

Influence of Principal-initiated Motivational Speakers Strategy on Academic Achievement of Students in Kenya: A Study across Public Secondary Schools in Mbita Sub County

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ABSTRACT: The use of motivational speakers strategy in enhancing students' academic achievement in schools in Kenya was adopted by many school administrators in the late 1980s after the introduction of private / holiday tuition in the late 1970s. By 2010, many charismatic professional motivational speakers were commonplace in schools on invitation. Currently many schools are utilising services of motivational speakers. This is based on the premise that worldover research has shown that motivation of the students enhance their academic achievement. There was therefore need to conduct a rigorous study to establish the actual position of this strategy in the 21st Century. Mbita Sub County was selected as the site for the study. This is because despite the existence of principal-initiated motivational strategy put in place by principals, the Sub-County still performs least with results showing that between 2018 and 2020, the Sub-County was ranked last in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations compared to the five other neighbouring sub- counties in Homa Bay County. Mbita Sub-County was ranked position five with an average mean score of 4.886 compared to Rangwe which was position one with a mean score of 5.354, Rachuonyo South was second with a mean score of 5.022, Rachuonyo East was third with a mean score of 4.988 while Homa Bay town was fourth with a mean score of 4.958. The objective of the study was to establish the influence of Principal-initiated motivational speakers strategy on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Mbita Sub-County, Kenya. The study established that Principal-initiated motivational speakers strategy significantly influenced students' academic achievement in public secondary schools by enhancing frequent consultation with teachers. The study recommends that Principals should advise motivational speakers on the specific aspects to address as they talk to students targeting the aspect of optimum use of study time, discipline, examination answering skills, change of attitude about difficult subjects and other aspects that lead to students' academic achievement. The findings are beneficial to policy makers and education administrators in improving students' achievement.

KEY WORDS: Academic Achievement, Influence, Principal-initiated Motivational Speakers Strategy, Students' Kenya: Public Secondary Schools, Mbita Sub County.

INTRODUCTION

Motivational speakers are pursued to influence students' academic achievement. The other elements that influence students' academic achievement include; availability of teaching and learning material, the quality of teachers, school infrastructure, students' entry behaviour, class size, staffing, school location among others. Literature has revealed that motivation strategies play a critical role in students' academic achievement. Preliminary literature review indicates that "motivation of students has a great impact on their learning processes and as a result is a major contributor to the success of students in their academic endeavour" (Filgona, Sakiyo, Gwany & Okoronka, 2020; Rafiola, Setyosari, Radjah & Ramli, 2020 & Agustina, Wahyudia, Pratini, 2021). Singh and Singh (2021) observed that many factors may motivate students to learn. These factors may be either intrinsic or extrinsic in dimension. However, teachers can to a great extent increase students' motivation to learn. While students may have an innate desire to learn, the external support provided by the teacher has a significant impact on students' learning. The teacher's role in motivation includes: creating an enabling environment conducive for learning, supporting of students' autonomy, relevance, and relatedness of the material; developing students' competence, interest in subjects taught, and perception of self-efficacy". These are all important factors that influence students' motivation to learn.

The responsibility of motivating students to learn lies squarely on parents, guardians, teachers and school administrators. According to Fizza (2019) teachers have a significant effect on students' motivation towards learning. Sometimes teachers have a

feeling that they have no control over students' attitudes about learning, but they actually do have an influence because generally, students learn if their teachers expect and motivate them to learn." According to Liebowitz and Porter (2019) principals are understood to be critical actors in improving teaching and learning conditions in schools so as to improve academic achievement. However, relatively little is known about the motivation strategies to which principals should dedicate their time and effort to improve learning outcomes. They found out that "there is direct evidence of the relationship between principals' behaviors and student achievement, teacher well-being, teacher instructional practices, and school organizational health." In addition, they highlighted the importance of principals' behaviors beyond instructional management as potential tools to improve student achievement outcomes. In addition, in a study by Maponya (2020) a conclusion was made that motivation is one of the instructional leadership strategies that principals can use to influence students' academic achievement.

In a study carried out in Sweden and Canada to examine the relationship between specific types of academic motivation and school achievement using the self-determination theory, the study demonstrated that "among high school students, intrinsic motivation is positively related to academic achievement" (Taylor, 2014). This study however did not find out the strategies that are used by principals to enhance motivation among students and that is what this present study sought to address.

