students receive constructive feedback on academic performance the findings were as indicated in figure. The findings were as indicated in figure 4.8

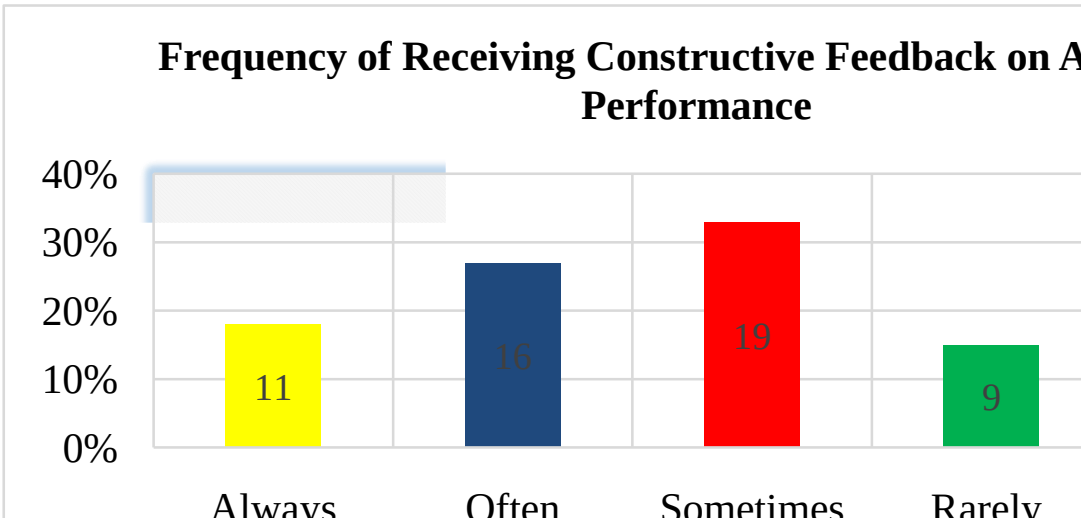

Figure 4.8: Frequency of Receiving Constructive Feedback on Academic Performance

The findings revealed that 11(18%) of the students reported always receiving constructive feedback on their academic performance, 16(27%) indicated they often received feedback, while 19(33%) reported receiving feedback sometimes. A smaller proportion, 9(15%), indicated they rarely received feedback, and 7% reported never receiving it. This suggests that while most students experience some level of feedback, the consistency and reliability of receiving feedback are varied. From the findings there is a need for more regular and reliable feedback mechanisms. Teachers should aim to provide feedback consistently to ensure that all students benefit equally from this motivational strategy, which can enhance academic outcomes. These findings are in agreement with those of Mutunga (2019), who found that regular feedback significantly enhances students' academic engagement and performance by clarifying expectations.

The researcher further sought to assess the how quickly students receive feedback on their assignments and assessments. The findings were as indicated in figure 4.9

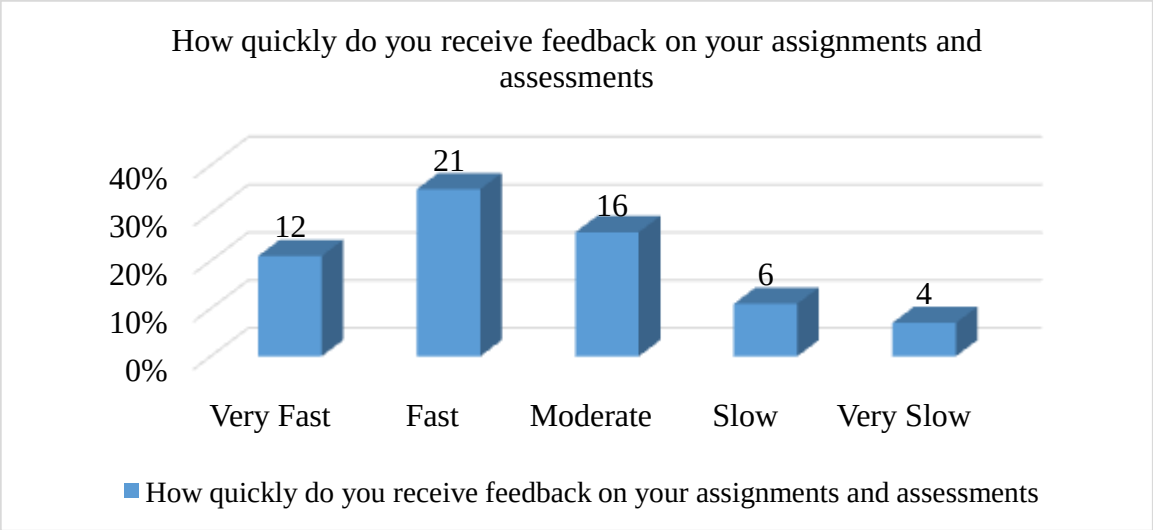

Figure 4.9: Speed of Receiving Feedback on Assignments and Assessments

The findings indicate that 12(21%) of the respondents reported receiving feedback very fast, 21(35%) stated they received feedback fast, and 15(26%) considered the speed of feedback as moderate. Meanwhile, 11% reported slow feedback, and 4(7%) stated that feedback was very slow. The results imply that the feedback system is reasonably efficient for most students, although some experience delays. From the findings timely feedback is largely upheld, but delays experienced by some students may hinder their ability to address academic weaknesses promptly. Efforts should focus on minimizing feedback delays to maintain its effectiveness as a motivational tool. These results align with the findings of Wanjiku (2020), who noted that timely feedback fosters better comprehension of course material and improves assignment completion rates.

Moreover, the researcher sought to assess how detailed and specific is the feedback students receive on their assessments and assignments. The findings were as indicated in figure 4.10

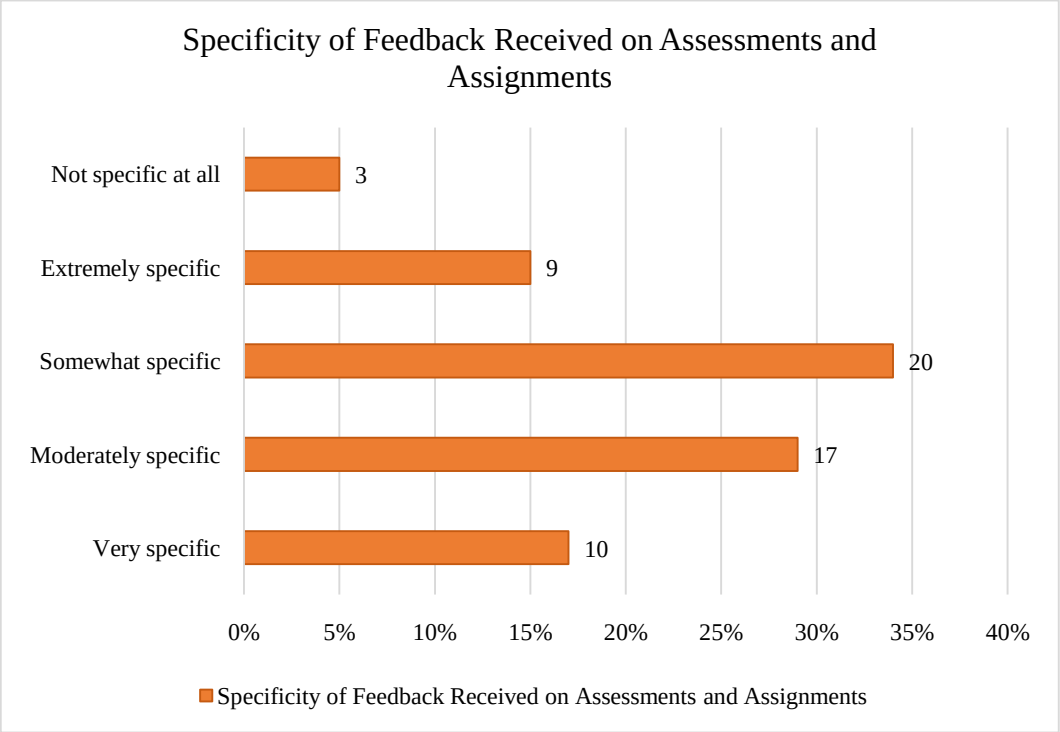

Figure 4.10: Specificity of Feedback Received on Assessments and Assignments

The data shows that 10(17%) of the students described the feedback they received as very specific, 17(29%) said it was moderately specific, and 20(34%) considered it somewhat specific. Additionally, 9(15%) rated the feedback as extremely specific, while 3(5%) stated that it was not specific at all. This implies that feedback specificity is moderately rated but varies significantly among students. The students' reports of moderately specific feedback point to a need for educators to offer more precise and practical guidance. Such feedback can enhance students' awareness of their strengths and weaknesses, promoting focused and meaningful academic development.These findings are consistent with those of Odhiambo (2018), who observed that detailed feedback enhances academic performance by enabling students to address specific gaps in their learning.

