

Headteachers' Goal Setting Strategies and Pupils' Academic Performance in Private Primary Schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties, Kenya

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Abstract: Goal-setting strategy is a classroom instruction technique adopted to establish a direction for learning in respective schools. These strategies may be responsible for the disparity in school performance, especially in private schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties. Previous scholarly works on headteachers' target setting strategies have concentrated on public schools while ignoring private schools. Therefore, this study examined the influence of goal-setting strategies and academic performance in private primary schools in the Nyeri and the Murang'a Counties in Kenya. The study adopted Bertalanffy and Weihrich Systems' theories. The study used a descriptive survey research design. The target population for the study is 2,630 head teachers and teachers from 259 private primary schools in the Murang'a and the Nyeri Counties. The schools considered had done KCPE for at least five years before the study period. The study employed Slovin's formula to determine the number of head teachers and teachers where 58 headteachers and 342 teachers were estimated to be representative samples for respective groups. The research also selected 15 SCQASOs using purposive sampling, while simple random sampling was adopted to select 158 schools from the two Counties. At the school level, the researcher recruited a headteacher using a purposive approach and two or three teachers using simple random sampling. A questionnaire was adopted to collect data from headteachers and teachers and interview schedules from SCQASOs. The researcher used Cronbach's alpha to compute the reliability of the study tools and determined at 0.7; all variables had an alpha coefficient above 0.7, which implies an internal consistency. The researcher also tested the content and the construct validity of the questionnaire by submitting the questionnaire. Data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and presented using charts and tables. Qualitative data were analysed using Atlas.ti, coded while quantitative data were analyzed in SPSS using descriptive and inferential statistics. The researcher used descriptive methods such as frequency distribution and correlation coefficient. The study found a statistically significant association between target setting and academic performance of private primary schools in Murang'a and Nyeri Counties. The findings can be generalized in private and public primary schools in Kenya.

Keywords: Goal Setting Strategies, Academic Performance, Private Primary Schools

1. Introduction

A goal-setting method is a classroom education approach used to develop a learning orientation in specific schools (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001). According to Schunk (2009) goal setting that leads to increased learner desire for academic accomplishment by articulating a goal does not necessarily

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enhance learning. Nevertheless, if done effectively, goal setting has the potential to improve learning.

Goal setting, in its broadest sense, is the process of establishing distinct and practical targets, or goals, for education. According to goal theory, learners can embrace one of two main goal orientations: a task-focused approach with an intrinsic emphasis on learning and advancement or a capacity perspective with an extrinsic concentration on extrinsic motivators such as performing better than other learners). The previous are known as learning, task engagement, or mastering objectives, whereas the latter are known as achievement or ego-involving goals (Elliott & Dweck, 1988).

Goal setting in language learning is commonly regarded as one of the strategies that encourage learner autonomy (Locke, Shaw, Saari, & Latham, 1981; Wentzel, 1991; Yang, 1998). A number of studies indicate that goal setting affects performance and enhances achievement (Boekaerts, 2002; Edwings, 1995; Moriarity, Pavelonis, Pellouchoud, & Wilson, 2001; Schunk, 2003). In particular, studies have shown that appropriate goal setting, along with timely and specific feedback, can lead to higher achievement, better performance, a high level of self-efficacy, and self-regulation. In spite of this compelling evidence in support of goal setting, 85% of individuals responded “no” when asked “Were you taught how to set goals in school?” (Bishop, 2003). The case for goal setting has clearly been made and supported by research studies, yet this important learning strategy has been largely ignored in classrooms.

Even when limited to a smaller population such as college students, the influence of goal setting varies by classroom setting (if the subject is basic or complex, classroom capacity), how learning is measured (a range of evaluations or solely numerous tests), and assessment requirements (if course grades are based on a curve). For example, Barron and Harackiewicz (2001) claim that achievement goals could be compatible with beginning and large classrooms in that achievement is judged via multiple-choice tests and marks are curved. Mastery learning, on contrast, may be better suited to advanced levels that employ a range of evaluations to gauge achievement. Their empirical research discriminates between strategies to mastery, achievement, and work aversion. The researchers discover through qualitative approach an association between goals and results both in basic and advanced learning levels. Although this is not what the investigators predicted, it does imply that success goals may have a positive impact on results at any level. Another intriguing conclusion from the researchers' study is that mastery goals are positively related to course engagement.

Schippers et al. (2015) discovered that a goal-setting strategy had a good influence on university students at a European business school during their first year of study. Learners in this survey were asked to set goals for what they wanted to grow, learn, and accomplish in their careers, among other aspects. They were also required to establish main objective strategies and make public declarations regarding their objectives. The researchers discovered that their goal setting interventions had a beneficial influence on both credits earned and retention rate. Investigators also discovered that ethnic minority guys benefited the most from the intervention.

