

Influence Of A Learner's Behaviour On Academic Achievement Scores In County Secondary Schools Of West Pokot County, Kenya

Julius Chemkenei Koring'ura, Genevieve Wanjala, Ibrahim Simiyu Khatete and Paul Amolo Odundo

University of Nairobi

Abstract

Decimal performance in KCSE examinations of West Pokot County has periodically worried the education stakeholders following wastage of financial and material resources invested in education. The decimal performance has denied the graduates opportunity for admission to higher institution of learning and employment in both public and private organizations. This study has endeavored to investigate learner's behaviors likely to influence academic achievement scores. The study was guided by four objectives which include: determining the influence of class attendance behavior on academic achievement scores in West Pokot County secondary schools; establishing the influence of writing assignment on academic achievement scores in West Pokot County secondary schools; assessing the influence of discussions on academic achievement scores in West Pokot County secondary schools; and examining the influence of studying on academic achievement scores in West Pokot County secondary schools. Learning theory propounded by Dewey in 1916 guided the study and it adopted descriptive research design. The target population was 31,882 students and 1995 teacher. Samples of 432 students and 346 teachers participated in the study while stratified and purposive sampling techniques were used. A questionnaire for students and an interview schedule for teachers were applied to collect data with test-retest used to test the validity and reliability of instruments. Data collected from respondents were analyzed and relationships between the independent and depended variables were established. The study established that class attendance, writing of assignments, engagement in class discussions and studying are behaviors critical in influencing learner's academic achievement. The study recommended 100% class attendance to facilitate efficient and effective completion of syllabuses and writing of assignments regularly and using results to make interventions in appraising performance. The study finally recommended participation of learners in discussions and studying to internalize concepts learnt in a course.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.0 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

During ancient times, behavior was a concern of societies and the youths were trained to develop characters deemed necessary to function effectively in their societies by way of developing and defending communities (David J, 2022). The youths were given training to acquire military skills, fine art, music, and gymnastics among others to serve specific functions. Thus ancient societies had a curriculum in place organized in accordance to age in such a fashion that others come early to serve prerequisite to those that follow and graduations conducted to move to the next level.

In African societies structures had existed which the youths go through from childhood to adulthood to acquire approved characters (Gabriel E. I., 2018). Such structures focus on imparting skills and abilities in meeting varied needs of the community members while focusing on gender roles. Gabriel E.I., (2018) further believed gender roles were defined and each was important in meeting specific needs including survival of the community. He observed that celebrations were used to mark the beginning and end of a training session to allow transition to higher training sessions and graduates qualify to provide certain specific services in the community. The applications of the skills learnt were based in the behavior exhibited by the graduates of the programme. IvyPanda (2020) also observed that current schooling is an exaggeration of the ancient societies' mode of socializing the youths on skills and abilities to effectively serve a community while focusing on goals and objectives which change continuously. The goals and objectives of socialization in schools still serve the same purpose of developing communities and protecting them against threats anticipated.

Behavior is a disposition an individual exhibits while participating in an activity to show expertise, knowledge, experience, heroism, confidence, courage or uniqueness and the intention is to advertise superior

performance which can attract praise and recognition the individual tends to enjoy (IvyPanda, 2020). The finding of IvyPanda(2021) indicates that Behavior is driven by a force within an individual's conscience and maintained to realize desired results. Persistence is a quality of behavior held in high esteem as it leads to realization of results, particularly, when the process calls for sacrifice, commitment and resources (Rabia, A., Najmonnisa, k. and Victoria, J., 2021). Callon (2016) believed communities in the past engaged in varied behaviors to provide for themselves while protecting their interests and lives, indicating that behavior is paramount in providing direction of life of an individual and it requires planning to be effective.

Today technological advances have reduced the world to a global village in the sense that different communities of varied backgrounds now have same goals and objectives with the youths socialized using similar or same curriculum. Today, performance of a learner in school is a requirement used for reward allocation as in recruitment and subsequent employment and placement at higher institutions of learning. To realize the desired performance, a learner's behavior is determinant as it hinges on the individual dispositions which include persistence and commitment in doing an activity. The activities that facilitate achievement of desired performance may include attendance of classes, writing assignments, participating in class discussion and studying.