SYNTHESIS OF LITERATURE ON INFLUENCE OF PRINCIPAL-INITIATED MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKERS STRATEGY ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Hyken (2019) defines a motivational speaker as "a professional speaker, industry speaker, subject matter expert, inspirational speaker and motivational speaker." He said that "a person who is paid for a public speech is a motivational speaker and a person who may or may not get paid for his speech in front of peers of the same industry is called industry speaker, on the other hand a person who is brought in to share information related to a subject is the subject matter expert. An inspirational speaker is one who speaks to influence the emotions by inspiring others through an emotional topic. A person who has all these qualities is called a motivational speaker." Haddad et al (2015) stated that "a motivational speaker's aim is to change the emotions and attitudes of people through cognitive process in order to guide them in making personal or professional changes in their lives". He adds that "motivational speakers guide students in decision making skills as the students become more confident and enthusiastic to participate in class activities".

Astalini (2019) stated that a motivational speaker enables students to make their choices in a logical and constructive manner in a case where teachers and educationists at academic institutes are unable to reach the challenges students are facing or know the approach that can help cater for these challenges." He asserts that "there is a positive impact of motivation and motivational speech on learning attitude of students towards a particular subject. A study by Sherwani (2020) on the other hand recommended "motivation teacher style or motivational speakers for high school and high education institutes in-order to help make students feel more positive and bring the autonomous learning environment." He adds that motivational speakers make the students independent to cater their problems on their own or setting of performance goals for the students, that is they provide the students with the learning experience to make them self-regulated and self-motivated to achieve their academic goals.

Percy et al (2019) in a study to explore the impact of guest speakers in Secondary schools in the United Kingdom established that "the vast majority of young people are positive about the benefits from talks of the guest speakers". In the study, a range of 77% to 91% of young people said that "talks helped in spanning their attitude, motivation, career understanding and self-belief." The study further established that "self-efficacy and confidence improved with each extra talk at 32% and 30% higher odds respectively. The programme of talks also reduced the number of students feeling their background holds them back from a significant majority to barely a handful." This study recommended "investment in guest speakers by secondary schools". In this study, only students were interviewed for information on the effectiveness of use of motivational speakers as a motivational strategy while in the current study, data was obtained from principals, teachers, directors of studies and students. In addition, data was obtained by use of interview schedules and questionnaires to get in-depth information.

In a study conducted by Khan (2021) to investigate the impact of motivational speakers on the attitude of students in Pakistan, the study revealed that there was a positive impact of motivational speakers on learners' attitude to learn. He found out that "motivational speakers boost the attitude of students towards class participation, subject interest, learning activities, and self believe therefore they start active participation in class and enjoy class work." Whereas this study predominantly used secondary

data that is; data from academic and non-academic researches conducted in Pakistan and other developed countries, the present study used primary data to ascertain the authenticity of the findings.

In another study by Warsi (2023) in Pakistan to explore the impact of motivation speeches on intrinsic motivation and psychological needs satisfaction among undergraduate students, the study established that “participants in the study who were assigned a motivational speaker showed enhanced intrinsic motivation and psychological need satisfaction compared to participants who were not assigned a motivational speaker”. The study therefore recommended that “educators should consider incorporating motivational speeches into their programs so as to enhance intrinsic motivation and promote need satisfaction among undergraduate students.” The study however, involved only undergraduate students whereas the present study focused on secondary school students. The study involved only students as respondents while the current study obtained data from both students and teachers.

In their study Kariuki and Mbugua (2018) while investigating the influence of students’ motivation by teachers on academic performance in Nyeri and Kirinyaga counties, Kenya concluded that “student motivation by teachers has a positive influence on academic performance.” The study found out that “investment by schools in the use of motivational speakers who speak to students is one way of motivating learners to learn.” The study by Kariuki and Mbugua (2018) used only descriptive survey design while the current study used both descriptive survey design and correlation research designs so as to analyse the data. At the same time the current study was conducted in Mbita sub-county where no similar study has been done. From the mentioned studies, it is evident that the use of motivational speakers as a motivational strategy influence students’ academic achievement. However, no study has been done to establish the influence of Principal-initiated motivational speakers on students’ academic achievement in Mbita sub-county.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework was informed by Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964). This theory states that a person's expectations directly relate to their level of motivation. The theory has three components which are; valence, expectancy, and instrumentality. This theory suggests that if a person puts in a specific amount of effort it will result in a specific reward. If a person's action results in their expected reward they will be motivated to take the same action again. If, however, their actions don't result in their expected reward they will become demotivated. In other words, the theory's position is that a person's motivation is directly affected by how much they want as a reward, their belief that their effort will lead to an expected level of achievement, and that their achievement will result in the reward they want. This Vroom's expectancy theory is appropriate for this study because Principals of secondary schools do employ different motivational strategies in their endeavours to improve students' academic achievement.

The relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable was as shown in Figure 1

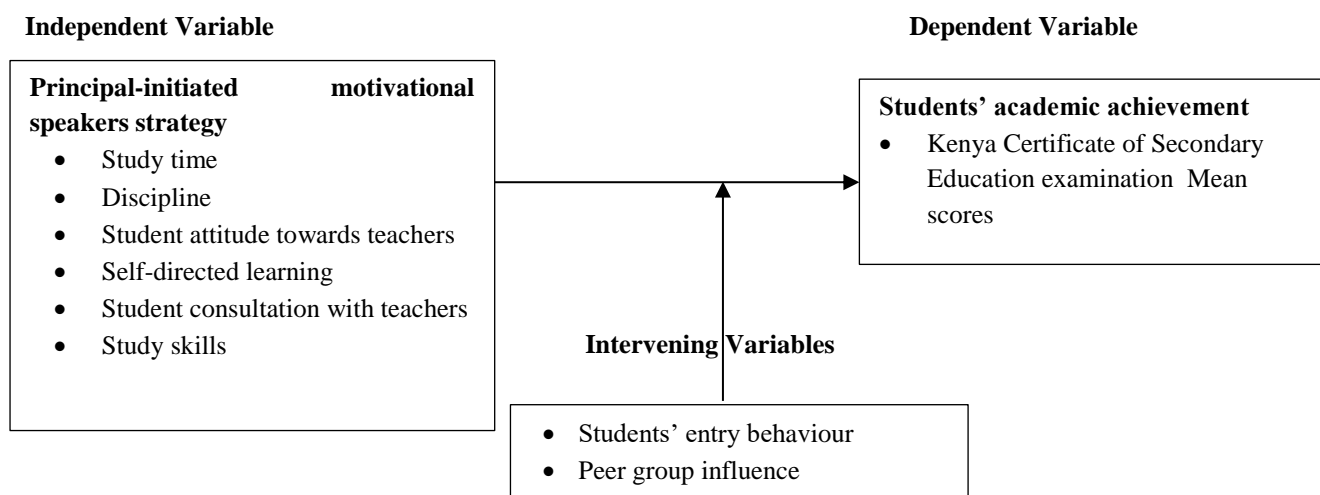


Figure 1: Influence of Principal-initiated motivation Speakers Strategy on Students’ Academic Achievement

From Figure 1, the Principal-initiated motivation speakers strategy is the independent variable while students' academic achievement in KCSE is the dependent variable. The conceptual framework postulates that Principal-initiated motivation speakers strategy like motivational speakers when undertaken is likely to enhance students' academic achievement. The factors influencing students' academic achievement in school such as students' entry behaviour and peer group influence are the intervening variables. Through the use of motivational speakers, students can make optimum use of their study time, are encouraged to prioritize their engagement in academic work, become more positive on frequent testing and get equipped with exam answering skills, all these make the students to improve their academic achievement. On the other hand, when motivational speakers are not used, students are not likely to optimize their study skill and as a result may not maximize their academic achievement.

Research Objective

The research objective was to establish the principal-initiated motivational speakers strategy on students' academic achievement.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted mixed methods approach and used descriptive survey and Correlational research designs. The study was guided by Vroom's expectancy theory (1964). The target population was 1923 form four students (2023 cohort), 348 teachers, 25 principals and 25 Directors of studies in public secondary schools in Mbita sub-county. From this a sample of 320 students, 183 teachers, 20 principals and 20 Directors of studies were selected. Sampling procedures were; snowballing for students, simple random sampling for teachers and saturated sampling for principals and Directors of Studies. Questionnaires, interview schedules and document analysis guides were used to collect data. The validity of the data collection instruments were determined by experts in the Faculty of Education, while reliability of the instruments were determined by piloting in five schools outside the study sample and the Cronbach's alpha was used to compute the reliability coefficient. Quantitative data were analyzed by use of frequency counts, percentages, means and Regression analysis with the aid of Statistical Packages for Social Science while qualitative data from interview schedules were transcribed and analyzed for content in emergent themes and sub-themes.