Kenya, like every other nation, emphasises education for the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits it provides to individuals. Education is a significant social phenomenon because it helps individual learners overcome their limitations and attain their goals. In Kenya, previous scholarly works have revealed a direct

relationship between headteacher management and outcomes. According to Ndinza (2015), effective administration by headteachers influences academic success. Nevertheless, the impact of headteacher approaches on private primary student achievement is unclear. Looking further, at data on the performance of private and public primary schools for the last 5 years, private schools have continued to perform better than public schools.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Setting goals gives students something concrete to strive for, that can lead to increased motivation. Team or class-wide goals can encourage learners since their colleagues, who have an interest in the goal's accomplishment, hold them accountable for their achievement and commitment. A collaborative aim might be to finish a group presentation within a certain time frame. Students who set clear goals for themselves are more likely to succeed. Learners with drive to attain their goals, if individual or educational, develop a healthy discipline and work ethic that can be translated into classroom achievement.

Over years in Kenya, national test performance results have been the single most significant driver of academic achievement, forcing a considerable proportion of parents to prefer private elementary schools over public primary schools. Many researchers and educational specialists are interested in learning more about the factors that influence academic success. The majority of this research has concentrated on public primary schools. Nevertheless, despite the considerable support from the state provided by public elementary schools, private schools outperform public schools in Kenya. Academic achievement appears to be influenced by headteacher management. Parents have been fighting the transfer of headteachers from high-performing public schools for approximately ten years. As a result, academic performance in public and private schools has been observed to improve/decline following a change in principal. When considering private and public schools, public schools have greater advantages, such as more professionally educated teachers, but private schools always have performed better academically (Zuilkowski, Piper, Ong'ele, & Kiminza, 2018). This study's null hypothesis was that goal setting is an important part of performance in private primary schools.

In the year 2017, only three private schools from Nyeri County managed to be among the top 100 schools in Kenya, Equally, two private schools from Murang'a in the same year managed to be among the top 100 schools. In 2018, among the seven schools in Nyeri County were private schools while in Murang'a, the first five top schools were private. In the 2019 KCPE, the majority of pupils with over 400 marks were from private primary schools in both Counties (KNEC, 2020).

The Government has enacted several policies in guiding the operations of public schools and enforcement the same through regular supervision yet most public schools have continued to record poor performance. On the other hand, private schools despite varied challenges such as a lack of teachers with long teaching experience have continued to record very competitive performance, especially in Nyeri and Murang'a counties. This study tested the contribution of goal setting to pupils' academic performance in private primary school; these findings form basis from which both private and public primary schools can improve their academic performance. This study examined how headteachers' goal

setting strategies influence the academic performance of private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties in Kenya.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

The theory utilised for this study is based on Bertalanffy and Weihrich's System Theory Input-Output model (1988). According to the notion, a structured enterprise does not exist in a vacuum; it is dependent on the setting that it is constituted. It also states that the organisation receives environmental inputs and subsequently translates them into output after evaluating this information. According to Robbins (1980), organisations are progressively being characterized as absorbers, integrators, and producers, and the organisation system can be considered as a collection of multiple interrelated factors (system advocate). A change in an organisational factor, according to Robbins, has an effect on all other organisational factors and sub-system constituents.

As a result, the inputs, processes, and producers must all work properly to obtain the desired result. To meet academic achievement targets in private schools, administration must implement techniques like curriculum oversight, financial control techniques, facility development, and incentive systems. Saleem (1997) agrees with Robbins (1980) that all systems must collaborate in order to accomplish the program's general goal. The input-output model assumes that a school with a high level of predictor factors enables students to create a high amount of performance that is quantified in terms of academic success. As a result, students do well in an academic environment that provides the best resources, motivated workforce, excellent financial management, and effective curriculum oversight. According to Oso and Onen (2005), the interdependence of the pieces of a system must be understood by all participants in order to guarantee the parts' interdependence. The quantity of availability of basic school factors influences the academic success of students.

1.3 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework describes the link between the variables studied (Orodho, 2009). According to Jabareen (2009), a parameter is a measurable property that has different values between subjects. The investigator's perspective on the problem steers the investigation (Kaplan, 2002). A conceptual framework is a proposed methodology for categorising the constructs employed in a study and their relationships. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) examine the importance of a conceptual framework as a guide for the reader to quickly grasp the anticipated relationship between the predictor (predicting) and predicted factors. This is shown in figure 1 below

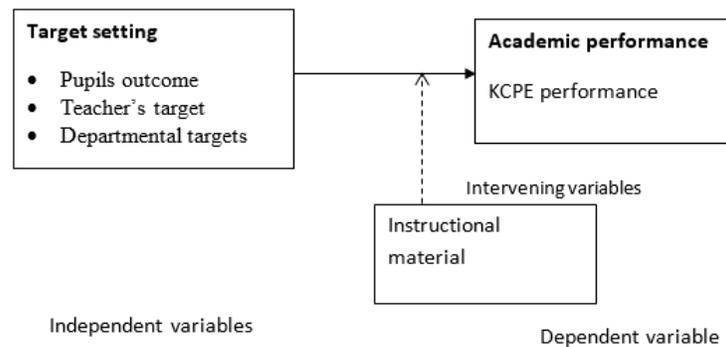


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

The process of creating a learning goal is known as target setting (Marzano, Pickering & Pollock, 2001). According to research, creating adequate goals and receiving timely and comprehensive feedback can lead to higher accomplishment, improved outcome, a high level of self-efficacy, and self-regulation (Moriarty, Pavelonis, Pellouchoud & Wilson, 2001; Schunk, 2003). Targets, as per Abe, Ilogu, and Madueke (2014), are explicit goals that someone is intentionally attempting to achieve, especially in terms of future aspirations such as equity and anticipation. Targets direct behaviour and offer guidance regarding the amount of effort should be put into work to achieve the desired outcome. In other words, people are more inclined to work well if they believe they have been suitably compensated. Similarly, students study more effectively if they assume that advancement, acknowledgment, or incentive will follow their achievement immediately.