Performance of KCSE examinations in County secondary schools of West Pokot County are attributed to individual student's behavior in doing educational activities. This study endeavors to identify the learner's behaviors influencing academic achievement scores in county secondary schools of West Pokot County, Kenya.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A learner's performance in KCSE examinations is critical in admission to higher institutions of learning to pursue a course desired. It is also noted that many organizations recruit their staff from a pool of qualified secondary school graduates, indicating the significance of a learner's academic achievement scores in determining placement opportunities. It is therefore required to establish behaviors likely to influence academic achievement scores.

The performance of KCSE examinations in county secondary schools of West Pokot County has registered decimal scores which have been blamed on learners' irresponsible behaviors as observed by Akaranga, S and Simiyu C.P., (2016). The decimal performance in KCSE examinations has denied the graduates university admissions and employment in organizations, which go for higher academic achievers. The graduates have remained jobless, rendering materials and financial resources invested in their secondary school education useless. This means that investment in secondary school education is not only useless but one draining parents/guardians resources without tangible benefits, making them poorer day after day. This situation of unemployed secondary school graduates coupled with poverty arising from useless investment meted in secondary school education triggers despondency, stress, conflicts and death amongst family members. This situation has seen both the youths and elders alike engage in taking of illicit drinks and chewing/smoking substance to feel high and manage stress and suicidal thoughts as found by Shahram,H.,(2015). It is against this background that the study intends to establish behaviors influencing learners' academic achievement scores.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to establish behaviors influencing learner's academic achievement scores in county secondary schools of West Pokot County, Kenya.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was guided by four objectives:

1. To determine the influence of class attendance on a learner's academic achievement scores in county secondary schools of West Pokot County, Kenya.
2. To establish the influence of writing assignments on a learner's academic achievement scores in county secondary schools of West Pokot County, Kenya.
3. To assess the influence of discussions on a learner's academic achievement scores in county secondary schools of West Pokot County, Kenya.
4. To examine the influence of writing organized notes on a learner's academic achievement scores in county secondary schools of West Pokot County, Kenya.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 CLASS ATTENDANCE BEHAVIOR AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT SCORES

A classroom is a place where a school curriculum is implemented with students sited to receive information planned for them in a period of forty minutes for a single lesson or eighty minutes for a double lesson. A school teaching time table is made in such a way that a teacher, curriculum implementer, goes to teach at a specific period of time in a week without interfering with another person's class. According to Reinke, W.M, Herman,

K.C. & Sprick, R,(2011) a classroom is designed in a special way to allow movement of a teacher to reach each learner in class for guidance and marking of responses. Reinke et al, (2011) further elaborated that a classroom is furnished to provide each learner a work place complete with a chair to sit on and a desk to write on while a teacher has a place in front of the class where everyone could see. The teacher has a blackboard/whiteboard for demonstration while delivering the lesson to the learners. The architectural design of the windows allows adequate ventilation in the room for every one inside to enjoy with improved audibility enhanced by optimum reverberations from the walls. The reverberations enable movement of sound in the room that enhances audibility inside while hindering noise from outside. It is therefore believed this situation of a classroom allows learning to take place effectively and efficiently making, it an ideal environment for curriculum implementation.

A study established that Class attendance allows desirable interactions between a learner and a teacher where effective sharing of information takes place (Lukkarinen, A., Koivukangas & Seppala, T.,2016) . Transmission of knowledge and skills from the teacher to the learner is done effectively and efficiently during a single lesson or double lesson, thus making class attendance behavior determinant of academic achievement scores (Lukkarinen et al, 2016). This means the number of lessons attended is directly proportional to a learner's academic achievement scores, all other factors remaining constant.