Moreover, the researcher asked the students to rate the clarity of the feedback they receive on the assessment/assignment. The findings were as indicated in figure 4.11

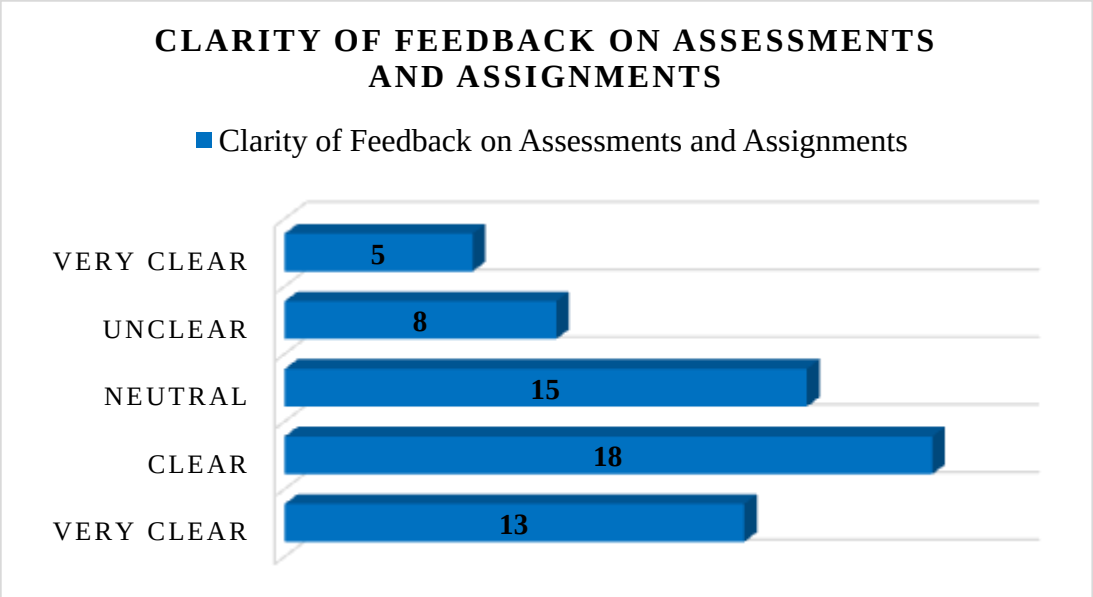

Figure 4.11: Clarity of Feedback on Assessments and Assignments

Regarding the clarity of feedback, 13(22%) of the respondents rated it as very clear, 18(31%) as clear, and 15(25%) as neutral. A smaller proportion, 8(13%), described feedback as unclear, while 5(9%) found it very unclear. The findings suggest that while most students perceive feedback as clear, some still face challenges understanding it. The clarity of feedback, perceived as satisfactory by most students, suggests effective communication in many cases. However, addressing the challenges faced by some students who find feedback unclear is crucial to ensure its utility in guiding academic improvement. These findings are in agreement with those of Kimani (2019), who established that clarity in feedback significantly enhances students' ability to align their performance with academic expectations.

Finally, the researcher sought to assess the whether constructive feedback motivate students to improve their academic performance. The findings were as indicated in figure 4.12

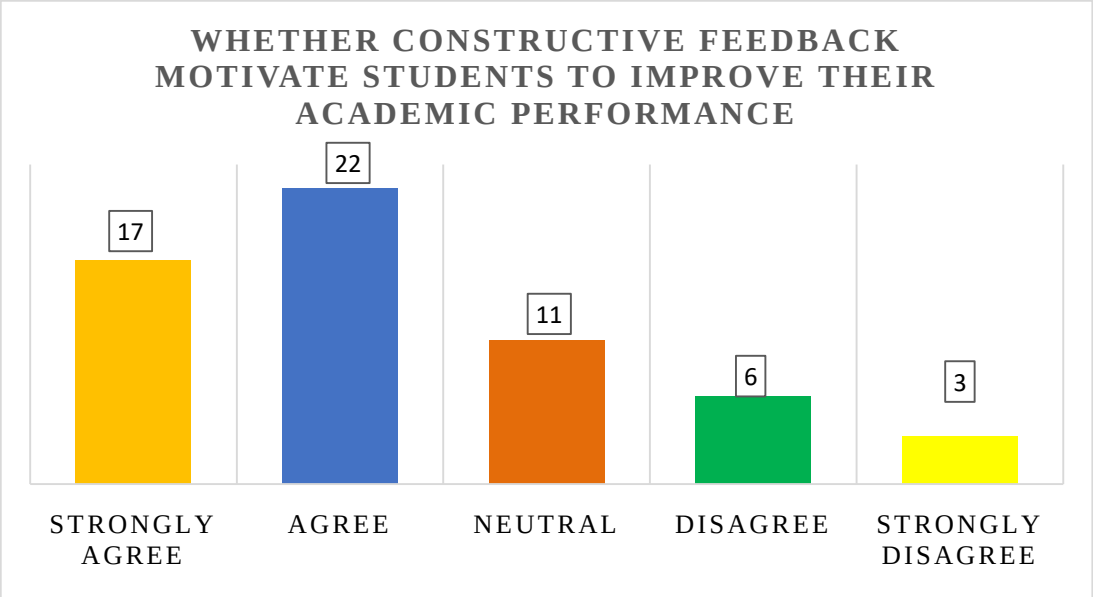

Figure 4.12: Whether constructive feedback motivate Students to improve their academic performance

The results showed that 17(28%) of the students strongly agreed that constructive feedback motivates them to improve their academic performance, while 22(37%) agreed. Additionally, 11(18%) remained neutral, 6(11%) disagreed, and 4(6% strongly disagreed. This implies majority of students find constructive feedback motivating, although some remain indifferent or do not feel motivated by it. The motivating influence of constructive feedback, as noted by the majority of students, underscores its importance as a motivational strategy. Teachers should continue to use constructive feedback to inspire improvement, while addressing the needs of students who remain indifferent or unmotivated by such feedback.

These findings are in agreement with those of Kilonzo (2020), who found that constructive feedback fosters intrinsic motivation among students by emphasizing their potential for growth. Similarly, Onyango (2019) observed that feedback linked to specific academic goals enhances students' commitment to learning. This highlights

the need for educators to provide actionable and encouraging feedback to support students in achieving academic success.

4.5.2 Teachers Response on Feedback Mechanism and Learning Environment

The researcher asked teachers to indicate how they provide feedback to students on their academic performance. The findings were as indicted in figure 4.13

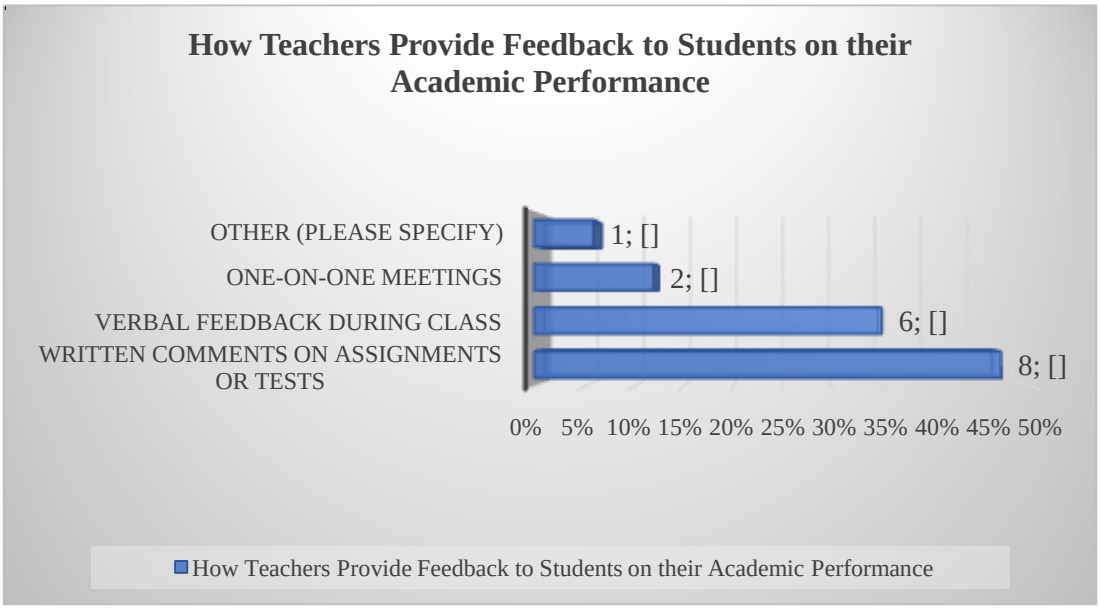

Figure 4.13: How Teachers Provide Feedback to Students on their Academic Performance

According to the data, 8(47%) of teachers use written comments as a primary method of providing feedback. Written feedback is especially appreciated for its capacity to deliver detailed, individualized insights and serve as a lasting reference, enabling students to better comprehend their performance and identify areas for growth.In addition, 6(35%), of teachers rely on verbal feedback during class. This form of feedback is often immediate and allows for real-time engagement between the teacher and students, fostering a dynamic learning environment. Students can ask questions and clarify any points directly, making it an interactive approach.

Moreover, only 2(12%) of teachers engage in one-on-one meetings with students to provide feedback. While this form is more personalized and specific, its lower frequency may reflect the time constraints and class sizes that limit the ability to meet with each student individually. Finally, 6% of teachers reported using other methods for feedback, which could include online platforms, peer feedback, or group discussions. This category, while the smallest, highlights the diversity of approaches used by educators.

The researcher sought to find out how teachers evaluate the learning environment in the classroom. The findings were as indicated in figure 4.14

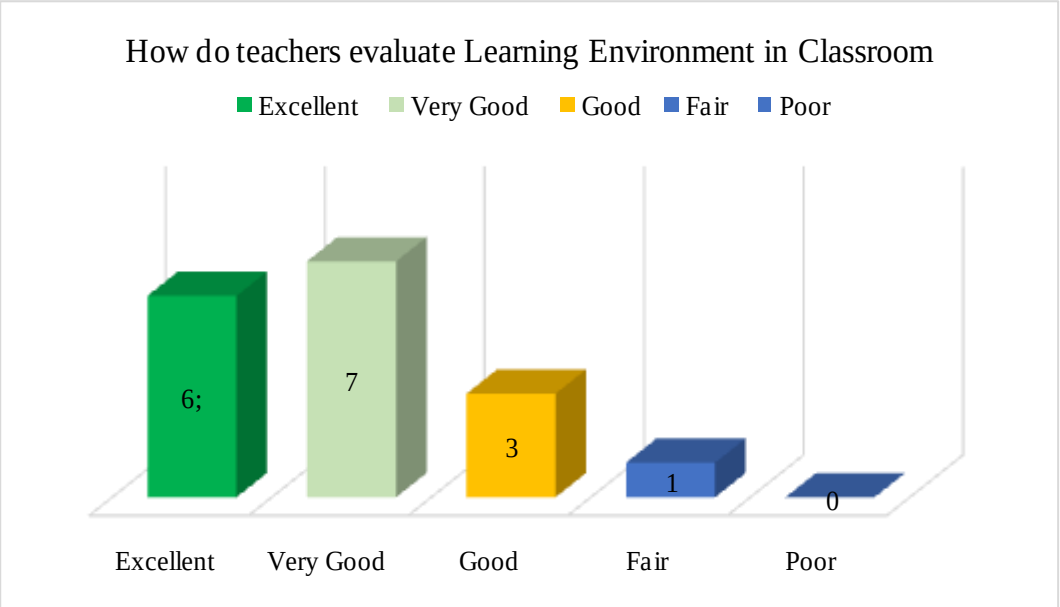

Figure 4.14: How do Teachers Evaluate Learning Environment in Classroom

The results show that the majority of teachers evaluated the learning environment in their classrooms as either very good7 (41%) or excellent 6(35%), with a few indicating it as good 3(18%) and a very small percentage 1(6%) rating it as fair. This result suggests that teachers generally view the learning environment positively. This positive evaluation reflects favourable conditions that may enhance students' engagement, motivation and academic performance. However, efforts should focus on

addressing the small percentage who rated the environment as fair, ensuring that all classrooms provide an equally supportive and effective learning space. These results align with studies of Makoha and Nabwire (2020) who emphasize the importance of a positive and engaging classroom environment, as it significantly influences student engagement and learning outcomes.