2. Literature Review

Performance goals are focused on achieving a certain objective, like boosting learner accomplishment by a certain proportion, increase employee happiness, or finishing a building project on time and within budget. It is considered that the individual brings the necessary skills and talents to reach the goal, and that performance improves through encouraging the individual to apply that knowledge to the particular action. A learning goal, on the other hand, concentrates on the discovery of effective tactics, techniques, or processes for doing the activity (Latham & Locke, 2007). The focus is on learning how to accomplish the work instead of getting a certain result.

Setting high-performance expectations for complex work is counterproductive if people do not have a set of effective tactics for accomplishing them. The compulsion to attain performance goals can hinder workers from taking the necessary time to learn how to execute the job and can lead to the selection of task strategies too soon. Setting learning goals allows individuals to grow to the level where achievement goals are good for enhancing effectiveness (Seijts & Latham, 2005). When it comes to learning objectives, the same traits of specificity and challenge apply as they do to performance objectives (Latham & Locke, 2007). If the aim of principal evaluation is growth, individual will anticipate a significant proportion of learning to achievement goals. Learning goals that indicate what the head teacher must learn to spearhead the achievement of the school goal must be backed by school development priorities.

Multiple goals are frequently set as part of headmaster assessment. There is virtually little research on the consequences of pursuing numerous aims at the same time, or on how individuals create target priorities (Seijts, Taylor & Latham, 2005). Given this, one of the key benefits of target setting is that it concentrates attention (Locke & Latham 2007); three to five targets are likely to do so, whereas twenty-five goals are expected to cause individual to lose concentration. The suggestion in the English standards for three to six objectives looks about correct, assuming that the complexity of each is not very difficult (Brown, 2005).

Creating a school vision is a necessary basis that the particular educational operations are built (Sergiovanni, 2002). According to Glickman (2010), developing and expressing a clear mission, priorities, and goals for the school is a vital part for practically all individuals dealing with classroom supervision. An instructional supervisor for performance should design or define goals and clearly convey them to partners. All parties' appreciation for the schools' objective and aims resulted in a well-structured culture (Glickman, 2010). Learning is a lifelong endeavour, and we must stay informed in order to enhance education quality. Targets direct the actions of both educators and pupils. The academic supervision may set academic achievement and syllabus completion targets. Setting school goals pushes teachers to focus even more, which may lead to instructors altering their teaching tactics to fit the diverse learning needs of students (Blase & Blase, 2000).

According to Steller (2011), the key goal of an effective head teacher is academic accomplishment; the head teacher should build a school climate through procedures and guidelines that give instructors with the necessary support to concentrate on the objective. A vision is the ultimate response to the inquiry, "Why?" What am I thinking? What difference does it make? Why is it significant to me and the world at large? Why do I work so hard to achieve my goal? A vision is the driving force underlying the immediate goals and motivations that guide our everyday actions (Damon, 2012). Self-efficacy influences a person's goals since it reflects the leadership's confidence. They contend that setting difficult goals increases a person's effectiveness. According to Girvin (2014), setting goals and objectives by a school improves students' achievement.

In this regard, the primary goal of the head teacher is to establish academic achievement targets and to disseminate these to educational staff members as recommendations. In their research, Robinson and Lloyd (2002) confirmed that having goals and expectations influences students' achievement. They describe goal setting in the educational context as the developing, disseminating, and evaluating of instructional objectives, guidelines, and aspirations, as well as the engagement of teachers and others staff in the process to ensure target consistency and agreement. Building a vision and providing directions is also one of the basic strategies of good administration, according to Leithwood and Riel (2005).

In his work, Bandura (2007) proved that target setting is becoming a procedure that automatically generates inconsistencies. Consequently, defining goals causes dissatisfaction with our present situation or productivity and establishes a gap between the present situation and the anticipated future situation. At the core of administration are two activities: offering direction and exercising influence. In other words, managers mobilise and collaborate with others to achieve common goals. The following are the consequences: Instructional supervisors do not enforce targets on their followers; instead, they

collaborate with others to establish a shared sense of direction and purpose. Transformational supervisors work mainly alongside and also through others. They also contribute to the creation of atmosphere that allows others to be more productive. As a result, management effects on school targets are both indirect and direct (Bovalino, 2008).

Sun and Leithwood (2015) found that establishing a shared vision, reaching agreement on goals, and retaining high achievement expectations have a significant positive influence on crucial school atmosphere like school culture and shared decision-making procedures, as well as teacher-related results like satisfaction, engagement empowering, effectiveness, and organisational citizenship. These important school environments and teacher-related outputs have a direct impact on learner engagement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). According to Leithwood's (2009) analysis of important school working circumstances, a school with a vision has a significant impact on learner accomplishment. Felder (2010) found that headteachers assist teachers in setting goals and developing ongoing evaluation methods for assessing the linkages between their learning, learner acquiring knowledge, and school improvement goals.