RESULTS

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1. Demographic Data for Directors of Studies

Aspect of Demographic Data		Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	16	80
	Female	4	20
	Total	20	100
Age in years	26-30	2	10
	31-40	15	75
	Over 40	3	15
	Total	20	100
Highest academic level	Diploma	2	10
	B.ED	13	65
	Masters	4	20
	Nil response	1	5
	Total	20	100
Teaching experience	Below 5	1	5
	6-10 years	8	40
	10-15 years	8	40

	More than 15 years	2	10
	Nil response	1	5
	Total	20	100
Experience as Director of Studies	Below 5 years	9	45
	6-10 years	9	45
	11-15 years	1	5
	More than 15 years	0	0
	Nil response	1	5
	Total	20	100

Source: Field Data, 2024

From Table 1 it was observed that the number of male Directors of Studies 16(80%) is far more than the number of female Directors of Studies 4 (20) Table 1 revealed that majority of Directors of Studies (75%) were aged between 31-40 years, then 26-30 years (10%), over 40 years (15%). The fact that majority are aged over 30 years indicate that they had enough experience and therefore could respond to questions in relation to motivation strategies and student’s academic achievement.

Table 1 revealed that most Directors of Studies in the sub-county (65%) had Bachelor’s degree. This may be because of Teachers Service Commission (TSC) employment score sheet which usually favours degree holders. Only 2 (10%) and 4 (20%) holds Diploma and Master’s degree respectively. The diploma may be because the teachers entered the profession through diploma and have not got an opportunity to further their studies or few diploma teachers do qualify for TSC employment. The 4 Master’s degree may be because of the long-time taken to graduate with Master’s degree or because TSC does not pay salary increment for Masters Certificates. The fact that all respondents were trained and had professional qualifications means that they were credible respondents because they are highly educated and therefore matters of motivation of students are not new to them. Table 1 also showed that in terms of teaching experience of Directors of Studies, majority of the respondents had an experience of between 6-10 years and between 11-15 years which are both at 40%. The levels of experience was relevant in the study because people with more experience are able to provide accurate evidence on the influence of motivation on academic achievement.

In terms of experience of Directors of Studies, majority of the respondents had an experience of below 5 years and between 6-10 years which are both at 45%.The levels of experience was relevant in the study because people with more experience are able to provide accurate evidence on the influence of motivation on academic achievement.

Table 2. Demographic Data for Teachers

Aspect of Demographic Data		Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	117	63.9
	Female	54	29.5
	Nil response	12	6.6
	Total	183	100
Age in years	26-30	81	44.3
	31-40	78	42.6
	Over 40	16	8.7
	Nil response	8	4.4
	Total	183	100
Highest academic level	Diploma	7	3.8
	B.ED	153	83.6
	BSC/BA	11	6

	Masters	11	6
	Nil response	1	0.6
	Total	183	100
Teaching experience	Below 5	88	48.1
	6-10 years	59	32.2
	11-15 years	21	11.5
	More than 15 years	14	7.7
	Nil response	1	0.5
	Total	183	100
	Designation	Teacher	138
Head of Department		28	15.3
Senior Master		9	4.9
Deputy Principal		5	2.7
Nil response		7	1.7
Total		183	100

Source: Field Data, 2024

From Table 2 it was observed that the number of male Teachers 117(63.9%) is far more than the number of female teachers 54 (29.5%). This means there is gender disparity in the sub-county with few women teachers in the sub-county. Majority of teachers (44.3%) were aged between 26-30 years. This is the prime age in the teaching service where majority of the teachers would wish to do their best. Then 31-40 years were (42.6%) and over 40 years (8.7%). Table 2 revealed also that most teachers in the sub-county (83.6%) had Bachelor's degree. This may be because of Teachers Service Commission employment score sheet which usually favours degree holders. Only 7(3.8%), 11 (6.0%) and 11 (6.0%) holds Diploma, BSC/BA and Master's degree respectively. Table 2 showed that in terms of teaching experience, majority of the respondents had an experience of below 5 years at 48.1%. Between 6-10 years were at 32.2%, 11-15 years of experience was at 11.5% while more than 15 years of experience was at 7.7%. Table 2 revealed that more than three-quarters of teachers in the sub-county 138 (75.4%) were not holding any administrative position in the school. This signifies they have ample time to arrange and implement curriculum delivery in the schools. 28 teachers (15.3%) were Heads of Departments, 9 (4.9%) were senior masters and 5(2.7%) were Deputy Principals.

Research Objective

The research objective was to establish the influence of Principal-initiated Motivational speakers strategy on students' academic achievement in Mbita Sub County.

The Directors of Studies and Teachers were asked to rate on a 5-point rating scale on the influence of Principal-initiated Motivational speakers strategy on students' academic achievement and the results were as shown in Table 3.



