



Teacher Appraisal and Its Relationship to Secondary School Academic Performance in Garissa Township Sub County, Kenya

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to examine teacher appraisal and its relationship with secondary school students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya. The objectives of the study were to determine whether teachers' professional development is a predictor of secondary school students' academic performance, examine the relationship between teacher time management and academic performance of secondary school students, assess whether creativity in teaching has a relationship with secondary school students'

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academic performance and examine whether teacher performance appraisal perception intervenes the relationship between teacher appraisal and secondary school students' academic performance. The study was anchored on the theory of Goal setting. The study used a survey research design. The targeted population comprised all 9 Secondary School Principals, 9 Secondary School Deputy Principals, 1 Sub-County Director of Education and 105 teachers in the nine public secondary schools within Garissa Township Sub-County. The study used the census to obtain its respondents. Data was collected using semi-structured questionnaires and interview schedules. The questionnaire was tested for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha method based on the 0.7 Cronbach's Alpha coefficient's threshold, while validity was tested using content validity. Quantitative data was analyzed using regression analysis, and qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis. The findings revealed that all the independent variables significantly related to secondary school students' academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya. Teacher performance appraisal perception is also significantly associated with secondary school academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya. Therefore, the study recommends that school management and Teachers Service Commission (TSC) enhance teacher professional development and time management and motivate teachers to improve creativity in teaching to improve students' secondary school academic performance. The research findings will benefit stakeholders on teachers' appraisal systems in public secondary schools, including the TSC, the Ministry of Education, teachers, and future researchers with needs similar to this problem.

Keywords: Academic performance; creativity in teaching; performance appraisal perception; teacher professional development; teacher time management.

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the most critical socio-economic pillars for any society. Many countries compete to provide quality education to their citizens to boost their socio-economic levels. Quality education is paramount for sustainable development to be realized. The teacher appraisal system has been adopted globally in most countries to provide quality education and accountability among employees (OECD, 2013). With the rapid desire to provide high-quality education, the need to introduce various performance appraisal methods arose.

1.1 Background to the Study

Performance appraisal has been used in most key sectors, especially in the civil service and the private sector (Aguinis, 2009). However, with changing dynamics, performance appraisal is becoming a norm in most countries' education systems. In a school setting, performance appraisal draws its foundation and data from the events inside the classroom. It has, therefore, become an essential tactic of efficient and proper personnel management to steer their efforts towards the desired educational goals of a community (Zhang & Ng, 2015). Teachers' performance appraisal is vital for improving morale and performance in the school work environment (OECD, 2013). Consequently, teacher performance appraisal is an essential factor for school improvement and the

professional development of teachers. Even as the performance appraisal system in public secondary schools continues to be implemented, the system is still surrounded by professional performance gaps, translating into failures in delivering quality education.

In Kenya, the education system has introduced reforms, including performance contracting (PC) and teacher professional appraising development (TPAD), in their efforts to address challenges facing the performance appraisal system in public secondary schools (Republic of Kenya, 2016). As such, teachers are required to undertake TPAD as a key performance measure. This aims to improve quality and efficiency and help build a performance-oriented culture. Besides, the system is also meant to ensure accountability in the public sector. On this premise, performance appraisal entails systematic evaluations of teachers' performance and helps enhance comprehension of teachers' abilities for intended growth and development. It is deeply anchored on the values, norms and philosophies of societies. Appraisals reflect particular attitudes geared towards performance (self) and motivation, in addition to relationships (subordinates, peers, executives, organization), all having variance from one country, society and culture to the next. The deep-seated values, beliefs, and norms in diverse cultures have affected teachers' motivation, organizational equity perception, and justice towards performance needs.