One of the three administration techniques that contribute to more effective instruction recognized in a large-scale research of instructional supervision sponsored by the Wallace Foundation is concentrating the school on targets and aspirations for learner performance (Leithwood et al., 2012). Whereas the principal is the primary decision-maker in the institution, better performing schools benefit from effective governance, with the principal enabling teachers, parents, and others to contribute in decision-making.

Creating such coherent and cooperative achievement, on the other hand, highlights the significance of the school leader's ability to establish clear goals and urge all players to collaborate toward a common goal (Louis et al., 2010). Having such aims allows individuals to make purpose of their work and find a social identity within their work situation (Jantzi, 2011). In our everyday lives in classrooms, goal setting still hasn't turnout to personal, meaningful, and motivating for us (Onyango, 2012).

As a consequence, we are losing one of the most effective instruments for assisting learners in meeting their goals. According to Conzemius and O'Neill (2006), headteachers who lack a defined vision and goals are wasting chances to see results in their job. According to Bandura (2007), goal setting influences our motivations, perceptions about what we are able to comprehend or the level that we are able to achieve, and self-evaluation. The disparity caused by goal setting is perceived as constructive dissatisfaction (Bovalino, 2008). Targets concentrate our efforts and motivate us to work harder and longer than we would meet the required standards.

According to Robinson and Burton (2009), this is not always the case; goals are indeed motivational in an educational setting if the partners, who include instructors, students, and parents, believe individuals have the ability to achieve the goals. They feel that either their available assets are adequate for the task or that they will be provided with the necessary supplementary knowledge and assistance. Individuals are more devoted to goals if they comprehend and appreciate them, and if the goals are explicit and explicit (Reitzug, 2009). Latham and Locke (2010) also mentioned the significance of differentiating between allocated and personalized goals. Individual ambitions, as well as a person's feeling of self-efficacy, are what most directly influence an individual's behaviour.

Setting a difficult goal might boost a person's sense of accomplishment. Ultimate conscience, high standards for everybody, and the assumption that every kid can learn when given the right strategy and amount of time are at the core of defining educational goals (Fullan, 2010). He argued that the moral aim that should be accomplished must include both strong devotion and the tools to carry it out. Thus, dedication plus strategy is essential; failure results if either engagement or plan is lacking. A vision is a consistent and broad goal to achieve an outcome that is both important to the self and significant for the universe beyond the individual. Monitoring and supervision are also part of the head teacher's duties, and evaluation allows the educator to adjust strategies as needed (Yunas, 2013). Supervisors are frequently needed to concentrate on novel programs, attain or change an organization's current aims, and apply the road map available to achieve the targets.

Faisal (2013) noted that modifications take place as a result of certain situations, such as economic situation, climatic changes, the emergence of calamities, or shifting global patterns. Whenever a change occurs, the education system of any community must adapt in order to meet its objectives. According to Abdullah and Kassim (2011), effective headteachers can influence a fundamental change in the educational system to attain the established targets. Management ensures that they possess a wide range of information at their discretion to demonstrate that learner achievement can be utilized to shape their vision and goals (Murphy, 2012).

According to research conducted in various nations, managers' plays a critical part in school growth and any type of transformation brought about for school improvement (Luo, Aye, Hogan, Chan & Kaur, 2013). Educational management is an approach that has a significant impact on people's attitudes regarding meeting their goals. The primary impact of school administration is usually discovered to be on learner learning (Hallinger & Heck, 2013). The head teacher has specific goals, such as developing individuals while also holding them more accountable for the completion of particular responsibilities. Thus, school administrators motivate students and discuss their goals with workers in order to improve their performance. Gilbert (2000) discovered that management productivity has two major components: the management actions demonstrated is the technique, and the outcomes of such ultimate actions. We look for instructional, behavioural management, administrative, and relational skills in headteachers when evaluating their effectiveness.

Headteacher evaluations frequently indicate a marked polarity; they are either successful or unsuccessful in achieving their major aims (Khan & Saeed, 2009). When considering the state of education and its influence on social and economic concerns in every nation, it is proposed that instructional management can play an important part in improving the entire scenario (West, 2009). One essential need for this to occur is that administrators have the vision to govern their establishments efficiently by supporting teachers and encouraging students (Hussein, 2011).

3. Research Methodology

The study used a descriptive survey research approach to assess the impact of headteachers' goal setting tactics on the academic performance of private primary schools in Kenya's Nyeri and Murang'a Counties. This research design is said to be appropriate for doing a thorough analysis of the survey

data in order to establish the relationship between the variables in the study (Lambert & Lambert, 2012). The design enables for a thorough investigation and explanation of factors.

3.1 Target Population

The term "target population" refers to the entire set of elements about which researchers are interested when forming conclusions. According to Kothari (2008), population is the total number of items about whom data exists. According to Mbwesa (2008), the target population is the entire group of people, events, or items that the investigator wishes to investigate. The study targeted 259 headteachers and 2,371 teachers from 259 private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties in Kenya. There is a total population of 2606 both headteachers and teachers. This formed the target population for this study (KPSA, 2019). The study also targeted 15 Sub County Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (SCQASO) to supplement the findings from teachers and headteachers.