Academic achievement score = k number of lessons + c

Where k and c are constants

In normal situations a learner is absent from class for one reason or another but an effort is usually made for a recap and affected learner is likely to do more work by way of writing notes and assignments missed in addition to consultations with the subject teacher and colleagues. This means that 100% class attendance allows adequate interaction between a learner and a teacher purporting that all information the teacher had was received and processed for purposes of knowledge and skills acquisition. The advent of Covid-19 has not lessened the role of class attendance since educational institutions have engaged teams, Google meet among other online avenues to allow teacher/learner interactions desired (Ananthachandran, V.,2020)

2.2 WRITING ASSIGNMENTS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Writing assignments is an activity based in cognitive domain, linked to academic performance, and a teacher prepares it at the end of every topic covered to measure the level of knowledge and skills learners acquired (Defazio J., Jones J., Tennant F. and Hook S.A. ,2010). The study of Defazio et al (2010) established that assignments provide a learner an opportunity to comprehend, analyze, apply, synthesize and evaluate knowledge learnt. The subject teacher scores a learner the level of ability in processing knowledge based in cognitive domain.

An assignment is a task given to a student by a teacher to write in a defined period of time and submit it for marking. It is designed to capture all the important areas of work covered in a given topic in such a way that skills learnt are sufficiently practiced and internalized for future use. A study indicated the benefits of writing assignments to include improvement of communication skills, sharpening creativity and imagination levels, widening knowledge base and increasing level of confidence (Rae, 2020). The various levels of cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills are examined as is practicable to provide an exposure to the learner who is given sufficient time to respond (Lokesh B.V., 2022). The findings of Lokesh (2022) observed that mixes of strategies are used to measure the level of skills and abilities of learners in the three domains of learning. Studies indicate that an assignment is a task done within a short time of the day while a homework refers to a task given to be done at home in a period of one day or over a weekend (Anuradha (2021). It is hoped that the learner would consult the reference books, class text, notes, teacher or even colleagues to acquire background information and write the assignments.

Defazio et al (2010) observed that assignment results informs on the knowledge, skills and abilities a learner has achieved from teaching and could be used to recommend for remedial classes or any other intervention mechanisms to assure thorough understanding of the matter. The study further indicated assignments scores could challenge a learner to revise contentious topics thoroughly in preparations for end of term and subsequently end of course examinations respectively (Defazio et al., 2010). Thus assignments serve a litmus test of a learner's understanding of content covered in class which helps to see a teacher's effectiveness in the eyes

2.3 DISCUSSION AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Cashin, W. E. (2011) defines discussion as two-way, spoken communication between the teacher and the students, and more importantly, among the students themselves. Thus discussion can be conceived as a process of sharing ideas/opinions between two or more people with intention of understanding the circumstances surrounding an area of concern in order to agree and make generalization to aid conclusion and determination. It is natural that different people, upon receiving same information, understand it differently and

could provide varied interpretations or explanations which are amalgamated in a class discussion (Gogia G.'2017). This means that discussion is undertaken in educational institutions to obtain varied points of view of each participant concerning an area of study to derive acceptable generalizations that represents knowledge for use in the future. In an earlier study, Alozie, N. M. and Mitchell, C.E. (2014) observed that students with interest to improve their knowledge in their subjects of study form a group discussion and create a timetable for meetings. Students create tasks for discussions chosen from their subjects of interest, particularly topics or sub-topics posing challenges in terms of understanding, are discussed and generalizations derived for knowledge, the study noted. It is believed that each student gets an opportunity to express a point of view concerning a particular area of study in addition to building confidence to present before entire class (Carrasco & Torres Iribarra,(2018). Based on the study of Carrasco & Torres Iribarra,(2018), the group members would consider their individual points of view and opinions to draw generalizations about the area of study, which cumulatively equip them with knowledge and abilities desirable and facilitating effectiveness in writing examinations.