However, in the face of these reforms, in Garissa County, there has been a drastic drop in the number of students who proceed to the institution of higher learning and poor performance of the students. In 2022, the mean stood at 3.1, and from the years 2010 to 2021, the average mean has been 3.5-4.0, translating to a dismal performance (Ministry of Education, 2022).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In Kenya, the education system has introduced teacher appraisal performance to improve students' academic performance in schools, especially secondary schools. However, the benefits of the teacher appraisal system to the education system in the country have yet to be realized (Ngeno et al., 2013). The key stakeholders are raising concerns about this program's effectiveness in driving students' academic performance in Kenyan secondary schools. Moreover, there is scanty empirical evidence on how teachers' performance appraisal relates to student performance in Kenyan schools. Therefore, this research examined teacher appraisal and its relationship with secondary school students' academic performance in public schools in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

1.3 Research Objectives

This study was based on the following research objectives:

- i. To determine whether teacher professional development predicts secondary school students' academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.
- ii. To examine the relationship between teacher time management and secondary school students' academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.
- iii. To assess whether creativity in teaching relates to secondary school students' academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.
- iv. To examine whether performance appraisal perception moderates the relationship between teacher appraisal and secondary school students' academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

The study tested the following hypotheses:

- i. There is no relationship between teacher professional development and secondary

school students' academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

- ii. There is no relationship between teacher time management and secondary school students' academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.
- iii. There is no relationship between creativity in teaching and secondary school students' academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.
- iv. There is no relationship between teacher appraisal perception and secondary school students' academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Nzuve and Njeru (2013) showed that operative performance appraisal management systems define anticipations and support individualized performance objectives with organizational ones. Meanwhile, Natalie (2014) established that the performance appraisal process is important for employee motivation. Performance appraisal systems have improved job performance at work and concluded that performance standards are quantified and pegged against an individual evaluation, which is essential for employee motivation. More so, Karamanos (2020) established that professional improvement approaches are vital for student performance in mathematics elementary public schools. Content delivered in the development program influenced students' academic performance.

A study by Adams and Blair (2019) established a strong correlation between time management behaviors and higher grades. Furthermore, research by Alyami et al. (2021) indicated a significant relationship between time management and higher-secondary students' performance in the examinations.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

The study, which adopted a survey research design, targeted a population of 9 Secondary School Principals, 9 Secondary School Deputy Principals, 1 Sub-County Director of Education (SCDE) and 105 teachers in the nine public secondary schools within Garissa Township Sub-County. The researcher used a census to use the entire target population as its respondents.

The research employed closed and open-ended questionnaires to collect data from the 105 teachers in the public secondary schools within

Garissa Township Sub-County. To help supplement data collected through questionnaires, the researcher used oral interviews to collect data from the school principals, deputy school principals and education officials on the role of teacher performance appraisal scores on the secondary school academic performance of learners in their respective schools and or areas of jurisdiction. The interview involved a face-to-face meeting between the researcher and the interviewee. It was based on questions and answers relating to the problem under study.

3.1 Questionnaire Validity and Reliability

The study tested for validity using content validity. The content validity was evaluated by involving the supervisor as the research expert in rating the questionnaire items based on their relevance and representativeness to the content domain. Reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha approach on public secondary school teachers from the neighbouring Tana River sub-county. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was 0.851, more significant than 0.70. This meant that the tool was reliable and fit for data collection.

3.2 Data Analysis Methods

Quantitative data was analyzed quantitatively to yield descriptive statistics in mean and standard deviation and presented as tables and pie charts (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). The content

analysis technique was used to analyze information obtained from the interviews and report it in narrative form. Inferential analysis was done through correlation analysis to determine the relationship between variables. The statistics generated from correlation analysis were probability values (p-value) and Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficients (R) at a 5% significance level.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Hypothesis 1

There is no relationship between teacher professional development and secondary school students' academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

Pearson product-moment correlation was used to assess the relationship between teacher professional development and secondary school students' academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

Among the components of teacher professional development, mastery of subject content was rated highest with a mean score of 3.1563, and use of appropriate instructional methods had the lowest score of 2.6354. On average, the ratings suggest a modest view of teacher professional development, which could partly explain the moderate secondary school academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