3.2 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

A stratified sample strategy was used in the investigation, followed by a simple random sampling technique. Counties are considered strata in this situation. To ensuring that all subjects are reflected in the research, stratified sampling is used when the population being studied has varied features (Miller, 1996). The two counties have different representations in the number of private primary schools; thus the use of stratified sampling was ideal in ensuring equal representation of private schools from each county. The study further used random sampling to select the school to be included in the study from each County. At the school level, headteachers used purposively recruited while random sampling was used to select teachers to participate in this study. The research listed all schools and at school level all teachers were listed in upper classes. Using research randomizer (<https://www.randomizer.org/>) the researcher selected 158 headteacher and 342 teachers to be included in the study by checking the individuals whose number corresponded with selected numbers. The randomizer helps select unique list of numbers. These numbers were employed to choose participants who were issued numbers and asked to take part in the survey. Participants answered questionnaires based on their personal experiences and perspectives. Slovin's (1960) formula was used to calculate the appropriate sample size for the targeted population. An investigator must know the size of the population or projected population of the study in order to apply Slovin's formula. The formula is given below:

3.3 Headteachers' Sample Size Determination

$$n = N / (1 + N * e^2)$$

Where n= desired sample size, N=Targeted population size, e: significance level (maximum amount of error the researcher is willing to commit while estimating sample size for the study) =0.05

$$n = \frac{259}{1 + (259 * 0.05^2)}$$
$$= \frac{259}{1.6475} = 157.207$$

n_{~~~}158

A sample of 158 private primary schools was selected for this study.

3.4 Teachers' Sample Size Determination

Where n= desired sample size, N=Targeted population size, e: significance level (maximum amount of error the researcher is willing to commit while estimating sample size for the study) =0.05

$$n = \frac{2,347}{1 + (2,347 * 0.05^2)}$$

$$= \frac{2,347}{6.9275} = 342.259$$

n_{~~~}342

The study selected at least two teachers in schools with one stream and at most three teachers from schools with three or more streams to participate in the study and 15 Sub County Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (SCQASO) to supplement the findings from teachers and headteachers. The respondents were selected as shown in the figure.

According to Cochran, the sample size for school heads and teachers was calculated as follows using a stratified sampling procedure (1977).

Table 1: Sample size determination per County

Counties	Headteachers Population	Teachers Population	$n_i = \frac{\text{ithstratumpopulation}}{\text{targetpopulation}(N)} \times n$	
			Headteachers	Teachers
Nyeri	143	1,315	87	192
Murang'a	116	1,056	71	154
Total	259	2,371	158	342

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

Data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on relevant factors in a typical methodical fashion to enable the researcher to address specific study queries (Truman, 2008). A questionnaire was used to collect primary information in the field. Structured and unstructured queries were included in the questionnaires. The researcher hired a research assistant who was given a set amount of time to collect data. According to Orodho (2009), inquiries are useful because they can amass a great number of data in a short period of time and can be simply examined. The surveys were delivered to the participants by research assistants. Semi-structured questionnaires were utilised in the study to collect both qualitative and quantitative responses. The questionnaire targeted headteachers and teachers

of private primary schools while interview schedule was administered to the Sub County Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (SCQASOs).

3.6 Pilot Study

Before even the actual survey, a pilot was conducted to test the tools consistency and survey protocols. This was done to determine the study tool's validity and reliability. According to Glasgow (2005), doing a pre-test with the questionnaires or structured interview aims to minimise difficulties before data collecting begins. It is advised that a sample of participants' equivalent to those selected for the survey sample be picked for the pilot test. In general, twenty Kirinyaga County residents were selected to take part in the pre-test (Glasgow, 2005). Pilot testing, according to Mugenda (2003), entails ability to effect a preliminary assessment of data collection method and mechanisms to identify and fix issues, allowing programmes to make appropriate remedial adjustments to the survey tools and information gathering methodologies to ensure that the information achieved is coherent and usable.

Piloting also helps to identify how the technology supported the investigators in creating code sheets for unstructured queries (Orodho, 2009). The pilot research targeted ten Kirinyaga County private school principals. The responses from piloted schools were used to make necessary changes in the questionnaire to ensure that the questionnaire capture the required data to answer the particular questions to address the research problem.

3.7 Instrument Reliability

The degree that a certain measuring process produces identical results across multiple testing is referred to as assessment of reliability. In this connection, if an investigator analyzes same collection of objects again using the same equivalent measuring tool, identical outcomes are predicted (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). As a result, reliability is concerned primarily with the precision, consistency, stability, and recurrence of parameter and data observations in providing the genuine score of the subject under evaluation.

Mugenda and Mugenda (2012) define study tool's reliability as a study tool's ability to consistently assess characteristics of interest throughout time. The less variation the tool produces in establish positive of reliability, the more it is reliable. Cronbach's alpha was used to examine the dependability and internal consistency, and it was found to be 0.7 (Hair, Tahtam, Anderson & Black, 1998). A pilot research was done to evaluate the research tool's internal consistency, and the consistency values achieved using Cronbach's alpha revealed that the tool was consistent in collecting the desired outcomes.