Table 3. Motivational Speaker’s Aspects Influencing Students’ Academic Achievement as Rated by Director of Studies and Teachers

Aspects of motivational speakers	Ratings					N R	MR	Ratings					NR	MR	OM R
	Directors of Studies							Teachers							
	1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	5 %			1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	5 %			
Optimum use of study time	0	0	26.3	47.4	26.3	0	4.00	1.1	7.7	30.6	42.1	19.1	0	3.70	3.85
Emphasis on high discipline	0	0	21.1	31.6	47.4	0	4.26	1.1	2.7	24	41	30.1	1.1	3.97	4.12
Positive attitude towards frequent testing	0	0	26.3	36.8	36.8	0	4.11	1.1	6.6	26.8	37.2	27.9	0.5	3.85	3.98
Exam answering skills	0	5.3	36.8	26.3	26.3	5.3	3.78	3.8	6	27.9	36.1	26.2	0	3.75	3.76
Student's self confidence	0	5.3	26.3	21.1	42.1	5.3	4.06	0.5	7.7	19.1	36.1	29.5	7.1	3.93	3.99
Change of attitude towards difficult subjects	0	5.3	15.8	52.6	26.3	0	4.00	8.2	12	26.2	30.6	16.4	6.6	3.37	3.69
Positive attitude towards teachers	0	0	21.1	42.1	36.8	0	4.16	3.8	5.5	16.4	29	39.3	6	4.01	4.08
Self-directed learning	0	5.3	31.6	31.6	26.3	5.3	3.83	4.9	1.6	19.7	30.6	36.6	6.6	3.99	3.91
Emphasis on better study skills	0	0	21.1	36.8	42.1	0	4.21	0	0.5	23	33.9	36.1	6.6	4.13	4.17
Emphasis on effective revision	0	0	21.1	36.8	36.8	5.3	4.17	0	1.1	23.5	37.2	26.8	11.5	4.01	4.09
Frequent consultation with teachers	0	10.5	31.6	31.6	26.3	0	3.74	0	11.5	21.3	38.8	22.4	6	3.77	3.75
Group work	0	10.5	26.3	15.8	47.4	0	4.00	5.5	7.7	18.6	41.5	16.4	10.4	3.62	3.81
Overall Mean Rating															3.93

KEY: MR=Mean Rating; NR=Nil Return; OMR=Overall Mean Rating DOS- Director of Studies

Interpretation of Mean Rating

- 1.00-1.44 (No influence);
- 1.45-2.44 (Low influence);
- 2.45-3.44 (Moderate influence);
- 3.45-4.44 (High influence);
- 4.45-5.00 (Very high influence)

From Table 3, the Directors of Studies (DOS) rated the influence of motivational speakers on students’ optimum use of study time as being high with a mean of 4.00 while the teachers rated optimum use of study time at a mean of 3.70. The overall mean rating was 3.85 which was high influence. Motivational speakers’ influence on students’ high discipline was rated by the Directors of

studies at 4.26 while the teachers had a mean rating of 3.97. The overall mean rating was 4.12 which was high influence. On positive attitude towards frequent testing, the DOS rated at a mean of 4.11 while the teachers rated at a mean of 3.85. The overall mean rating was 3.98 which was high influence.

On examination answering skills the Directors of Studies (DOS) mean rating was 3.78 while the teachers mean rating was 3.75. The overall mean rating was 3.76 which was high influence. On boosting students' self-confidence, the Director of Studies mean rating was 4.06 while the Teachers' mean rating was 3.93. The overall mean rating was 3.99 which was high influence. On change of attitude towards difficult subjects, the DOS mean rating was 4.00 while the teachers' mean rating was 3.37. This was an overall mean rating of 3.69 which was high influence. On positive attitude towards teachers, the DOS rating was 4.16 while teachers' rated at 4.01. This was an overall mean of 4.08 which was high influence.

On the aspect of self-directed learning, the DOS rating was 3.83 while teachers rated at 3.99. This was an overall mean rating of 3.91 which was high influence. On emphasis on better study skills, the DOS rating was 4.21 while the teachers' mean rating was 4.13. This was an overall mean rating of 4.17 which was high influence. On emphasis on effective revision, the mean rating by the DOS was 4.17 while the teachers' mean rating was 4.01. The overall mean rating was 4.09 which was high influence. On frequent consultation with teachers, the Directors of Studies mean rating was 3.74 while teachers' mean rating was 3.77. This was an overall mean rating of 3.75 which was high influence. On the use of group work, the DOS rating was 4.00 while teachers' mean rating was 3.62. This was an overall mean rating of 3.81 which was high influence. Overall, from the Questionnaire findings, Principal-initiated Motivational speakers were found to have high influence on students' achievement in KCSE in Mbita Sub County since the overall mean rating was 3.93.