Table 4.9: Teachers Response on Timely Feedback and Students' Academic Performance

Statement	**n**	**SA**	**A**	**N**	**D**	**SD**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev**
		F %	**F %**	**F %**	**F %**	**F %**		
Do you believe that constructive feedback enhances students' motivation to succeed academically?	17	9; 53	5; 29	2; 12	1; 6	0; 0	3.353	1.052
Based on your experience, how much do you believe the learning environment impacts students' academic performance?	17	8; 47	7; 41	2; 12	0; 0	0; 0	3.294	0.952

According to the findings, 9(53%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 5(29%) agreed, 2(12%) were neutral, 1(6%) disagreed, and none of the respondents strongly disagreed that constructive feedback enhances students' motivation to succeed academically, with a mean of 3.353 and a standard deviation of 1.052. This indicates that a majority of the teachers believe that constructive feedback plays a significant role in motivating students to perform better. These findings align with those of

McMahon et al. (2019), who found that teachers' feedback directly influences student motivation and, consequently, academic performance.

Regarding the learning environment's impact on student performance, 8(47%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 7(41%) agreed, and 2(12%) were neutral. No one disagreed or strongly disagreed, with a mean of 3.294 and a standard deviation of 0.952. This suggests that teachers recognize the crucial role of a positive learning environment in fostering academic success. These results support the study by Chang (2018), which showed that a supportive classroom environment contributes significantly to improved academic outcomes for students.

Moreover, the researcher asked the HODs to indicate what impact timely feedback has on students' academic performance. One HOD explained,

"*Timely feedback is critical in helping students understand their mistakes early on. In our school, we provide feedback immediately after tests or assignments, and this allows students to work on their weaknesses right away*" (HOD, from National Girl School). Another HOD, emphasized,

"*We have found that when students receive feedback in a timely manner, they are more likely to apply it to future tasks. This has been particularly helpful in improving their performance in subjects like mathematics*" (HOD, from Extra County Boy School).

The researcher asked how HODs incorporate student feedback into their teaching methods. One HOD from a girls' school explained,

"*We conduct regular student surveys to gather feedback on how they feel about the teaching methods and course content. We then use this feedback to make necessary adjustments, ensuring that we remain responsive to their needs*" (HOD, Sub-County Girls' School). Another HOD shared,

"*We also have a suggestion box in our school, and students are encouraged to provide anonymous feedback. This allows us to identify areas where we can improve, particularly in terms of how we deliver lessons*" (HOD, Extra County Boys School).

These methods of gathering and acting on student feedback help ensure that teaching practices remain relevant and effective in improving academic outcomes.

4.6 Conducive Learning Environment and Students' Academic Performance

Fourth objective of this study was to assess the correlation between a conducive learning environment and students' academic performance in Homa Bay County. This section examines students' perceptions of the learning environment, focusing on elements such as teacher-student interactions, classroom conditions, resource accessibility, and levels of student engagement.The analysis examines how these aspects of the learning environment influence academic outcomes, highlighting students' experiences, as well as the strategies implemented by teachers and school administrators to create a supportive atmosphere for learning.

4.6.1 Students Response on Conducive Learning Environment and Students' Academic Performance

The researcher asked students to rate the quality of the learning environment. The findings were as indicated in table 4.10

Table 4.10: Quality of the Learning Environment

Question	N	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Rate the quality of the learning environment	59	15; 25		23; 39		14; 23		8; 13	
How would you rate the overall relationship you have with your current teacher?	59	16; 27		21; 35		15; 25		8; 13	

According to the findings, 15(25%) of respondents rated the quality of the learning environment as excellent, 23(39%) as good, 14(23%) as fair, and 8(13%) as poor. This indicates that most students perceive the learning environment positively, with a significant proportion finding it either good or excellent. These findings align with those of a study by Nyabuto (2019), who found that a supportive and well-equipped learning environment enhances students' academic performance.

Regarding the relationship with their current teacher, 16(27%) of students rated it as excellent, 21(35%) as good, 15(25%) as fair, and 8(13%) as poor. This suggests that while many students view their relationship with teachers positively, there is room for improvement to ensure stronger connections. This is consistent with Mutiso (2020), who found that teacher-student relationships significantly impact learners' motivation and engagement levels.

The researcher further asked the students to indicated their experiences on different aspects of learning environment, the findings were as indicated in table 4.11

Table 4.11: Student Experiences on Learning Environment

		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
	n	**F %**	**F %**	**F %**	**F %**	**F %**
How often do you find yourself rushing to complete assignments or study for tests?	59	11; 19	18; 31	16; 27	9; 15	5; 9
Do you feel that you contribute meaningfully to group projects or activities?	59	12; 21	22; 37	14; 23	8; 13	4; 7
How frequently do you engage in group projects or activities with your classmates?	59	14; 23	11; 33	15; 25	6; 11	5; 9
Do you feel that you have choices in how you complete assignments and projects?	59	11; 19	21; 35	17; 29	8; 13	3; 5

When asked about rushing to complete assignments or studying for tests, 11(19%) of respondents indicated always, 18(31%) often, 16(27%) sometimes, 9(15%) rarely, and 5(9%) never. This shows that most students frequently experience time pressure, potentially affecting their overall performance. For contributing meaningfully to group projects, 17(21%) of respondents indicated always, 22(37%) often, 14(23%) sometimes, 8(13%) rarely, and 4(7%) never. These findings suggest that students generally feel they contribute positively to group activities. The findings are in agreement with Njoroge (2017), who found that group projects promote collaboration and individual accountability among students.

Regarding engaging in group projects, 11(23%) responded always, 14(33%) often, 15(25%) sometimes, 6(11%) rarely, and 5(9%) never. These results indicate that

group projects are a common part of students' learning experiences. The findings also revealed that 11(19%) of the students indicated that they always feel they have choices in how they complete assignments and projects, 21(35%) responded often, 17(29%) sometimes, 8(13%) rarely, and 3(5%) never. These results suggest that while a majority of students feel they have some level of autonomy in completing their tasks, a notable proportion still lacks such flexibility. This aligns with the findings of Wanjiru (2018), who observed that providing students with choices in their academic tasks fosters a sense of ownership and improves their engagement and performance. The data underscores the importance of offering students the freedom to approach assignments in ways that resonate with their individual learning preferences.

Moreover, the researcher further sought to find out teacher-student relationship. The findings were as indicated in table 4.12

Table 4.12: Teacher-Student Relationship

	n	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev
		F %	F %	F %	F %	F %		
Our teachers are friendly and approachable in class and outside of class.	59	18; 31	23; 39	11; 19	4; 7	3; 5	3.751	0.891
Our teachers make an effort to get to know us as individuals.	59	16; 27	22; 37	12; 21	5; 9	4; 7	3.622	0.880
Teachers regularly provide constructive feedback on our work in class.	59	17; 29	20; 33	15; 25	4; 7	3; 5	3.653	0.862
The relationship we have with our teachers impacts our motivation to learn.	59	19; 33	22; 37	12; 21	3; 5	3; 5	3.804	0.833
Teachers make an effort to understand our personal and academic challenges and offer their help when possible.	59	15; 25	23; 39	14; 23	5; 9	3; 5	3.650	0.854

The data on teacher-student relationships shows generally positive perceptions among students. For the statement that teachers are friendly and approachable in class and outside of class, 18(31%) of students strongly agreed, 23(39%) agreed, 11(19%) were neutral, 4(7%) disagreed, and 3(5%) strongly disagreed. With a mean score of 3.751 and a standard deviation of 0.891, this suggests that most students perceive their teachers as approachable and friendly, both within and outside the classroom. This aligns with the findings of Njoroge (2017), who found that student-teacher rapport significantly enhances the learning environment and student satisfaction. The relatively low percentage of disagreement 7(12%) highlights the overall positive view of teacher-student relationships.

Regarding the effort teachers put into knowing students as individuals, 16(27%) strongly agreed, 22(37%) agreed, 12(21%) were neutral, 5(9%) disagreed, and 4(7%) strongly disagreed, with a mean score of 3.622 and a standard deviation of 0.880. These findings indicate that most students feel their teachers attempt to understand them as individuals, although a portion of students are undecided or feel this is not consistently practiced. This is supported by research from Kimani (2020), who suggested that personalized attention from teachers contributes to stronger student engagement and academic performance.

When asked if teachers regularly provide constructive feedback on their work, 17(29%) strongly agreed, 20(33%) agreed, 15(25%) were neutral, 4(7%) disagreed, and 3(5%) strongly disagreed. The mean score of 3.653 and a standard deviation of 0.862 indicate that a majority of students believe they receive regular feedback. This feedback is essential for academic growth, and studies such as those by Mwai (2019) affirm that feedback helps students identify strengths and areas for improvement. The

percentage of neutral responses (25%) suggests that feedback may not be as consistent for all students, which could benefit from further exploration.