3.8 Instrument Validity

The extent of precision in obtaining the required information is referred to as validity (Mbwesa, 2008). It is a measurement of the precision of data obtained using survey tools. Burns (1997) categorised measurement researcher tool validity into external and internal validity. The amount to which an empirical measure effectively captures the true definition of the notion under investigation is referred to as validity (Babbie & Mouton, 2007). It is the extent that a test assesses what it claims to assess, or the correctness and meaningfulness of conclusion drawn from study findings (Orodho, 2009). Thus, validity

indicates the extent to which study outcome are a true picture of the actual and if the outcomes may be extrapolated further than sample employed.

This analysis used content validity as a measurement of how well collected gathered with a given study tool's portrayed a specific domain or content of a specific idea. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2012), the standard technique for evaluating the content validity of a measure is to engage a practitioner or specialist in a specific sector. The occurrence of correlation between the measures and the in linked domains undermines construct validity.

3.9 Data Analysis

Any study including mathematical or statistical assessment and testing hypotheses is referred to as data analysis. The study tool's yielded both qualitative and quantitative data. The investigator cross checked the surveys tools after gathering data to determine and check if all areas were well captured. The major goal of proofreading was to double-check the accuracy and consistency of the responses. The primary goal of data analysis, that is to establish relevance and interpretations from study findings, was accomplished through data processing (Shamoo & Resnik, 2009).

The data obtained by unstructured tools was coded to offer computer input. Once the final data was verified, it was transferred to the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) for statistical analysis. SPSS Version 20.0 was used to analyse quantitative data. Version 20.0 is more flexible software that permits data modification into multiple forms. Prior data analysis and transformation of the data, the original dataset was maintained. Quantitative research approach was used to present the continuous data; categorical data was analysed using frequency distribution. Inferential statistics was used in assessing association between predictors and predicted factors. Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis were used to test the association. Tables and charts are used to present the findings of the analysis.

3.10 Legal and Ethical Considerations

Resnik (2011) defines legal and ethical considerations as a standard for behaviour that recognises and differentiates between permissible and inappropriate behaviour. Before beginning the investigation, the researcher acquired official approval from Karatina University and the National Commission of Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI). The responses were also given permission by the investigator. The goal of the investigation was communicated to the participants by the investigator. The investigator will also communicate the scientific studies with parties who may be interested in the survey's results. During the study, the investigator adhered to three principles: secrecy, anonymity, and the use of data acquired solely for academic purposes.

4. Results and Analysis

4.1 Response Rate

The sample size of this study was 158 headteachers and 342 teachers in Nyeri and Murang'a counties. Out of the targeted sample, 123 headteachers' and 298 teachers' questionnaires were returned. This

represents a response rate of 77.85% and 87.1% for the headteachers and teachers. This was sufficient for data analysis as per Kothari (2004) who asserted that a success rate of 50% or above is sufficient for analysis.

4.2 Findings of the Study

In this section, the study first presents the demographic and background information followed by the analysis of each objective and finally the inferential analysis.

4.3 Demographic and Background Information

This section provides a profile of the respondents who were included in the study. This is done by presenting characteristics such as the participants' gender, education, and work experience. The study sought to establish the gender of the respondents and found that the majority of headteachers were male accounting for 74.8%. Consequently, the majority of teachers were male accounting for 63.8%. This implies that most teachers in private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties are male.

Table 1: Respondents' gender

	Gender	n	%
Head Teachers	Male	92	74.8
	Female	31	25.2
	Total	123	100.0
Teachers	Male	190	63.8
	Female	108	36.2
	Total	298	100.0

Teacher's qualification is a particular skill or type of experience or knowledge someone possesses to make him or her suitable to teach (Zuzovsky, 2009). The researcher sought information on the respondents' highest level of education attained and presented the results in the table below. Among the headteachers, 6.9% had master's, 34.5% had bachelor's degrees, 45.8% had a diploma while 13.8% reported being holders of a certificate. Among teachers, 13.8% had a bachelor's degree, 37.6% had a diploma, and 48.7% had a certificate as the highest level of qualification. These findings are consistent with Yasin and Khansari (2021) who found education qualification plays a role in the academic performance in a school. According to Rice and Roychoudhury (2003) qualification of the teacher significantly affects the performance of pupils. Similarly, Darling-Hammond (2000) revealed that teacher qualification has a direct effect on the performance of students in different disciplines of learning. Moreover, teacher qualification of the teacher is indicated by the formal education, teaching experience and certification or licensure (Jacob & Lefgren, 2004). Consequently, teachers who meet these requirements tend to boost the academic performance of the pupil. Therefore, we assume schools with more qualified teachers are likely to perform better.

Table 2: Respondents' education achievements

	Education	n	%
Head Teachers	Masters	8	6.9
	Bachelor's Degree	40	34.5
	Diploma	52	45.8
	Certificate	16	13.8
Teachers	Bachelor's Degree	41	13.8
	Diploma	112	37.6
	Certificate	145	48.7

Experience is another criterion used often to measure teacher quality. Berliner and Gage (1976) is of the view that experience accumulated over the years is the most crucial necessary condition for expertise. Rosenholtz (1986) found that inexperienced teachers (those with less than 3 years of experience) are not more effective than more senior teachers but the benefit of experience appears to level off after about five years. Experience is very critical in teaching, management of school and performance of schools. The study examined the work experience among teachers and headteachers. The study found that 32.5% of headteachers had more than 10 years, 24.4% had 5-10 years, and 30.1% had 2-4 years while 13.0% had less than 2 years. On the experience of teachers, 6.4% had more than 10 years, 30.5% had 5-10 years of work experience, 25.5% had 2-4 years while 37.6% had less than 2 years. The study concludes better academic achievements influence the better performance of schools.