Descriptive statistics were generally weak in determining the actual influence which is normally determined by inferential statistics. It is for this reason that the study invoked inferential statistics and therefore the need to have quantitative data on academic achievement of students.

The data on academic achievement of students was collected for the period 2019-2023 in line with Principal-initiated motivational speakers' variables and the results were as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Mbita Sub-county Schools' Academic achievement in KCSE for the period 2019-2023

Achievement index	Frequency(f)	Percentage (%)
3.00-4.90	13	65
5.00-6.90	6	30
7.00-8.90	0	0
9.00-10.90	1	5
Total	20	100

From Table 4, indicated most of the schools had KCSE mean scores ranging from between as low as 3.0 to 4.9 as reflected by 13 (65%) and 6 (30%) scoring between 5.0 to 6.9. Only one school had a better achievement in KCSE exams with an average mean of between 9.0 to 10.9. This necessitated the study on influence of principals' motivation strategies on students' academic achievement in Mbita sub-county.

To establish the influence of Principal-initiated motivational speakers strategy on students' academic achievement, data on Principal-initiated motivational speakers strategy was regressed against student academic achievement.

Table 5. Linear Regression Analysis of the Influence of Principal-initiated Motivational Speakers Strategy on Students' Academic Achievement

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.369 ^a	0.136	0.016	1.43143	0.136	0.892	12	68	0.559

a. Predictors: (Constant), Principal-initiated Motivational Speakers Strategy

From Table 5, the influence of Principal-initiated Motivational Speakers strategy was not statistically significant because the p value was 0.559 which was greater than 0.05. Thus the null hypothesis accepted, implying that the use of Principal-initiated Motivational speakers strategy could not be relied upon in predicting students' academic achievement.

In order to establish the influence of Principal-initiated Motivational Speakers on students' academic achievement in KCSE, ANOVA was used to compute variance. The ANOVA output of motivational speaker's aspects influencing students' academic achievement is in Table 6.

Table 6. ANOVA on Influence of Principal-initiated Motivational speakers Strategy on Students' Academic Achievement

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	21.93	12	1.827	0.892	.559 ^b
	Residual	139.331	68	2.049		
	Total	161.261	80			

a. Dependent Variable: Student Academic Achievement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Principal-initiated Motivational Speakers Strategy

Table 6 indicated that Principal-initiated Motivational Speaker's strategy aspects influencing students' academic achievement in KCSE was not a significant predictor $F(12, 68)=0.559$ $p > 0.05$. This means that Principal-initiated Motivational speaker's influence cannot be relied upon in determining students' academic achievement.

To confirm the influence of Principal-initiated Motivational speakers strategy on Students' academic achievement in KCSE multiple regression analysis was computed and the results were in Table 7.

Table 7. Multiple Regression Analysis of the Influence of Principal-initiated Motivational Speakers Strategy and Students' Academic Achievement

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	4.401	1.483		2.968	0.004
(X1)	Study Time	0.333	0.253	0.218	1.316	0.193
(X2)	Discipline	0.142	0.226	0.097	0.626	0.533
(X3)	Attitude towards Test	-0.234	0.212	-0.159	-1.102	0.274
(X4)	Examination Answering skills	0.025	0.205	0.018	0.123	0.903



(X5)	Students' confidence	0.339	0.272	0.185	1.243	0.218
(X6)	Attitude about difficult subjects	0.162	0.239	0.126	0.679	0.499
(X7)	Attitude Towards Teachers	-0.153	0.221	-0.118	-0.692	0.492
(X8)	Self -directed Learning	-0.566	0.326	-0.374	-1.74	0.086
(X9)	Study Skills	0.212	0.376	0.105	0.565	0.574
(X10)	Revision	0.185	0.333	0.095	0.555	0.581
(X11)	Student Consultation with teachers	0.647	0.32	-0.343	-2.02	0.047
(X12)	Group Work	0.268	0.288	0.161	0.929	0.356

a. Dependent Variable: Students Academic Achievement

From Table 7, eleven out of 12 aspects of Motivational Speakers like optimum study time, discipline, positivity towards frequent testing, exam answering skills, confidence, change of attitude about difficult subjects, positive attitude towards teachers, self-learning, study skills, revision and group work had no significant influence on students' achievement. This was despite the fact that they had different levels of influence as indicated by the coefficients. For instance, positive attitude towards frequent testing had a coefficient of -0.234 meaning that for every unit of students' academic achievement, positivity towards frequent testing reduced students' academic achievement by 0.234 units and the p value was 0.274 which is greater than 0.05 thus not significant and therefore positivity towards frequent testing cannot be relied upon to explain students' academic achievement in KCSE. This could be because frequent testing may deny students the opportunity to read and revise well before they sit for the tests therefore the content retention is low.