The assertion that teacher-student relationships influence students' motivation to learn received strong support, with 19 respondents (33%) strongly agreeing, 22 (37%) agreeing, 12 (21%) remaining neutral, and 6 (10%) disagreeing. The responses yielded a mean score of 3.804 and a standard deviation of 0.833, underscoring the significance of positive teacher-student interactions in fostering motivation. Students who perceive their teachers as supportive and respectful are generally more driven to succeed academically-a finding consistent with research by Gikonyo (2021), which linked constructive teacher relationships to increased academic engagement and motivation.

The statement regarding teachers' efforts to understand students' personal and academic difficulties received varied responses: 15 students (25%) strongly agreed, 23 (39%) agreed, 14 (23%) were neutral, 5 (9%) disagreed, and 3 (5%) strongly disagreed. With a mean score of 3.650 and a standard deviation of 0.854, the data suggests that a majority of students perceive their teachers as attentive to their challenges, though a portion remains uncertain or feels the support is lacking. Okoth (2022) highlighted that when educators are attuned to both the academic and personal struggles of their students, they are better positioned to offer targeted and impactful assistance, ultimately enhancing educational outcomes.

The researcher also explored the strategies employed to foster a supportive learning environment for students in Homa Bay County. A Head of Department from a mixed school shared that.

"We have introduced peer mentoring programs, where older students help their juniors with academics. This has created a supportive environment that encourages collaboration and boosts academic outcomes, as students feel more comfortable asking questions" (HOD, Sub County Mixed day School). Another HOD from a boarding school shared,

"In our boarding school, we ensure that students have quiet time for studies in the evening, as well as adequate recreational time. This balance has significantly contributed to improved concentration and better academic performance" (HOD, Extra County Boys School). These strategies highlight the importance of peer support and balanced routines, which positively affect academic performance by fostering an environment of collaboration, focus, and mental well-being.

The researcher also explored how HODs adapt their teaching methods to support students who may face challenges due to socio-economic factors. One HOD from a girls' school shared,

"*We try to be as understanding as possible. For students who face socio-economic challenges, we offer additional learning materials and have mentorship programs where they are counseled and supported emotionally. This helps them focus better on their academic work*" (HOD, Sub -County Girls' School). Another HOD from a mixed school emphasized the importance of communication,

"*We encourage open communication with students. If a student is facing challenges at home, we involve their parents in finding solutions. This holistic approach ensures that no student is left behind academically*" (HOD, From Mixed day School). These practices demonstrate the importance of empathy, support, and collaboration with parents, which help students overcome socio-economic barriers and focus on their academic success.

The researcher sought to identify specific aspects of the learning environment that most significantly influence student engagement. One HOD from a boys' school mentioned,

"In our school, the availability of adequate teaching resources such as textbooks and

teaching aids plays a big role in engaging students. When students have the materials they need, they are more likely to stay interested and perform better academically" (HOD, County Boys' School). Another HOD from a day school pointed to the physical environment,

"*The physical classroom environment, including lighting and seating arrangements, also affects student engagement. In our school, we've ensured that classrooms are well-lit and spacious, which has contributed to higher engagement and improved outcomes*" (HOD, Sub-County Girls Day School). These insights suggest that both resources and physical space are critical to maintaining student engagement, which directly influences academic performance.

4.7 Academic Performance

4.7.1 Students Responses on Academic Performance

Students were asked to respond on the academic performance which was the dependent variable the findings were as indicated in the table 4.13

Table 4.13: Students Responses on Academic Performance

	n	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Mean	Std. Dev
		F %	F %	F %	F %		
How would you rate your overall academic performance?	59	16; 27	21; 35	15; 25	8; 13	2.765	0.845
Rate your class attendance	59	17; 29	22; 37	14; 23	6; 11	2.785	0.865
Rate your level of classroom engagement	59	15; 25	23; 39	14; 23	8; 13	2.775	0.855
Rate your assignment completion level	59	18; 31	22; 37	12; 21	6; 11	2.855	0.835

The data provided for academic performance reveals insightful trends regarding students' self-assessments of their academic abilities, attendance, engagement, and assignment completion. For the question regarding overall academic performance, 16(27%) of students rated their performance as excellent, 21(35%) as good, 15(25%) as average, and 8(13%) as poor, resulting in a mean score of 2.765 with a standard deviation of 0.845. This suggests that while a significant portion of students view their performance as good or excellent. Studies such as those by Mwaura (2020) suggest that self-assessment can be influenced by external factors like peer comparison, teaching quality, and personal expectations.

For class attendance, 17(29%) of students rated it as excellent, 22(37%) as good, 14(23%) as average, and 6(11%) as poor, with a mean score of 2.785 and a standard deviation of 0.865. As observed in research by Njoroge (2019), regular attendance is linked to better academic performance, and the variance in ratings could suggest that factors such as personal motivation and external challenges (e.g., family responsibilities or health issues) influence attendance.

When evaluating classroom engagement, 15(25%) of students rated it as excellent, 23(39%) as good, 14(23%) as average, and 8(13%) as poor, leading to a mean score of 2.775 and a standard deviation of 0.855. This data suggests that a majority of students are moderately engaged in classroom activities. Studies by Mwangi (2021) argue that engagement is crucial for deep learning, and the disparity in responses may indicate a need for more interactive or student-centered teaching strategies.

Finally, for assignment completion, 18(31%) of students rated their level of completion as excellent, 22(37%) as good, 12(21%) as average, and 6(11%) as poor, resulting in a mean of 2.855 and a standard deviation of 0.835. These results indicate

that the majority of students are able to complete their assignments either excellently or well. Research by Kinyua (2021) shows that assignment completion is a strong predictor of academic success, and the lower ratings may reflect factors such as workload, time management, or personal issues affecting students' ability to complete tasks to the best of their ability.

The researcher inquired about collaborations that positively influenced academic performance. One HOD from a mixed school explained,

"*We partnered with local NGOs to provide extra-curricular programs that complement the academic curriculum. These partnerships have helped students build skills outside of academics, which have had a positive impact on their overall performance*" (HOD, Extra County Mixed School). Another HOD shared,

"We have also worked closely with universities and local businesses to provide career guidance and mentorship to our students. This exposure has motivated them to perform better, knowing that their academic success opens doors for future opportunities" (HOD, Extra County Girls School). These collaborations enhance student learning by providing opportunities beyond the classroom and giving students exposure to real-world applications of their education.

Finally, the researcher asked about additional resources that could further enhance academic performance. An HOD from a girls' school suggested,

"*One thing that could enhance academic performance is increased access to digital learning tools. Many of our students are from rural areas and don't have easy access to the internet. Providing them with online resources could bridge this gap*" (HOD, county mixed school). A day school HOD added,

"*Additionally, I believe that more teacher training programs focused on modern teaching methods would greatly benefit the academic performance of our students. Continuous professional development for teachers is key*" (HOD, Sub- County boys' day school). These findings highlight the need for technological resources and continuous teacher training to enhance the learning experience and academic performance of students.

4.8 Inferential Statistics

4.8.1 Correlation Analysis

Correlation is a technique for investigating the relationship between two quantitative, continuous variables. The study adopted Pearson correlation analysis. Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) a measure the strength of the association between the two variables.

Table 4.14: Correlation Matrix

Correlations

		Academic Performance	Clear Performance Standards	Goal Setting	Timely Feedback	Conducive Learning Environment
Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.545*	.682*	.612*	.577*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	76	76	76	76	76
Clear Performance Standards	Pearson Correlation	.545*	1	.514*	.749*	.390*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	76	76	76	76	76
Goal Setting	Pearson Correlation	.682*	.514*	1	.635*	.585*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	76	76	76	76	76
Timely Feedback	Pearson Correlation	.612*	.749*	.635*	1	.531*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	76	76	76	76	76
Conducive Learning Environment	Pearson Correlation	.577*	.390*	.585*	.531*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	76	76	76	76	76

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The study found a significant, positive correlation between clear performance standards and students' academic performance in Homa Bay County ($r = 0.545$, $p = 0.000$). This suggests that schools that set clear and well-communicated academic expectations foster better academic outcomes for students. This finding is consistent with Karanja and Mwangi (2018) emphasis on the importance of setting clear, transparent expectations to guide students' learning. When students are aware of the performance standards they are expected to meet, they are more likely to strive towards meeting these goals, resulting in better academic performance. Similar findings were noted by Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2023), who highlighted that students perform better when expectations are clearly communicated and understood.

A strong positive correlation ($r = 0.682$, $p = 0.000$) was observed between goal setting and students' academic performance. This finding implies that students who set specific academic goals are more likely to perform better. The findings are in line with those of Njoroge and Kibe (2019) who highlighted the motivational benefits of goal-setting, noting that students with clear academic targets are more focused and engaged in their learning. Additionally, Belbin (2021) stresses that personal academic goals lead to increased self-regulation, which further contributes to improved academic performance.

The study revealed a significant positive correlation between timely feedback and academic performance ($r = 0.612$, $p = 0.000$). This indicates that regular, constructive feedback from teachers enhances student performance. This result aligns with Kilonzo (2020) assertion that feedback is a key component in the learning process, as it helps students recognize areas of strength and weakness, guiding them in improving their academic performance. Additionally, the role of timely feedback in student motivation and achievement is well documented. According to Kilonzo (2020),

feedback fosters a sense of progress in students, making them more likely to stay engaged and motivated. Therefore, the findings in this study confirm the importance of providing students with continuous and meaningful feedback to enhance their academic success.