Table 1. Components of teacher professional development

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Mastery of Subject Content	3.1563	.89828
Use of Appropriate Instructional Methods	2.6354	.71259
Learner Assessment Feedback and Reporting	2.6771	.87653

Table 2. Pearson's correlation analysis of the teacher professional development and student secondary school academic performance

Variables		Secondary School Academic Performance	Teachers Professional Development
Secondary School Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.646**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<0.0001
	N	96	96
Teacher Professional Development	Pearson Correlation	.646**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<0.0001	
	N	96	96

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From Pearson’s correlation analysis, the correlation coefficient, r , was found to be 0.646, which indicated a moderate positive relationship between teacher professional development and secondary school students’ academic performance. P-value statistic (sig) < 0.0001 was produced. Since the p-value generated, < 0.0001 is less than 0.01, the study reject the null hypothesis and concluded that a significant relationship existed between teacher professional development and secondary school student s’ academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

From the interview schedule, seven principals, eight deputy principals, and the SCDE indicated that among the issues and challenges facing staff appraisal in school, teachers did not wholeheartedly support their appraisal. They mainly attributed this to teachers feeling low on some metrics, such as professional development. All the principals and their deputies recommended enhanced professional development of teachers in and out of school training to improve teacher performance appraisal in secondary schools.

4.2 Hypothesis 2

There is no relationship between teacher time management and secondary school students’ academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

A Pearson product-moment correlation was run to determine the relationship between teacher time management and secondary school students’ academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

Among the components of teacher time management, lesson plan preparation was rated high with a mean score of 3.6667, with the scheme of work preparation and record of work covered preparation rated moderate at 3.2083 and 2.8021, respectively. On average, the ratings suggest a modest to a high view of teacher time management, which could partly explain the moderate secondary school

academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

Pearson's correlation analysis found the correlation coefficient, r , to be 0.715, indicating a high positive relationship between teacher time management and secondary school students’ academic performance. A p-value statistic (sig) < 0.0001 was produced. Since the p-value generated, < 0.0001 , is less than 0.01, the study reject the null hypothesis and concluded that a significant relationship existed between teacher time management and secondary school students’ academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

From the interview schedule, all nine deputy principals offered that performance appraisal scores highly impacted secondary school academic performance, with all principals and SCDE pinpointing that teachers are appraised at least annually in their schools and the Sub-County, respectively. However, among the issues and challenges facing school staff appraisal, as reported by seven principals and eight deputy principals, was some teacher resentment of their appraisal. They attributed this resentment partly to teachers not wanting to be assessed on time management, among other issues, which they blamed on teachers’ misunderstandings. These principals and deputies vouched for continuous reassurance on the merits of time management assessment. It was not intended to victimize teachers but to help them improve their weak areas.

4.3 Hypothesis 3

There is no relationship between creativity in teaching and secondary school students’ academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

A Pearson product-moment correlation was run to determine the relationship between creativity in teaching and secondary school students’ academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

Table 3. Components of teacher time management

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Scheme of Work Preparation	3.2083	.59677
Lesson Plan Preparation	3.6667	.70587
Record of Work Covered Preparation	2.8021	.57344

Table 4. Pearson’s correlation analysis of the teacher time management and student secondary school academic performance

		Secondary School Academic Performance	Teacher Time Management
Secondary School Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.715**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<0.0001
	N	96	96
Teacher Time Management	Pearson Correlation	.715**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<0.0001	
	N	96	96

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5. Components of creativity in teaching

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Application of New Skills and Techniques	3.3646	.60035
Welcoming New Challenges	3.5625	.77883
Flexibility and Adaptability in Unfamiliar Situations	3.0625	.53925

Table 6. Pearson’s correlation analysis of the creativity in teaching and student secondary school academic performance

		Secondary School Academic Performance	Creativity in Teaching
Secondary School Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.651**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<0.0001
	N	96	96
Creativity in Teaching	Pearson Correlation	.651**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<0.0001	
	N	96	96