A subject teacher has a responsibility to facilitate creation of group discussions, as an attempt to involve every student in the learning process, and upon providing a task to be discussed, each group engages in a discussion and presents findings to entire class which are used to draw conclusions about the area of study. The teacher creates the time for group discussions and another time for class presentations and discussions to establish the agreed generalization about the subject area. It is observed that discussion is a behavior which aids acquisition of knowledge and skills in the learning process hence impacts on learner academic achievement scores, the primary goal of school stakeholders. It has also been found that online discussions are effective and allows introverts and more female students to participate more compared to the traditional arrangements (Dylan R., 2016). Learners usually engage in discussion prior to writing assignments and examinations in recognition of its significance in equipping them with knowledge, skills and abilities desired.

2.4 STUDYING

Studying is a process where complete devotion of time and energy is dedicated to understand a concept within a topic or subject. Study habits make a learner feel more confident in the quality of work and assured that their work not only reflect knowledge acquired, but time and effort as well (Naar D., 2021). Studying involves reading a topic of interest to gather information about it expected to provide insight needed for application or reproduction during examination writing. Whereas reading is a process of going through a topic repeatedly in order to gain information from it, studying aims at deeper understanding and conceptualization of the topic Kubasiak E.,(2021). The material to read or study is usually a record of notes written during the process of teaching and learning or a text book relevant to a subject of interest.

Notes are the records of work covered in a particular subject of study and students have as many notebooks as there are subjects taken in a course. Notes are written by individual students during the process of teaching to aid engagement and concentration. Subject teachers also prepare notes for their students and allow them to write them out of class mainly for purposes of studying. Organized notes are an investment to a learner's academic work as they allow easy reading and easy to understand hence clear handwriting is a requirement for acquisition of knowledge and skills. During private studies in the library, a learner writes down some notes from an area of interest to supplement those provided in class for purposes of clear understanding of the subject matter during studying process (Kampen M., 2020). In the event that a learner is absent from class for one reason or another, studying of notes would fill the gap of knowledge arising. The student would look for notes from a colleague who attended the classes during his/her absence and writes them in the respective notebooks and study carefully to understand. To clarify areas of concern, the learner could organize for a discussion with a colleague who would share their points of view on the material covered for purposes of understanding.

Regular studying of notes allows a student to internalize concepts in an area of study and organize ideas in a chronological order for purposes of identification and retrieval during discussions (Bernstein L., 2021). The learners would therefore study their notes in preparation of examinations to acquaint themselves with materials covered several months or years back. Well organized studies allow a learner acquire information likely to influence academic achievement scores. The notes are composed of a summary of relevant information about an area of study enabling the reader to cover several topics in a short time and be ready to respond to questions arising from the particular contents.

Writing and studying organized notes is therefore a requirement for higher learner academic achievement scores given their quality of portability and convenience to a student preparing for examinations and such behavior should be developed amongst all students.

2.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study is anchored on learning theory propounded by John Dewey in 1916 who noted that knowledge and skill are useful only imparted to others and not their accumulation for its sake. A professional

teacher should have sufficient curiosity to demonstrate knowledge, incite the learners to imitate and develop intelligence and character. A teacher discusses a subject matter while demonstrating its application in solving problems for learners to appreciate. Upon listening to discussions, the learners enter into consciousness through guidance and acquire some reflection as their teacher to engage in the same discussion. It is observed that discussion will not take place unless the teacher and learner share consciousness. Dewey observed that consciousness was synonymous to a room whose entry is possible through a door which must be opened with a key held by a teacher. While having some consciousness a teacher and a learner could discuss matters visible to them to assure equitable reflection along with contribution with clarifications of process activities. Process activities translate to skills and knowledge of their applications turns abilities cultivated thus enabling the learner to acquire both skills and abilities. Dewey asserted that skills and abilities could be seen in the eye of a learner, confirmed by his/her involvement and disposition in doing or telling/describing a situation at hand. All areas within a packet of consciousness is synonymous to an itemized topic of study. Clarity of such itemized areas of study form an authority in a subject and a student's level of authority, determined by performance, informs the teacher's ability to impart knowledge, skills and abilities. A subject specialist is the one with special ability to impart knowledge and skill to a learner clearly, effectively and effortlessly. Dewey advocated for a professional personnel to handle a teaching service and create individuals, from a pool of young people, who are intelligent, knowledgeable and of superior character. It believed the learner who acquired knowledge and skills has an accompanied feeling of confidence to perform and activity and full of authority and joy.