The study found a positive correlation between a conducive learning environment and academic performance ($r = 0.577$, $p = 0.000$). This result indicates that a well-organized and supportive learning environment plays a crucial role in enhancing student performance. The findings are supported with those of Mutiso (2020) who emphasized that a comfortable and resource-rich environment boosts student engagement and academic achievement. The physical aspects, such as classroom lighting, seating arrangements, and noise control, were found to impact concentration and learning outcomes. Mutiso (2020) also stress that emotional support, such as peer mentoring and extracurricular activities, is essential for creating a learning environment that motivates students to excel academically. The findings of this study align with these perspectives, showing that a conducive learning environment significantly contributes to improved academic outcomes.

4.8.2 Regression Analysis

Table 4.15: Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.681[a]	.463	.458	.62786

a. Predictors: (Constant), Clear Performance Standards, Goal Setting, Timely Feedback Conducive Learning Environment

b. Dependent Variable: Students' Academic Performance

The results indicated that the combined influence of these predictors explained 46.3% of the variation in students' academic performance in Homa Bay County, as reflected by an R Square value of 0.463. This demonstrates a moderately strong relationship between the studied variables and students' academic performance in Homa Bay County, highlighting the significance of these strategies in enhancing students' outcomes. However, 53.7% of the variation remains unexplained, suggesting the presence of other factors not captured in this study.

Table 4.16: ANOVA of the Regression Model

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	123.922	4	30.9805	15.329	.000[b]
	Residual	143.491	71	2.021		
	Total	267.413	75			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Clear Performance Standards, Goal Setting, Timely Feedback
Conducive Learning Environment

b. Dependent Variable: Students' Academic Performance

Based on the ANOVA table, the F-statistic is 15.329 as shown in Table 4.16. Since the calculated F-value exceeds the critical value, this indicates that the model is statistically significant. This provides strong evidence that the regression results are reliable, and the variation is minimal—suggesting that changes in the study population would not substantially affect the outcomes. Therefore, the model is appropriate for the study.

Table 4.17: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**T**	**Sig.**
1	(Constant)	1.082	.127		8.529	.000
	Clear Performance Standards	.314	.033	.433	9.470	.002
	Goal Setting	.159	.042	.220	3.831	.003
	Timely Feedback	. 313	.033	.432	9.616	.026
	Conducive Learning Environment	.145	.045	.435	9.145	.031

Dependent Variable: Students' Academic Performance in Homa Bay County.

The study also conducted a regression analysis to establish the regression coefficients connecting the independent and dependent variables as illustrated by the equation below:

$$Y=\beta0+\beta1X1+\beta2X2+\beta3X3+\beta4X4+\varepsilon$$

In the analysis, Y represents students' academic performance in Homa Bay County, while X1, X2, X3, and X4 denote the independent variables:X1 = Clear Performance Standards, X2 = Goal Setting, X3 = Timely Feedback and X4 = Conducive Learning Environment. The constant term, β0, represents the baseline academic performance of students when all independent variables are zero, and ε represents the error term.

From the results presented, the derived equation reflects the unstandardized coefficients (β) of the predictors. The findings indicate that each of the independent variables positively correlates with students' academic performance in Homa Bay County. Specifically, the equation can be expressed as:

$$Y=1.082+0.314X1+0.159X2+0.313X3+0.145X4+\varepsilon$$

The constant value of 1.082 suggests that students' academic performance in Homa Bay County would be 1.082 when all other factors are held constant at zero. Additionally, the results indicate that a unit change in clear performance standards (X1) results in an increase of 0.314 in academic performance. Similarly, a unit change in goal setting (X2) leads to a 0.159 increase in academic performance. Furthermore, a unit change in timely feedback (X3) yields a 0.313 increase in academic performance, while a unit change in conducive learning environment (X4) results in a 0.145 increase. These findings underscore the significant positive impact of each predictor: Clear performance standards, goal setting, timely feedback and conducive learning environment on students' academic performance in Homa Bay County. The results highlight the importance of these factors in improving students' academic success.

4.8.3 Hypothesis Testing

Table 4.18: Test on HoDs, teachers and students on correlation between teacher motivation and student performance

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.082	.127		8.529	.000
	Clear Performance Standards	.314	.033	.433	9.470	.002
	Goal Setting	.159	.042	.220	3.831	.003
	Timely Feedback	. 313	.033	.432	9.616	.026
	Conducive Learning Environment	.145	.045	.435	9.145	.031

The researcher sought to test hypothesis one that **H01:** There is no significant relationship between clear performance standards and students' academic

performance in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County. The p-value was 0.002 < 0.05. Based on the significance threshold, the study rejects the null hypothesis (H01) and concludes that clear performance standards have a significant relationship with students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County. This finding is consistent with Karanja and Mwangi (2018) emphasis on the importance of setting clear, transparent expectations to guide students' learning. When students are aware of the performance standards they are expected to meet, they are more likely to strive towards meeting these goals, resulting in better academic performance. Similar findings were noted by Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2023), who highlighted that students perform better when expectations are clearly communicated and understood.

Moreover, the researcher sought to test hypothesis two that **H02:** There is no significant relationship between goal setting and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County. The p-value was 0.003 < 0.05, which is below the significance level. Therefore, based on the rule of significance, the study rejects the null hypothesis (H02) and concludes that goal setting has a statistically significant relationship with students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County. The findings are in line with those of Njoroge and Kibe (2019) who highlighted the motivational benefits of goal-setting, noting that students with clear academic targets are more focused and engaged in their learning. Additionally, Belbin (2021) stresses that personal academic goals lead to increased self-regulation, which further contributes to improved academic performance.

In addition, the researcher sought to test hypothesis three that **H03:** There is no significant relationship between timely feedback and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County. The p-value was 0.026 < 0.05.

Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the study rejects the null hypothesis (H03) and concludes that timely feedback has a significant relationship with students' academic performance. This result aligns with Kilonzo (2020) assertion that feedback is a key component in the learning process, as it helps students recognize areas of strength and weakness, guiding them in improving their academic performance. Additionally, the role of timely feedback in student motivation and achievement is well documented. According to Kilonzo (2020), feedback fosters a sense of progress in students, making them more likely to stay engaged and motivated. Therefore, the findings in this study confirm the importance of providing students with continuous and meaningful feedback to enhance their academic success.

Finally, the researcher sought to test hypothesis four that **H04:** There is no significant relationship between a conducive learning environment and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County. The data showed a p-value of $0.031 < 0.05$. According to the rule of significance, the study rejects the null hypothesis (H04) and concludes that a conducive learning environment significantly affects students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County. With Mutiso (2020) emphasizing that a comfortable and resource-rich environment boosts student engagement and academic achievement. The physical aspects, such as classroom lighting, seating arrangements, and noise control, were found to impact concentration and learning outcomes. Mutiso (2020) also stress that emotional support, such as peer mentoring and extracurricular activities, is essential for creating a learning environment that motivates students to excel academically. The findings of this study align with these perspectives, showing that a conducive learning environment significantly contributes to improved academic outcomes.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed summary of the major findings of the actual study; it then draws conclusions and discusses implications emanating from these findings. Finally, it makes some recommendations and suggestions on areas of further study. The main aim of this study was to investigate how teachers' motivational strategies correlate with students' academic performance among public secondary schools in Homa Bay County, Kenya. This study focused on elements such as clear performance standards, goal setting, timely feedback and conducive learning environment.

5.1 Study Summary

The investigation found out that there is a significant positive correlation between students' academic performance and four key factors: clear performance standards, goal setting, timely feedback, and a conducive learning environment. Schools that set well-defined performance standards foster better academic outcomes, but inconsistencies in communication hinder student alignment with expectations. Goal setting was found to be highly beneficial, yet many students do not actively participate in setting their own academic objectives, indicating a need for increased mentorship and support. Timely and constructive feedback was identified as a major contributor to student motivation and success, though inconsistencies in feedback frequency and specificity were observed. Lastly, a conducive learning environment, including positive teacher-student relationships and structured academic support, was shown to enhance engagement and performance. The study recommends improving communication, increasing student involvement in goal setting, ensuring timely and

clear feedback, and fostering a supportive learning environment to optimize academic achievement.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The study sought to determine a summary of the findings. The summary was categorized in terms of specific objectives.

5.2.1 Performance Standards and Students Academic Performance

The study found a significant, positive correlation between clear performance standards and students' academic performance in Homa Bay County ($r = 0.545$, $p = 0.000$). This suggests that schools that set clear and well-communicated academic expectations foster better academic outcomes for students. The study further found that performance standards are communicated inconsistently to students. Most students acknowledged that they are occasionally informed about performance expectations, which suggests a lack of systematic and regular communication. This inconsistency could hinder students' ability to align their efforts with the required benchmarks. The findings also showed that well-defined performance standards positively influence students' academic performance. Students agreed that clarity regarding expectations enhances their focus and understanding, helping them to prioritize their learning objectives effectively. This highlights the importance of providing structured and precise performance benchmarks to support academic success.

Additionally, students recognized that clear communication of subject-specific performance standards supports a more structured approach to learning. They reported that understanding expectations in individual subjects motivates them to prepare adequately, thus improving their overall academic engagement. Students also

prioritized regular class attendance, which was associated with enhanced participation in learning activities and improved academic outcomes. Active involvement in classroom discussions and activities was noted to be moderate, with factors such as teaching methodologies and individual confidence influencing their participation. Moreover, students acknowledged the importance of timely submission of assignments. Adherence to deadlines was noted to improve their academic discipline and organization, which contributes to better academic performance overall.

Teachers emphasized that clear communication of performance standards is crucial for academic success. They noted that students benefit significantly when expectations are explicitly outlined, as this provides them with clear academic goals and guidance. Teachers observed a strong correlation between adherence to performance standards and improved academic performance. They explained that students who consistently follow the outlined benchmarks perform better as they receive insightful information on the expectation on them. Furthermore, teachers highlighted the importance of integrating performance standards into teaching methods. They identified strategies such as regular assessments, classroom discussions, and personalized approaches, including written guidelines and one-on-one feedback, as effective ways to ensure students understand and meet performance expectations.