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Among the components of creativity in teaching, welcoming new challenges was rated high with a mean score of 3.5625, whereas application of new skills and flexibility in unfamiliar situations were rated moderate at 3.3646 and 3.0625, respectively. On average, the ratings suggest a modest to high view of creativity in teaching, which partly explains the moderate secondary school academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

From Pearson’s correlation analysis, the correlation coefficient, r , was found to be 0.651, which indicated a moderate positive relationship between creativity in teaching and secondary school students’ academic performance. P-value statistic (sig) < 0.0001 was produced. Since the p-value generated, < 0.0001 is less than 0.01, the study reject the null hypothesis and concluded that a significant relationship existed between creativity in teaching and secondary school students’ academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

From the interview schedule, all the deputy principals underscored the importance of performance appraisal scores on secondary school academic performance. However, the eight deputy principals and seven principals who had indicated teachers’ reluctance to be appraised blamed this partially on the inflexibility of teachers, especially when faced with new challenges requiring the employment of new techniques. In totality, the deputy principals and principals proposed continued support for the teachers to adapt to changing environments as part of the measures to improve teacher performance appraisal scores in secondary school.

4.4 Hypothesis 4

There is no relationship between teacher appraisal perception and secondary school students’ academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

Table 7. Components of performance appraisal perception

	Mean	Std. Deviation
The performance appraisal criteria are communicated to me.	3.3646	.65083
I understand how my teaching performance is assessed.	2.7292	.65661
I am aware of the goals and expectations set for my performance appraisal.	2.5521	.85680
The criteria used to evaluate my teaching performance are relevant to my responsibilities.	3.3333	.62688
The appraisal criteria accurately reflect the nature of my work.	3.5521	.77961
The criteria take into account the diverse aspects of teaching.	3.09375	.599616
I receive timely feedback as part of the performance appraisal process.	3.1667	.95880
The frequency of feedback during performance appraisal is sufficient.	2.6563	.73739
I am adequately informed about my strengths and areas for improvement.	2.6771	.92332
The feedback received during performance appraisal contributes to my professional growth.	3.1771	.64880
I use the feedback provided to enhance my teaching practices.	3.6563	.73739
The feedback received helps me identify areas for professional development.	2.8021	.60905
I am comfortable suggesting improvements to the current performance appraisal system.	2.5417	.84501
My suggestions for improvement would be considered seriously.	3.3438	.62959
There is an open culture for discussing and implementing changes in the appraisal process.	3.5313	.76713
Overall, I am satisfied with the current performance appraisal system.	3.0729	.56652
I find the appraisal process fair and unbiased.	3.1458	.94009
The performance appraisal system motivates me to improve my teaching practices.	2.6458	.69554
The appraisal criteria are easy to understand.	2.6562	.89240
I am confident in my ability to meet the criteria set for performance appraisal.	3.1979	.64269
The criteria provide a clear framework for evaluating teaching performance.	3.6563	.69325
The performance appraisal process has a positive impact on my overall teaching effectiveness.	2.8333	.64346
The appraisal system helps enhance student learning outcomes.	2.5729	.85526
The feedback received contributes to my ability to create an effective learning environment.	3.3229	.62399
My achievements are appropriately recognized in the performance appraisal process.	3.5417	.78024
The appraisal system acknowledges and values innovative teaching practices.	3.1458	.94009
I receive sufficient recognition for going above and beyond in my role.	2.6875	.74428
I perceive consistency in how different evaluators assess my teaching performance.	2.6875	.92124
The criteria used by different evaluators are applied uniformly.	3.1667	.64346
The performance appraisal process ensures fairness and equity.	3.6875	.70056

Table 8. Pearson’s Correlation Analysis of the Teacher Performance Appraisal Perception and Secondary school students’ academic performance

		Secondary School Academic Performance	Perception
Secondary School Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.639**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<0.0001
	N	96	96
	Pearson Correlation	.639**	1
Perception	Sig. (2-tailed)	<0.0001	
	N	96	96

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A Pearson product-moment correlation was run to determine the relationship between teacher appraisal perception and secondary school students’ academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