Confidence by students had a coefficient of 0.339 meaning that for every unit of students' academic achievement, confidence by students increased achievement by 0.339 and the p value was 0.218 which is greater than 0.05 thus not statistically significant and therefore confidence by students cannot be relied upon to explain students' academic achievement in KCSE. Positive attitude towards teachers had a coefficient of -0.153 meaning that for every unit of student academic achievement, positivity towards teachers reduced students' academic achievement by 0.153 units and the p value was 0.492 which is greater than 0.05 thus not significant and therefore positivity towards frequent testing cannot be relied upon to explain students' academic achievement in KCSE. Frequent consultation with teachers had a coefficient of 0.647 at p value of 0.047 meaning that for every unit of student achievement, Consultation with teachers increased students' academic achievement by 0.647 units. This means that consultation with teachers can be relied upon to explain students' achievement in KCSE as it is significant.

DISCUSSION

Gender disparity in the sub-county showed few women as Directors of Studies in the sub-county. This gender disparity may be as a result of female teachers being reluctant to take up leadership roles. It was necessary to establish the gender of the respondents so as to ensure the results are a true reflection and inclusive of gender concerns. Gender was relevant in the study to eliminate gender biases since different gender may hold differing perspectives on the influence of motivation on students' academic achievement.

Most teachers in the sub-county had Bachelor's degree. This may be because of Teachers Service Commission employment score sheet which usually favours degree holders. The diploma may be because the teachers entered the profession through diploma and have not got an opportunity to further their studies or few diploma teachers do qualify for TSC employment. The 11 Master's degree may be because of the long-time taken to graduate with Master's degree or because TSC does not pay salary increment for Masters certificates. The fact that all respondents were trained and had professional qualifications means that they were credible respondents because they are highly educated and therefore matters of motivation of students are not new to them. The administrative positions were considered because in most cases the Deputy Principals, Senior masters and Heads of Departments are appointed based on good achievement in the classroom. Therefore it was necessary to focus on this aspect because all can provide valuable information pertaining to motivation and academic achievement.

The interview findings revealed that Principal-initiated Motivational speakers have positive influence on academic achievement of students in KCSE. In this respect, majority of the Principals interviewed confirmed that indeed motivational speakers to a great extent have positive influence on students' academic achievement in KCSE. One of the Principals asserted in my secondary school, every year I invite and ensure that Form Four students are addressed by a senior Kenya National Examination Council examiner per paper across all subjects done in KCSE. These motivational speakers talk to our students on better study skills and exam answering skills which in turn boosts their self-confidence and as a result improve in their overall academic achievement at KCSE. The motivational speakers also excite the students and give them the confidence which enable them to improve their ability to do well. When they talk to our students, the motivational speakers are accompanied by our Head of Departments to help us get feedback as a school.

The Student interviewees on their part confirmed that the motivational speakers who were invited to their schools, enabled them to have proper time management, attend dutifully to class assignments and also boosted their self-confidence. Some students commended their principals for inviting motivational speakers to speak to them on issues of academics. One student asserted, I would have not performed better than I did in KCSE if motivational speakers were not brought to our school. The motivational speakers made me to have high level of academic discipline and to work extra hard. The advices I received from motivational speakers made me to be more focused in my studies than before.

The interview conducted with teachers confirmed that indeed motivational speakers play a big role in the academic achievement of students. One of the teachers asserted in as much as majority of motivational speakers are moving from one school to another giving talks to 'make money', the use of motivational speakers indeed is a booster to students' academic progress. What matters most is the quality of the motivational speaker. Some do not give the correct output but, they are good to be invited to our schools. They make our students to be more focused to work hard and they put stress to what students have learnt in class. This make the students to have positive attitude with their teachers and also make our students to consult more. The literature review did not concur with the questionnaire findings. Most studies like Warsi (2023); Kariuki and Mbugua (2018) and Khan (2021) found a positive significant relationship between motivational speakers and students' academic achievement. For example; a study by Khan (2021) revealed that there is a positive impact of motivational speakers on learners' attitude to learn and they boost learners' attitude towards class participation, subject interest, learning activities and self-belief.