5.2.2 Goal Setting and Students Academic Performance

The study found a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.682$, $p = 0.000$) between goal setting and students' academic performance. This finding implies that students who set specific academic goals are more likely to perform better. The study also found that majority of students do not actively participate in setting their own academic goals, with the largest proportion of respondents indicating that they never engage in this

practice. This lack of involvement suggests a gap in student empowerment and engagement in their academic planning. The study found that many students perceive setting personal academic goals as significantly enhancing their motivation. A substantial portion of students indicated that such practices positively influence their drive to succeed academically, emphasizing the motivational potential of goal-setting initiatives.

The study found that while many students frequently set specific academic goals for the year, a notable proportion remains indifferent or uncertain about this practice. This reflects varying levels of engagement with goal-setting behaviors, which are likely to tilted by external factors such as guidance, resources, or personal motivation. The study found that students generally perceive their goals as moderately achievable within the given timeframe. However, there is considerable variability in this perception, pointing to potential barriers such as time management issues or inadequate support systems.

The study found that the majority of students believe there is a positive relationship between setting academic goals and achieving success. Students who recognize this link often display a greater commitment to goal-setting practices, underlining the transformative potential of structured academic planning. The study found that students' access to resources to achieve their academic goals is inconsistent. While some students feel supported in their goal-setting efforts, others perceive significant disparities in resource availability, which may hinder their ability to meet set objectives.

The study found that most teachers frequently set academic goals as part of their professional practice, with many recognizing the importance of structured planning in

fostering student outcomes. However, a minority of teachers reported rarely or never setting goals, highlighting potential barriers such as time constraints or insufficient training. The study found that nearly half of the respondents identified a strong positive influence of setting academic goals on students' performance. This underscores the potential of goal-setting as a transformative tool for enhancing academic outcomes.

The study also found that teachers often provide guidance to students in establishing realistic and attainable academic goals. While many teachers are actively involved in this process, some do not consistently offer support, indicating a need for targeted interventions to promote mentorship in goal-setting practices. The study found that teachers evaluate the effectiveness of goal-setting primarily through indicators such as grade improvement, increased motivation, and better engagement. These measures reveal the multidimensional impact of goal-setting on academic performance, with a strong emphasis on motivational and behavioral outcomes. The study found that teachers also value other dimensions, such as time management, confidence, and academic behavior, when assessing the impact of goal-setting. These factors, although less quantifiable, are critical in shaping a holistic approach to academic success.

5.2.3 Timely Feedback and Students' Academic Performance

The study revealed a significant positive correlation between timely feedback and academic performance ($r = 0.612$, $p = 0.000$). This indicates that regular, constructive feedback from teachers enhances student performance. The study also found that most students receive constructive feedback on their academic performance, though the frequency varies significantly. Some students always or often receive feedback, while others report infrequent or absent feedback, highlighting inconsistencies in feedback delivery. The study also found that the speed of feedback is generally

efficient for a majority of students, with most reporting feedback as very fast, fast, or moderate. However, a notable portion of students still experience delays, indicating areas where the timeliness of feedback could be improved.

Moreover, the study found that the specificity of feedback is moderate, with some students describing it as very specific or extremely specific, while others consider it somewhat specific or not specific at all. This variability suggests that the detail and relevance of feedback could be enhanced to meet diverse student needs. The study found that clarity in feedback is generally perceived positively, with most students rating it as clear or very clear. Nevertheless, a minority of students face challenges understanding feedback, indicating the need for more effective communication strategies by educators.

The study also found that constructive feedback serves as a motivator for most students, with many strongly agreeing or agreeing that feedback inspires them to improve their academic performance. However, some students remain indifferent or disagree, suggesting that feedback might not always resonate effectively or address their specific needs. The study further found that teachers predominantly provide feedback through written comments and verbal interactions during class. These methods offer detailed and immediate insights but may not always allow for in-depth, personalized discussions due to time and resource constraints. The study found that one-on-one meetings between teachers and students for feedback are infrequent, despite their potential to provide tailored guidance. This reflects logistical challenges such as large class sizes and limited time for personalized engagement.

Teachers' analysis on feedback mechanism revealed that teachers generally evaluate the classroom learning environment positively, with most describing it as good, very

good, or excellent. This indicates that educators believe their classrooms support effective learning, though there is still room for targeted improvements. The study found that teachers recognize the motivational impact of constructive feedback, with a majority strongly agreeing or agreeing that it enhances students' drive to succeed academically. This underscores the importance of actionable and supportive feedback in fostering student growth. The study also found that a supportive and positive learning environment is seen as essential by teachers for fostering academic success. Most teachers agree or strongly agree that the classroom environment significantly influences student engagement and performance. This highlights the dual importance of timely feedback and conducive learning conditions in enhancing academic outcomes.

5.2.4 Conducive Learning Environment and Students' Academic Performance

The study found a positive correlation between a conducive learning environment and academic performance ($r = 0.577$, $p = 0.000$). This result indicates that a well-organized and supportive learning environment plays a crucial role in enhancing student performance. Moreover, the study found that students generally perceived the quality of their learning environment positively. A significant proportion rated it as either good or excellent, suggesting that the majority were satisfied with the conditions provided for their academic pursuits. However, a smaller percentage expressed dissatisfaction, indicating that there is still room for improvement in certain aspects of the learning environment. The study found that relationships between students and their teachers were perceived positively by most respondents. Many students described their relationships with teachers as either excellent or good, emphasizing the key function of student-teacher interactions in creating a conducive learning atmosphere. Nonetheless, a portion of students expressed less favorable

views, highlighting the need for more efforts to strengthen teacher-student connections and foster an inclusive environment.

Moreover, the study found that students frequently experienced time pressure in completing assignments or preparing for tests. This challenge was noted as a common occurrence, which might impact their ability to engage deeply with academic material. Despite this, students reported meaningful contributions to group projects, demonstrating a sense of responsibility and collaboration in their learning experiences. The study found that group projects were a regular feature of students' academic routines, with many students actively participating and contributing. These activities provided opportunities for peer interaction and teamwork, which are essential for holistic development. However, some students indicated that they did not engage as consistently, reflecting potential disparities in participation levels.

In addition, the study found that students experienced varying degrees of autonomy in how they approached assignments and projects. While many students felt they had some level of choice, others reported limited flexibility, which could hinder their ability to tailor learning activities to their preferences and strengths. The findings underscore the importance of offering diverse approaches to assignments to enhance student engagement. The study found that teacher-student relationships significantly influenced students' motivation to learn. Most students described their teachers as approachable and friendly, both in and outside the classroom, which positively impacted their willingness to engage with academic material. A smaller proportion of students expressed neutral or negative views, suggesting that fostering closer relationships with all students remains essential.

The study also found that teachers made notable efforts to understand students as individuals, though this practice was not consistent across all respondents. Many students felt acknowledged and valued, but a segment expressed uncertainty or dissatisfaction, indicating an opportunity to enhance personalized attention and support. The study further found that regular and constructive feedback from teachers was commonly reported by students, with many affirming that this feedback was instrumental in guiding their academic progress. However, some students felt that feedback was inconsistent or insufficient, pointing to the need for more uniform practices in providing evaluations and suggestions.

Moreover, the study found that the relationship between students and teachers played a critical role in enhancing students' overall motivation and engagement. Students who felt respected and supported by their teachers reported higher levels of enthusiasm for their studies. However, there was a recognition that not all students experienced this level of motivation, highlighting an area for further development in fostering inclusive and supportive teacher-student dynamics. Moreover, the study found that teachers demonstrated an effort to understand students' personal and academic challenges, with many students acknowledging this support. Nevertheless, a portion of students felt that these efforts were limited or inconsistent, emphasizing the need for greater attention to individual needs to ensure all students benefit equally from a supportive learning environment.

5.3 Conclusions of the Study

The study conclusions were done based on the study objectives as here in:

5.3.1 Performance Standards and Students Academic Performance

The study concluded that clear performance standards have a significant relationship with students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County. The rejection of the null hypothesis (H01) indicates that well-defined expectations positively influence academic outcomes. The study also concluded that performance standards were communicated inconsistently to students, with a lack of systematic engagement in conveying these expectations. While some students noted occasional communication, this irregularity may hinder their ability to fully align their academic efforts with the intended benchmarks. This suggests a gap in effective communication of standards that needs to be addressed. The study concluded that well-defined performance standards have a positive influence on students' academic performance. Students perceived that clear and structured benchmark improved their focus and understanding, enabling them to prioritize their learning objectives. However, the inconsistency in communication may undermine the full potential of these standards to drive performance.

The study concluded that subject-specific performance standards were beneficial when clearly communicated. Students appreciated the clarity these standards provided, which helped them prepare more effectively. Nevertheless, the findings also indicated that not all subjects had equally clear expectations, revealing a weakness in the uniformity of standard communication across subjects. The study concluded that students prioritized regular class attendance, recognizing its importance for academic success. This positive finding underscores the role of discipline and consistency in promoting learning outcomes. However, the moderate

levels of participation in classroom activities highlighted by the findings suggest a need for more engaging teaching methods to boost active involvement.

The study concluded that timely submission of assignments was generally upheld by students, with adherence to deadlines enhancing academic discipline and organization. Despite this positive trend, some students struggled with consistency in meeting deadlines, indicating a need for additional support to ensure compliance with assignment expectations. The study concluded that teachers recognized the critical role of clear communication of performance standards in enhancing student success. They observed that clearly articulated benchmarks provided students with actionable goals, leading to improved academic outcomes. However, teachers also acknowledged challenges in consistently integrating these standards into their teaching practices.

The study concluded that adherence to performance standards positively influenced student outcomes. Teachers observed that students who followed these benchmarks demonstrated better academic performance. Nevertheless, it was noted that some students lacked the necessary support to consistently adhere to these standards, limiting their potential for academic improvement. The study concluded that integrating performance standards into teaching through strategies like regular assessments, discussions, and personalized feedback significantly improved student outcomes. However, challenges in implementing these strategies uniformly across teaching staff highlighted an area for improvement in standardizing the integration process.