2.7 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The independent variables of this study include attendance of classes, writing of assignments, engaging in discussions and reading notes while the dependent variable is academic achievement score. The two kinds of variable are related as shown in the organogram below.

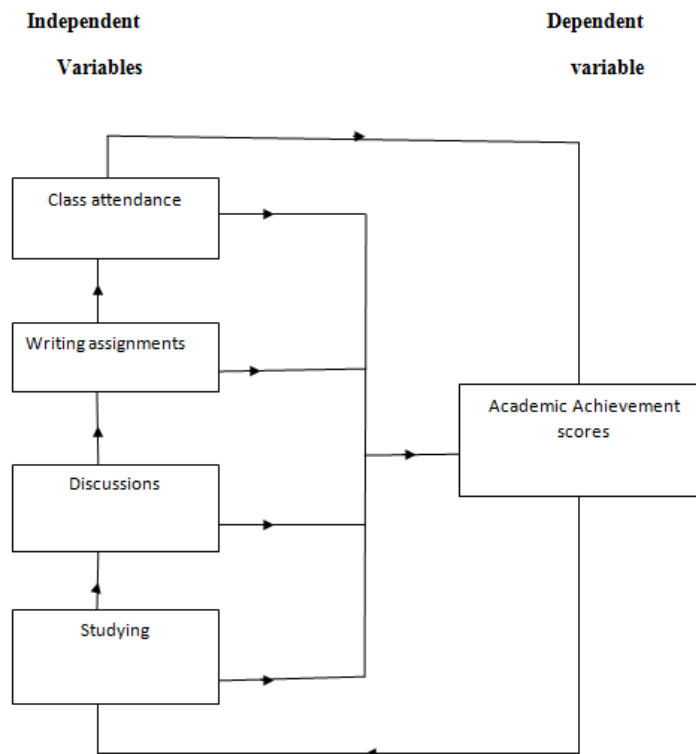


Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework of behavior

Class attendance allows a learner to participate in learning activities which include listening, sharing experiences, answering questions and implementing instructions. Writing assignments on the other hand involves application of knowledge, comprehension, analysis, description, synthesis and evaluation. Discussion is another independent variable which involves engaging in sharing of ideas and applying them in answering questions and finally studying variable entails reading, practicing and memorizing important concepts. Achievement refers to the dependent variable which consists of grades, performance, demonstrations and participations. The intervening variable includes the education policies.

III. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The study employed descriptive research design which allows investigation of activities and their degrees of influence on academic achievement. The target population includes 31,882 students and 1995 teachers of West Pokot County secondary schools. The research instruments included questionnaires for students and interview schedules for teachers. Questionnaires attempted to solicit information from students on specific behaviors intended to promote desired academic achievement while interview schedules for teachers sort to establish teachers' views on the natured behaviors amongst learners. Random and stratified samplings were used to identify respondents. Forms three and four students were considered among the respondents on the basis of their experience on behaviours promoting academic achievement scores in secondary schools. The teachers on the other hand were required to provide information on significance of behaviours usually enforced in schools. According to Jackson, S. L (2009) descriptive research design is commonly represented by use of frequency charts, bar graphs and pie charts to tabulate the information gathered appropriately. Data collected in this study was processed by editing, coding and tabulated to generate information necessary for determination of behavior significance. The validity and reliability of research instruments were assured by use of test re-test technique in two schools which was not used during actual data collection process.

Table 1: Target population of the study

SUB-COUNTY	NO. OF SCHOOLS	STUDENTS	TEACHERS
Kapenguria	48	13,439	726
Pokot South	24	4,500	357
Pokot North	11	2,296	152
Pokot Central	22	3,674	333
Kipkomo	28	7,975	427
TOTAL	133	31,882	1,995

Source: WPC Education office, 2022

Table 2: Sample size of the study

SUB-COUNTY	SCHOOLS		STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	P	S	P	S	P	S
Kapenguria	48		13,439	146	726	8
Pokot South	24		4,500	49	357	4
Pokot North	11		2,296	25	152	2
Pokot Central	22		3,674	40	333	4
Kipkomo	28		7,975	86	427	5
TOTAL	133	103	31,882	346	1,995	23

P- Unit Population

Questionnaire for Students

S- Unit Sample

Section I: Personal information of student

Fill in the spaces indicated with a tick or a cross to correctly describe your responses.