Table 3: Respondents' work experience

	Work experience	n	%
Head Teachers	Less than 2 years	16	13.0
	2-4 years	37	30.1
	5-10 Years	30	24.4
	More than 10 years	40	32.5
Teachers	Less than 2 years	112	37.6
	2-4 Years	76	25.5
	5-10 Years	91	30.5
	More than 10 years	19	6.4

Professional development activities can be conducted by many different organizations, in school and out of school, on the job or during a sabbatical leave. On these occasions, practicing teachers update their content knowledge and teaching skills so they can meet the requirements of new curricula, consider new research findings on teaching and learning, adapt to changes in the needs of the student population, and so on. Criticism has been levelled against the episodic nature of these activities and concern is expressed that very little is known about what these activities comprise and involve. Continuous training is critical

in ensuring a professional enhance their skills and increase productivity in line with their work. The study found the majority of headteachers had attended additional training (72%). Some studies on in-service professional development have found no relationship between student achievement in mathematics and reading (Jacob & Lefgren, 2004). Other studies have found higher levels of student achievement linked to teachers’ participation in professional development activities directly related to the area in which they are teaching e.g. mathematics (Brown, Smith, & Stein, 1995; Wiley & Yoon, 1995).

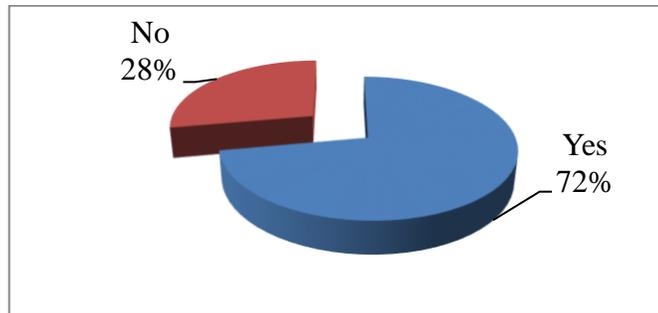


Figure 4: In-service training among headteachers

4.4 Effect of goal Setting and Performance of the Private Primary School

Table 4 shows headteachers’ goal setting and their effect on the performance of private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang’a Counties. This focused on headteachers self-reporting on setting teaching and learning relationships targets, setting strategic planning targets, setting resourcing targets, having a self-development plan, helping the team to set targets of developing others, and helping their school to develop performance targets. According to Noor Aman and Mustaffa (2012), teachers must set a target for classwork for it has a great effect on learners ‘academic achievement.

Table 4: Self-reporting on the use of target setting strategies among headteachers

	Little Extent		Moderate Extent		Great Extent		Very Great Extent	
	Count	Mean	Count	Mean	Count	Mean	Count	Mean
I help teachers to have set teaching and learning relationships targets	0	0.0	7	5.7	8	6.5	108	87.8
The school has set strategic planning targets	7	5.7	0	0.0	8	6.5	108	87.8
The school has set resourcing target	0	0.0	15	12.2	23	18.7	85	69.1
I have personal development targets	0	0.0	15	12.2	30	24.4	78	63.4
I help our team to set targets of developing others	15	12.2	0	0.0	47	38.2	61	49.6
I help our school to develop performance target	0	0.0	0	0.0	23	18.7	100	81.3

Most headteachers (87.8%) reported that they help teachers to have set teaching and learning relationships targets. Most schools (87.8%) according to headteachers had set strategic planning targets (87.8%), set resourcing targets (69.1%), had personal development targets (63.4%), set targets of developing others (49.6%) and helped their school to develop performance target (81.3%). This finding is in agreement with Leithwood & Jantzi (2005) emphasizes that there is a need for leadership and teamwork to facilitate work plan and strategies.

4.5 Teacher Rating of Headteacher’s Target Setting Strategies

Table 5 shows teachers rating on headteachers helps teachers to have set teaching and learning relationships targets, setting strategic planning targets, setting resourcing targets, maintaining school culture and diversity, headteacher personal development targets, helping teams set targets of developing others and helping schools have targets to develop management.

Table 5: Teacher rating of headteacher’s target setting strategies

	Not at all		Little Extent		Moderate extent		Great extent		Very great extent	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Teachers gets assistance to have set teaching and learning relationships targets	0	0.0	7	2.4	14	4.8	93	32.0	177	60.8
The school has set strategic planning targets	0	0.0	7	2.5	0	0.0	85	29.9	192	67.6
The school has set resourcing target	0	0.0	7	2.4	13	4.5	140	48.1	131	45.0
The school has set culture and diversity	7	2.3	6	2.0	57	19.1	71	23.8	157	52.7
Head teacher has personal development targets	0	0.0	14	4.7	28	9.4	96	32.2	160	53.7
We get help from head teacher to set targets of developing others	14	0.0	14	4.7	27	9.1	89	29.9	154	51.7
Head teacher helps our schools have targets to develop management	0	0.0	21	7.0	14	4.7	126	42.3	137	46.0

Most teachers (60.8%) reported that headteachers helped teachers to have set teaching and learning relationships targets. Most schools (67.7%) according to teachers had set strategic planning targets, set resourcing targets (48.1 %), set culture and diversity in schools (52.7%), teachers’ development targets (53.7%), set targets of developing others (51.7%) and helped their school to develop performance target (46.0%). Data from the SCQASOs responses on the target setting shows that target setting is critical in

the performance as it effectively gives the drive that is needed to remain positive about challenges. Citing SCQASOs Responses;

If you want to succeed, you need to set goals. Without goals, you lack focus and direction. Goal setting not only allows you to take control of your life's direction; it also provides you with a benchmark for determining whether you are succeeding.