5.3.2 Goal Setting and Students' Academic Performance

The study concluded that there was a significant relationship between goal setting and students' academic performance. By rejecting the null hypothesis (H02), it is

concluded that having clear academic goals enhances student motivation and focus, contributing to better performance. The study concluded that a majority of students do not actively participate in setting their own academic goals, indicating a need for strategies to increase student engagement and involvement in academic planning. The study concluded that setting personal academic goals significantly enhances students' motivation, highlighting the importance of empowering students to establish clear and achievable objectives. The study concluded that while many students frequently set specific academic goals, a significant number remain indifferent or uncertain, suggesting that external factors such as mentorship and clarity of purpose influence goal-setting behavior.

The study further concluded that students perceive their goals as moderately achievable within the given timeframe, although there is variability, reflecting potential barriers such as inadequate support systems and time management challenges. The study also concluded that the study concluded that students believe there is a positive relationship between setting academic goals and achieving success, demonstrating the critical role of structured goal-setting in fostering academic excellence. The study also concluded that access to resources necessary for achieving academic goals is inconsistent, with disparities in resource availability potentially limiting the ability of some students to meet their objectives.

The study further concluded that most teachers frequently set academic goals as part of their professional responsibilities, recognizing the significant role of structured planning in enhancing student performance. The study concluded that setting academic goals has a strong positive influence on students' academic performance, underscoring its transformative potential in boosting academic outcomes. The study concluded that teachers frequently provide guidance to students in setting realistic and

attainable goals, though there remains a need for targeted interventions to ensure consistent mentorship for all students.

The study also concluded that teachers assess the effectiveness of goal-setting through indicators such as grade improvement, increased motivation, and better engagement, illustrating the multifaceted benefits of goal-setting practices on student performance. The study concluded that additional factors such as time management, confidence, and academic behavior are valuable indicators of the effectiveness of goal-setting, emphasizing the holistic benefits of the practice beyond academic achievements.

5.3.3 Timely Feedback and Students' Academic Performance

The study concluded that timely feedback has a huge impact on students' academic achievement. The rejection of the null hypothesis (H03) suggests that regular and constructive feedback is crucial in helping students accelerate their academic achievements. The investigation also concluded that students receive constructive feedback on their academic performance at varying frequencies, indicating inconsistencies in feedback delivery. The study also concluded that the speed of feedback is efficient for most students, though some experience delays, suggesting room for improvement in the timeliness of feedback. Moreover, feedback specificity is moderate, with significant variability among students, highlighting the need for more detailed and relevant feedback. The study further concluded that clarity in feedback is generally perceived positively by most students, though a minority face challenge understanding the feedback, pointing to the need for improved communication. In addition, the study concluded that constructive feedback serves as a motivational tool for most students, though some remain indifferent or unmotivated, emphasizing the need for more personalized and impactful feedback.

The study concluded that teachers primarily provide feedback through written comments and verbal interactions during class, which are effective but limited by time and resource constraints. The study concluded that one-on-one meetings between teachers and students for feedback are infrequent, despite their potential to provide personalized guidance, reflecting logistical challenges in implementation. The study concluded that teachers view the classroom learning environment positively, suggesting that it supports effective learning while leaving room for further enhancements. Moreover, the study concluded that constructive feedback significantly motivates students to succeed academically, highlighting its importance in fostering student growth and performance. Finally, the study concluded that a supportive and positive learning environment is crucial for academic success, with teachers recognizing its significant influence on student engagement and outcomes.

5.3.4 Conducive Learning Environment and Students' Academic Performance

The study concluded that a conducive learning environment significantly affects students' academic performance. By rejecting the null hypothesis (H04), it is established that a supportive and resourceful learning environment contributes positively to students' academic excellence .The study also concluded that the quality of the learning environment significantly influences students' academic performance. Most students rated their learning environment positively, highlighting that a well-equipped and supportive atmosphere fosters better academic engagement and outcomes. However, the presence of a small proportion of dissatisfied students indicates areas that require further enhancement to ensure inclusivity and uniform satisfaction. The study concluded that strong teacher-student engagement are critical for creating a conducive learning environment. Many students perceived these relationships positively, which enhanced their motivation and engagement. However,

the study also highlighted the need for deliberate efforts to strengthen these relationships universally to address the needs of all students.

The study also concluded that time pressure in completing assignments and preparing for tests remains a common challenge for students, potentially affecting their academic performance. Despite this, students reported active participation in group projects, reflecting their ability to collaborate effectively and adapt to shared academic tasks. The study concluded that students generally feel a sense of autonomy in approaching assignments and projects, which enhances their engagement and performance. However, a notable proportion of students indicated limited flexibility, suggesting that providing more choices could further improve their learning experiences and outcomes.

Further the study concluded that teacher feedback plays a pivotal role in guiding students' academic progress. While many students reported receiving regular and constructive feedback, the inconsistency in feedback practices underscores the need for a standardized approach to ensure all students benefit from this critical support. The study further concluded that teacher efforts to understand students' personal and academic challenges positively impact their learning experiences. While many students acknowledged such efforts, the inconsistency in perceptions highlights an opportunity for educators to adopt more targeted and inclusive approaches to addressing individual student needs.

The study also concluded that teacher-student relationships significantly influence students' motivation to learn. Students who felt respected and supported by their teachers demonstrated higher levels of enthusiasm and academic engagement. However, the variability in responses suggests that fostering a universally supportive

relationship with all students remains an area for improvement. The study further concluded that group projects are a valuable component of the learning environment, promoting teamwork and collaboration among students. Despite the positive responses, the disparities in participation levels highlight the need for more inclusive strategies to ensure that all students benefit equally from these collaborative opportunities.

5.4 Recommendations of the Study

From the findings, the study made the following recommendations to different stakeholders:

5.4.1 Performance standards and students' academic performance

The Ministry of Education should ensure that all students are aware of academic expectations which would help them work towards meeting the targets. Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASOs) should monitor adherence to these standards and provide necessary guidance to improve teaching quality.

5.4.2 Goal setting and students' academic performance

Parents should play an active role in aiding their children's academic goals by creating a positive learning environment at home as outlined in the Basic Education Act 2013.This includes providing emotional and motivational support and ensuring children remain committed to their studies. In addition, parents should engage with teachers to track their children's academic progress and collaborates with schools to foster an environment that encourages success. School administrators should facilitate their interaction by organizing regular parent-teachers meeting and providing platforms for communication.

5.4.3 Timely feedback and students' academic performance

To enhance students' academic performance, educators must prioritize timely and constructive feedback within the education system. The Basic Education Act, 2013 assigns the Education Standards and Quality Assurance Council (ESQAC) the responsibility of maintaining education quality by overseeing teaching practices and ensuring prompt feedback. Therefore, teachers should consistently conduct assessments and provide clear, actionable feedback to support student learning. To reinforce this approach, the Cabinet Secretary for Education, in collaboration with ESQAC, should establish and enforce policies that mandate timely feedback as a fundamental requirement in all educational institutions.

5.4.4 Conducive learning environment and students' academic performance

A supportive learning environment is crucial for boosting students' academic performance. The Basic Education Act, 2013 tasks the Education Standards and Quality Assurance Council (ESQAC) with ensuring that schools are safe, inclusive, and well-equipped. To achieve this, the Cabinet Secretary for Education should enforce policies that foster conducive learning conditions, while school administrators and teachers should maintain a clean, orderly, and engaging atmosphere. Additionally, parents and the community should actively contribute to improving school infrastructure and student well-being, creating an environment that enhances learning and growth

5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies

Based on the findings from the model summary, which shows a significant relationship between clear performance standards, goal setting, timely feedback, and a conducive learning environment with students' academic performance ($R^2 = 0.463$), the study recommends the following suggestions for further studies:

i. Given that the model explains 46.3% of the variance in students' academic performance, future studies could explore other variables that may influence academic performance, such as students' socio-economic background, parental involvement, teaching methodologies, or student mental health. These factors could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the drivers behind academic success.

ii. Further studies could be conducted in different counties or regions to compare the influence of motivational strategies on students' academic performance. For example, a similar study could be conducted in urban and rural schools to investigate whether the impact of these factors varies based on location, resources, or infrastructure.

iii. To gain deeper insights, future research could include qualitative studies to explore the perceptions of both students and teachers regarding the effectiveness of clear performance standards, goal setting, timely feedback, and a conducive learning environment. Understanding how these strategies are perceived and implemented at the ground level could inform practical improvements in educational practices.

iv. With the increasing role of technology in education, future studies could examine how digital platforms and tools (e.g., online feedback systems, virtual goal-setting platforms, and performance tracking tools) can be incorporated into the educational process to further enhance students' academic performance.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Students 'Questionnaire

We appreciate your participation in this survey. Your input is crucial for exploring the connection between motivational strategies and academic performance. Please answer the following questions honestly and accurately. This questionnaire aims to gather information about the link between motivational strategies and academic performance in public secondary schools in Homa Bay Sub County.

INSTRUCTIONS

Please answer the questions provided. Rest assured, your responses will remain confidential and will only be used for research purposes. Do not write your name on this questionnaire. For sections A to E, please tick (√) the answers that best apply to you in the provided brackets.

PART II: MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES

SECTION A: PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements given below. This section seeks information on performance standards. Respond by putting a tick (√) in the spaces provided. Where there are no alternatives, please write your response. Your response will be in a scale of {5-1}.

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. School Name: ……
2. Gender: ……
3. Grade/Form: ……

PART II: MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES

SECTION A: PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. This section is designed to collect information on performance standards. Respond by ticking (√) the appropriate spaces. If no options are provided, write your response. Use the following scale for your answers:

{Always -5}{Often-4}{Sometimes-3}{Rarely- 2}{Never-1}

	Always	**Often**	**Sometimes**	**Rarely**	**Never**
a) How frequently is performance standards communicated to you?					

{Strongly agree -5}{Agree-4}{Neutral-3}{Disagree-2}{Strongly disagree -1}

	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
Do you think that having well-defined performance standards positively impacts your academic performance?					
The performance standards for my subjects are clearly communicated to me. Do you attend class regular?					
Do you attend class regularly?					
Do you actively participate in classroom activities and discussions?					
Do you submit your assignment on time?					