The finding of positivity towards frequent testing not being significant is contradicting a study by Sherwani (2020) who found that motivational speakers help students to feel more positive and bring autonomous learning environment, make students self-regulated and self-motivated to achieve their academic goals. Confidence by students could not be relied upon to explain students' academic achievement in KCSE. This may be because schools have introduced many ways to boost students' confidence like the Guidance and Counselling department and involvement in co-curriculum activities. Moreover, it can also be argued that other factors are also responsible for students' academic achievement in KCSE. This is contrary to findings by Percy (2019) who concluded that vast majority of young people are positive about the benefits from talks of guest speakers.

Positivity towards frequent testing cannot be relied upon to explain students' academic achievement in KCSE. This may mean that schools have inculcated positive attitude in students towards their teachers internally like by use of better teaching methods to build good rapport between students and teachers. Moreover it can be argued that other factors may be responsible for students' academic achievement in KCSE. The finding of positive attitude towards teachers not being significant is contradicting a study by Astalini (2019) which asserts that there is a positive impact of motivational speech on learning attitude of students towards a particular subject.

Students consultation with teachers increased students' academic achievement which could be relied upon to explain students' achievement in KCSE as it was significant. This means the more the students consulted teachers after listening to a motivational speaker, the more the students grasped the desired knowledge and skills in their various subjects that culminate in better achievement. This implies that the motivational speakers' emphasis on consultation inspires students in learning. From document analysis, the Principals who invited motivational speakers had their results at KCSE as good. The Principals confirmed that their results improved over the years with continuous engagement of motivational speakers. This was an evidence that the students were performing well with Principal-initiated motivational speakers. This concurred with the assertion by one of the principals

who stated from the time I stated engaging motivational speakers, my school has improved year after year in KCSE performance index. Prior to engagement of motivational speakers the school performance lay between 6.4 and 7.7, after that the performance ranges between 8.9 and 9.2. Teachers and students do acknowledge the importance of the motivational speakers with emphasis on participative learning whereby learners continuously consult teachers on areas of their subject which are perceived to be difficult. The teachers assist them accordingly.

In view of the output from regression analysis and the interview findings, it can be noted that motivational speakers play a pivotal role in academic achievement of students. These motivational speakers emphasize particular areas and skills that enhance students' learning. These areas and skills include: optimum study time, confidence, consultation, group work among others. Optimum use of study time by the students make them to be more focused and have optimum concentration in learning without distraction. This combined with confidence make the students to face learning without fear. Students also develop the attribute of consultation with teachers to improve in their areas of weaknesses. In instances where students may not consult their teachers they can consult from their peers during group work. This shows that students' academic achievement accelerated by motivational speakers can not only be determined by one variable but by a combination of several variables working hand in hand.

Essentially, motivational speakers positively influence academic achievement through an aspect known as consultation with teachers and therefore concurs with interview findings, descriptive analysis and the product of multiple regression analysis. Authoritatively we can say that Principal- initiated motivational speakers do influence students' academic achievement. The study findings concurred with those of studies by Warsi (2023), Kariuki and Mbugua (2018) who investigated the influence of motivation of students by teachers on academic performance found out that students' motivation by teachers through motivational speech has a positive influence on students' academic achievement and a study by Khan (2021) while studying the role of motivational speech on influencing learning attitude of Pakistani students revealed that there is a positive impact of motivational speakers on learners' attitude to learn and they boost learners' attitude towards class participation, subject interest, learning activities and self-belief.

CONCLUSION

Principal-initiated motivational speakers strategy significantly influenced students' academic achievement in public secondary schools by enhancing frequent student consultation with teachers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) Principals should advise motivational speakers on the specific aspects to address as they mentor students.
- ii) Motivational speakers should focus more on frequent testing in all subjects equitably.
- iii) Motivational speakers should shade more light on question answering skills.
- iv) Motivational speakers should emphasise student confidence, positive attitude towards perceived difficult subjects, study skills and group work.

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Cite this Article: Enose M.W. Simatwa, Alfred Chuchu Adede (2025). *Influence of Principal-initiated Motivational Speakers Strategy on Academic Achievement of Students in Kenya: A Study across Public Secondary Schools in Mbita Sub County*. *International Journal of Current Science Research and Review*, 8(3), pp. 1224-1237. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijcsrr/V8-i3-26>