Gender	Male		Female			
Age	15 and below		16-20		21 and above	
Class	F3		F4			

Section II: Behavior and learner's academic achievement

Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree on the significance of class attendance behavior in promoting learner academic achievement.

5-Strongly Agree 4- Agree 3 – Uncertain 2 – Dis-Agree 1- Strongly Dis-Agree

Significance of class attendance behaviour on learners' achievement		Rating scale				
		5	4	3	2	1
1	Class attendance influences completion of syllabus					
2	Class attendance allows sharing of ideas on subject of interest					
3	Class attendance allows giving and taking of instructions					
4	Class attendance enables interaction of a teacher and a learner					
5	Class attendance allows delivery and reception of subject material of interest					

Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree on the significance of writing assignments behavior in promoting learner academic achievement.

5-Strongly Agree 4- Agree 3 – Uncertain 2 – Dis-Agree 1- Strongly Dis-Agree

Significance of class attendance behaviour on learners' achievement		Rating scale				
		5	4	3	2	1
1	Writing assignments provoke the need to study by informing level of knowledge					
2	Writing assignments influence confidence in writing examinations					
3	Writing assignments improve retention of important ideas learnt					

Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree on the significance of discussion behavior in promoting learner academic achievement.

5-Strongly Agree 4- Agree 3 – Uncertain 2 – Dis-Agree 1- Strongly Dis-Agree

Significance of class attendance behaviour on learners' achievement		Rating scale				
		5	4	3	2	1
1	Discussion behaviour allows sharing of ideas					
2	Discussion behavior builds a learner's confidents to present ideas before a group of people or a multitude.					
3	Discussion behavior allows revision of skills and concepts					

Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree on the significance of studying behavior in promoting learner academic achievement.

5-Strongly Agree 4- Agree 3 – Uncertain 2 – Dis-Agree 1- Strongly Dis-Agree

Significance of studying behavior on learners' academic achievement		Rating scale				
		5	4	3	2	1
1	Studying behavior allows additional knowledge on a subject area of interest.					
2	Studying behavior reminds learner important ideas learnt earlier in a course.					
3	Studying behavior improves retention of knowledge acquired in a teaching/learning process					

Interview schedule for teachers

1. Demographic information (peace committees, administration, civil society and women)

- a) What is your gender?
- b) How old are you?
- c) What is your professional status?
- d) What is your responsibility?
- e) What is your qualification?
- f) What is your experience in teaching?
- g) What subject(s) do you teach?

2. Learner's behavior and academic achievement

- a) What is the position of class attendance of your students?(30%, 50%, 70%, 100)
- b) How does class attendance influence a learner's academic achievement scores?(Receives desired knowledge, practice skills learnt in discussions, receive desired instructions)
- c) How do your students respond to assignment? (dislike, welcome, uncertain)
- d) What role do assignments serve? (measures ability, facilitate intervention, facilitate studying)
- e) How often do you engage your students in discussions?(daily, weekly, monthly)
- f) How class discussions influence a learner's academic achievement?(Improves confidence, facilitates understanding, Increases knowledge)
- g) How often do your students engage in studying your subject(s)?(daily, weekly, monthly)
- h) What is the significance of studying in relation to a learner's academic achievement?(improves recall, increases knowledge, improves understanding)

IV. STUDY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Demographic Characteristics

The demographic data indicate gender disparity with 62.3% males and 37.7% female, a situation to be addressed by the County education board to realize gender equality in the future. It is believed cultural practices of the Pokot community, which include FGM practices and early marriages at puberty negatively impact on girl child education as observed in table 3.