SECTION B: GOAL SETTING

This section aims to collect information on goal setting. Please indicate your response by ticking (√) the appropriate spaces. If no options are provided, write your answer. Use the following scale for your responses:

{Always -5} {Often-4} {Sometimes-3} {Rarely-2} {Never-1}

	Always	**Often**	**Sometimes**	**Rarely**	**Never**
a) Do you take part in setting your own academic goals?					

Response to this question will be in a scale of **{4-1}**

{Significantly -4} {Moderately-3} {Slightly-2} {Not at all -1}

	Significantly	**Moderately**	**slightly**	**Not at all**
b) How much do you think setting personal academic goals enhances your motivation?				

	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Strongly disagree**	**Disagree**
Do you frequently set specific goals for the academic year?				
Do you think your goals are achievable within the given time frame?				
Do you agree setting academic goals leads to success?				
Are you provided with resources to help achieve academic goals?				

SECTION C: FEEDBACK

This section is designed to collect information about the learning environment. Please tick (√) the appropriate spaces. If there are no options provided, write your response. Use the following scale for your answers.

{Always- 5} {Often-4} {Sometimes-3} {Rarely-2} {Never-1}

	Always	**Often**	**Sometimes**	**Rarely**	**Never**
a) How frequently do you receive constructive feedback on your academic performance?					

	Very fast	**Fast**	**moderate**	**slow**	**Very slow**
b) How quickly do you receive feedback on your assignments and assessments?					

	Very specific	**Moderately specific**	**Somewhat specific**	**Extremely specific**	**Not specific at all**
c) How detailed and specific is the feedback you get on your assessments and assignments?					

	Very clear	**clear**	**Neutral**	**Unclear**	**Very unclear**
d) Rate the clarity of the feedback you receive on your assessment/assignment.					

The response to this question will be in a scale of **{5-1}**

{Strongly agree -5}{Agree-4}{Neutral -3}{Disagree- 2}{Strongly disagree -1}

	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Neural**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
e) Does constructive feedback motivate you to improve your academic performance?					

SECTION D: LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

This section aims to gather information about the learning environment. Please respond by placing a tick (√) in the appropriate spaces. If no options are provided, write your response. Use the following scale for your answers.

{Excellent- 4}{Good-3}{Fair -2}{Poor-1}

	Excellent	**Good**	**Fair**	**Poor**
a)Rate the quality of the learning environment				
b) How would you rate the overall relationship you have with your current teacher?				

	Always	**Often**	**Sometimes**	**Rarely**	**Never**
d) How often do you find yourself rushing to complete assignments or study for tests?					
d) Do you feel that you contribute meaningfully to group projects or activities?					
e) How frequently do you engage in group projects or activities with your classmates?					
f) Do you feel that you have choices in how you complete assignments and projects?					

(c) (i) Please indicate how much you agree with the statements below using the following scale from 5 to 1.

{**Strongly agree -5}{Agree- 4}{Moderate-3}{Disagree-2}{Strongly disagree -1}**

Teacher-student relationship	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Moderate**	**Agree**	**Strongly agree**
Our teachers are Friendly and approachable in class and outside of class.					
Our teachers make an effort to get to know us as individuals.					
Teachers regularly provide constructive feedback on our work in class.					
The relationship we have with our teachers' impact our motivation to learn.					
Teachers make an effort to understand our personal and academic challenges and offer their help when possible.					

SECTION E: ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

This section aims to gather information on academic performance. Please indicate your response by ticking (√) the appropriate spaces. If there are no options provided, kindly write your answer. Use the following scale for your responses:

4 - Excellent

3 - Good

2 - Average

1 - Poor

	Excellent	**Good**	**Average**	**Poor**
a) How would you rate your overall academic performance?				
b)Rate your class attendance				
c)Rate your level of classroom engagement				
d)Rate your assignment completion level				

Appendix II: Teachers' questionnaire

Thank you for taking part in this survey. Your honest and knowledgeable answers are invaluable. This questionnaire aims to gather insights into the connection between motivational strategies and academic performance in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County. Your responses will greatly aid in understanding this relationship.

Instructions:

Please answer the questions as accurately as possible. Your responses will remain confidential and used solely for research purposes. Do not write your name on this questionnaire. For each question, tick (√) the appropriate responses in the provided brackets and write your answers in the provided spaces where necessary.

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. School Name: ……
2. Gender: ……
3. Subject: ……
4. Years of Experience: ……

PART II: MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES

A. Goal Setting

This section seeks your opinions on goal setting. Please review each statement and tick (√) the box that best represents your view.

Use the following scale for your responses:

{Always - 5}, {Often - 4}, {Sometimes - 3}, {Rarely - 2}, {Never - 1}.

	Never	**Rarely**	**Sometimes**	**Often**	**Always**
a) How often do you set academic goal?					

The response to this question will be in a scale of **{4-1}**

{Strongly negative influence -4}{Somewhat-3}{No influence -2}{Strong positive influence 1}

	Strongly negative influence	**Somewhat negative**	**No influence**	**Strong positive Influence**
b) In your view, how does setting goals impact students' academic performance?				

	Always	**Often**	**Sometimes**	**Rarely**	**Never**
c) How often do you offer guidance to students in establishing academic goals that are both realistic and attainable?					

(d) How do you evaluate the effectiveness of goal setting in enhancing academic performance?

- Grade improvement: _____
- Increased motivation: _____
- Better engagement: _____
- Other (please specify): _____

B: PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

This section seeks your insights on performance standards. Please indicate your opinion by ticking (√) the appropriate spaces. If no alternatives are provided, kindly write your response.

	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Strongly disagree**	**Disagree**
To what extent do you agree that students benefit from clearly communicated performance standards?				
Have you ever noticed a correlation between adherence to performance standards and academic success among students?				
How strongly do you believe adherence to performance standards influences student performance?				
Do you think the communication of performance standards is effectively executed?				

The response will be in a scale of **{4-1}**

{Strongly agree -4}{Neutral-3}{Disagree-3}{Strongly disagree- 1}

	Strongly disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Strongly disagree**
b) Do you think that having well-defined performance standards enhances students' performance?				

(c) How do you integrate performance standards into your teaching methods?

- Regular assessments: _____
- Classroom discussions on expectations: _____
- Other (please specify): _____

C: Feedback Mechanism and Learning Environment

This section seeks your input on feedback mechanisms and the learning environment. Please indicate your opinion by ticking (√) the appropriate spaces. If no alternatives are provided, please write your response.

a) How do you provide feedback to students on their academic performance?

- Written comments on assignments or tests: _____
- Verbal feedback during class: _____
- One-on-one meetings: _____
- Other (please specify): _____

The responses for this question should be on a scale of {4-1}.

{Strongly agree -4}{Neutral-3}{Disagree-2}{Strongly disagree -1}

	Strongly agree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Strongly disagree**
b) Do you believe that constructive feedback enhances students' motivation to succeed academically?				

The response for this question will be in a scale of **{4-1}**

{Excellent -5}{Very good -4}{Good-3}{Fair-2}{Poor-1}

	Excellent	**Very good**	**Good**	**Fair**	**Poor**
c) How would you evaluate the learning environment in your classroom?					

	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Neutral**	**Strongly disagree**	**Disagree**
d) Based on your experience, how much do you believe the learning environment impacts students' academic performance?					

Additional Comments (Optional)

Please use this space to share any additional comments or insights you believe are relevant to the objectives outlined above._____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your input is invaluable to our research on enhancing academic performance in public secondary schools.

Appendix III: Interview for HODs

1. Can you provide your insights on the significance of goal setting for enhancing academic performance, especially in the context of public secondary schools in Homa Bay County?
2. How do you ensure that clear performance standards are effectively communicated to students to boost their academic performance in this region?
3. Based on your experience, what impact does timely feedback have on students' academic performance, particularly in Homa Bay County
4. What strategies or initiatives have you implemented or observed to create a conducive learning environment for students in Homa Bay County, and how do you believe they impact academic performance?
5. How do you adapt your teaching methods or classroom approach to support students who may face challenges due to factors outside of school, such as socio-economic issues or community dynamics in Homa Bay County?
6. From your observations, what specific aspects of the learning environment in Homa Bay County have the most significant influence on student engagement and academic outcomes?
7. Can you describe any successful collaboration or partnerships you've been involved in that have positively influenced student academic performance in this region?
8. How do you incorporate student feedback into your teaching practices to continuously improve the learning experience and academic outcomes in Homa Bay County?
9. What strategies do you employ to motivate students to set and achieve academic goals, especially considering the diverse backgrounds and challenges they may face in Homa Bay County?
10. In your view, what additional support or resources could further enhance academic performance in public secondary schools in Homa Bay County, beyond what is currently available?

Appendix IV: Introductory Letter

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL

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Website: www.ku.ac.ke

P.O. Box 43844, 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA
Tel. 8710901 Ext. 57530

Our Ref: E55/CE/NKU/28772/2018

DATE: 9th October, 2024

Director General,
National Commission for Science, Technology
and Innovation
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR OWINO JOHN OPANA – REG. NO. E55/CE/NKU/28772/2018

I write to introduce **Owino John Opana** who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. The student is registered for M.Ed degree programme in the **Department of Education Management Policy and Curriculum Studies.**

John intends to conduct research for a M.Ed Project Proposal entitled, **"Teacher's Motivational Strategies as Correlates to Students' Academic Performance among Public Secondary Schools in Homa Bay County, Kenya"**

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

PROF. ELIUD KIMANI
EXECUTIVE DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

EM/fc

Appendix V: Licence from NACOSTI

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: 157512

Date of Issue: 04/November/2024

RESEARCH LICENSE

This is to Certify that Mr., OWINO JOHN OPANA of Kenyatta University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Homabay on the topic: TEACHER'S MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES AS CORRELATES TO STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN HOMA BAY COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending : 04/November/2025.

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Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

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