Among the components of performance appraisal perception, the performance appraisal process ensuring fairness and equity was rated highest with a mean score of 3.6875, whereas being aware of the goals and expectations set for one’s performance appraisal was rated lowest at 2.5521. On average, the ratings suggest a modest to a high view of performance appraisal perception, which partly explains the moderate secondary school academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

From Pearson’s correlation analysis, the correlation coefficient, *r*, was found to be 0.639, which indicated a moderate positive relationship between teacher performance appraisal perception and secondary school students’ academic performance. P-value statistic (sig) < 0.0001 was produced. Since the p-value generated, < 0.0001 is less than 0.01, the study rejected the fourth null hypothesis and concluded a significant relationship existed between teacher performance appraisal perception and secondary school students’ academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

4.5 Discussion

On assessing the role of teacher professional development regarding secondary school students’ academic performance, the overall rating of teacher professional development indicators was moderate, with mean score ranges between 2.6354 and 3.1563. The correlation between teacher professional development and secondary school students’ academic performance was 0.646, indicating a

moderate positive relationship. ANOVA test revealed a p-value statistic of less than 0.0001, indicating that the influence of teacher professional development on students’ secondary school academic performance was statistically significant. These findings agree with those of Karamanos (2020), who established that content delivered in the development program influences student academic performance. The results are also in line with Parish (2013), whose study concluded that time spent in the professional development of teachers was directly proportional to the student’s examination scores.

Among the components of teacher time management, lesson plan preparation was rated high with a mean score of 3.6667, with the scheme of work preparation and record of work covered preparation rated moderate at 3.2083 and 2.8021, respectively. On average, the ratings suggest a modest to high view of teacher’s time management. Teachers’ time management relationship with students’ secondary school academic performance was 0.715, indicating a highly positive relationship. ANOVA test revealed a p-value statistic of less than 0.0001, indicating that the influence of teacher time management on secondary school students’ academic performance was statistically significant. The results agree with those of Adams and Blair (2019), who established a strong correlation between time management behaviors and higher grades, and also with Alyam et al. (2020), who established that time management correlates with academic performance.

As regards the influence of creativity in teaching on students’ secondary school academic performance, the study observed that welcoming new challenges was rated high, with a mean score of 3.5625. In contrast, applying new skills

and flexibility in unfamiliar situations were rated moderate at 3.3646 and 3.0625, respectively. On average, the ratings suggest a modest to a high view of creativity in teaching. Creativity in teaching was also found to have a moderate positive relationship with students' secondary school academic performance, with a correlation coefficient of 0.651. ANOVA test revealed a p-value statistic of 0.000, indicating that the influence of creativity in teaching on students' secondary school academic performance was statistically significant.

The ANOVA test revealed a p-value of less than 0.0001, indicating that the influence of teacher appraisal perception on students' secondary school academic performance was statistically significant. The model intercept was 0.876, and the slope was 0.654, revealing that for every unit change in teacher appraisal perception, there is a change of 0.654 in students' secondary school academic performance.

5. CONCLUSION

The study concludes a statistically significant relationship exists between teacher professional development and students' secondary school academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya ($p < 0.01$; $r = 0.646$).

The study also concludes that teachers' time management influenced students' secondary school academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya ($p < 0.01$; $r = 0.715$). The study concluded that creativity moderately influenced students' secondary school academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya ($p < 0.01$; $r = 0.651$).

In conclusion, a significant relationship existed between teacher performance appraisal perception and secondary school students' academic performance in Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya ($p < 0.01$; $r = 0.639$).

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

This study recommends that the schools' management:

- monitor teacher time management, especially regarding the record of work covered preparation.
- motivate teachers to improve creativity in teaching, especially in terms of flexibility in unfamiliar situations

6.1 Suggestions for Further Study

Future studies can also focus on secondary school students' academic performance in localities other than Garissa Township Sub-County, Kenya.

DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc) and text-to-image generators have been used during writing or editing of this manuscript.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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