The key to great goal setting is falling in love with the process. Pupils' goals are motivated by a sense of excelling well in school. On the other hand, teachers' desire to rate among their peers together with management rewards makes the goal setting and achieving them a noble course.”

“Too often, people get caught up in the outcome. They become consumed with envisioning this outcome, instead of giving enough attention to the day-to-day actions necessary to get there in the first place

Table 6: School performance distributions

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
2016 Average Score	123	224	369	294.27	51.272
2017 Average Score	123	223	372	291.10	50.461
2018 Average Score	110	270	389	332.31	35.462
2019 Average Score	112	270	376	330.48	35.380
2020 Average Score	106	280	370	330.31	29.257
Average score	123	228.50	363.30	310.86	39.507
Valid N (listwise)	105				

The study found performance has been on increase on average among the private schools studied. In 2016, the average score was 294.27 with minimum of 224 score, a maximum of 369 and a standard deviation of 51.272; this deviation implies that there was higher disparity in the 2016 performance among schools. The overall average performance of private schools in the region was explained by a mean of 310.86 and standard deviation of 39.507 which implies that private school’s performance disparity is wide even though their performance is better than public schools.

4.6 Correlation target setting Strategies and Performance of Private Primary Schools

The study sought to establish the nature of the relationship between the independent variable (target setting) and the dependent variables (Performance of private primary schools). This was done using correlation coefficients to test the linearity of the study variables. The study used Pearson Correlation (r) to test whether the relationship between the variables was significant or not at a 95% level of confidence.

Table 7: Association between target setting strategies and performance of private primary schools

Correlations			
		Performance	Target Setting
Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	0.489**
	Sig. (2-Tailed)		.000
	N	123	123
Target Setting	Pearson Correlation	0.489**	1
	Sig. (2-Tailed)	.000	
	N	123	123
**. Correlation is Significant at The 0.01 Level (2-Tailed).			

The correlation between target setting and Performance of private primary schools is implied by $r = 0.489$, with a p-value of 0.000, implying a moderate, positive and significant relationship. Therefore, the target set by headteachers of private primary schools strongly influenced the performance of private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties. For every unit increase in the target setting index, the performance of private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a counties increases by 0.489 units.

8. Summary of the Findings

The goals set and the strategies chosen for goal accomplishment vary according to the level of decision-making. At the group level, teachers can use student performance data to differentiate instruction (Dunn, Airola, Lo, & Garrison, 2013). Teachers first set goals in terms of desired achievement gains or skill attainment. To accomplish those goals, they can (for example) decide to use a specific instructional strategy or form a separate group of students to work on improving a specific skill. At school and board levels, data are used to highlight specific areas for improvement in the school(s), and the strategies chosen often comprise policy decisions or (for example) the allocation of resources or the modification of the curriculum.

Most headteachers reported that they help teachers to have set teaching and learning relationship targets. Most schools according to headteachers had set strategic planning targets, set resourcing targets, had personal development targets, set targets of developing others and helped their school to develop performance targets. Teachers reported that the headteacher helped them to set teaching and learning relationship targets. Most headteachers had set strategic planning targets, set resourcing targets, set culture and diversity in schools, teachers' development targets, set targets of developing others and helped their school to develop performance targets. The correlation between target setting and Performance of private primary schools was a moderate, positive and significant relationship. The target set by the headteacher of private primary schools strongly influenced the performance of private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties.

Targets are set and monitored regularly as new academics strive to establish independent academic identities. What constitutes desirable targets for institutional satisfaction remains opaque to individuals, who turn to generic advice provided by Human Resources Departments that lack disciplinary nuance (Becher & Trowler, 2001). Consideration of the affective dimensions (Clegg, 2008) of a permanent

measurement culture (Davies & Petersen, 2005) is now foregrounded in the literature on academic identities where care and collegiality (Lynch, 2010) are being superseded by individuation (Macfarlane, 2007) and competitiveness. As Ball (2003, p. 216) argues, this requires people to perform in material and symbolic ways in response to systems of control and surveillance rooted not in academics' desires but 'institutional self-interest' (Ball, 2003) as corporatized managerial imperatives overtake virtuous conceptions (Macfarlane, 2007) of academic service.

9. Conclusions and Recommendation of the Study

The study also concluded that the target-setting process significantly contributed to the performance of private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a counties. Headteachers helped teachers to set teaching and learning relationships targets, set strategic planning targets, set resourcing targets, self or staff development targets, and targets of developing others and helped their school to develop performance targets. The study further recommended the management of the private primary schools to enhance the staff management which can be done by improving the value of the organization's staff through motivation, training and improving the working conditions for the staff.

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