Table 3: Gender distribution
Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	269	62.3	62.3	62.3
Valid Female	163	37.7	37.7	100.0
Total	432	100.0	100.0	

The data further indicated 29.9% of students who are 15 years old or below while 68.1% have their ages within the bracket of 16 to 20 years. Only 2.1% of students are 21 years or above as observed in table 4.

Table 4: Age distribution
Age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 15 years or below	129	29.9	29.9	29.9
Valid 16-20 years	294	68.1	68.1	97.9
Valid 21 years or above	9	2.1	2.1	100.0
Total	432	100.0	100.0	

According to Piaget and child development stages, the secondary school students are at the peak of learning behavior that would influence their adult life. This scenario requires that secondary school teachers provide environments appropriate in facilitating learners' acquisition of desirable behaviors which include commitment in attending classes, writing assignments, engaging in class discussions and studying.

Table 5: Class membership
Class

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid F3	207	47.9	47.9	47.9
Valid F4	225	52.1	52.1	100.0
Total	432	100.0	100.0	

According to table 5, there were 47.9% and 52.1% of F3 and F4 students respectively who participated in the study. It is believed such students have done several examinations and passed to earn promotions to senior grades in secondary school level and could be informed of behaviors likely to promote learner academic achievement.

Class attendance Behavior and learner academic achievement

i) Completion of syllabuses

Table 6 indicates 85.4% of respondents believed class attendance influence completion of syllabuses while 12.5% were uncertain and 2.1% were of contrary opinion.

Table 6: Completion of syllabuses
Completion

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	9	2.1	2.1	2.1
Valid Uncertain	54	12.5	12.5	14.6
Valid Agree	295	68.3	68.3	82.9
Valid Strongly Agree	74	17.1	17.1	100.0
Total	432	100.0	100.0	

It was observed that regular class attendance allows a learner to be taught all the material contained in the syllabus book and effectively prepares him/her for examinations. Thus class attendance influences academic achievement.

ii) Sharing of ideas

In table 7 there were 79.6% of respondents who believe class attendance allows sharing of ideas in a subject of interest while 19.7% were uncertain.

Table 7: Sharing of ideas
Sharing

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	3	.7	.7	.7
Uncertain	85	19.7	19.7	20.4
Agree	200	46.3	46.3	66.7
Strongly Agree	144	33.3	33.3	100.0
Total	432	100.0	100.0	

Given that a class is a place where curriculum implementation is done, a learner and a subject specialist can effectively share ideas to facilitate understanding of a subject matter under discussion which influence academic achievement scores.

iii) Giving and receiving instructions

In table 8, there were 76.9% of respondents were of the opinion that class attendance allows giving and receiving of instructions while 22.1% were uncertain.

Table 8: Giving and receiving of instructions
Instructions

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Uncertain	100	22.1	23.1	23.1
Agree	199	46.1	46.1	69.2
Strongly Agree	133	30.8	30.8	100.0
Total	432	100.0	100.0	

A subject specialist is believed to give instructions to students in class to facilitate learning, thus class attendance behavior is a requirement which can influence academic achievement. It is noted that learning takes place inside and outside of class and instructions to write assignments and the books to read are given in a classroom to the advantage of regular class attendees.

iv) A learner and a teacher interaction

In table 9, there were 98.4% of respondents who agree that class attendance allows interactions of a learner and a teacher in the teaching/learning process.

Table 9: Interactions
interactions

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Uncertain	7	1.6	1.6	1.6
Agree	169	39.1	39.1	40.7
Strongly Agree	256	59.3	59.3	100.0
Total	432	100.0	100.0	

The data strongly indicate that class attendance enable a healthy interaction which facilitate learning by way of sharing ideas and subsequent learner academic achievement.

v) Delivery and reception of material

Table 10 indicates 100% of respondents were of the opinion that class attendance allows delivery and reception of subject materials.

Table 10: Delivery and reception of material
Material

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	164	38.0	38.0	38.0
Strongly Agree	268	62.0	62.0	100.0
Total	432	100.0	100.0	

A subject specialist delivers lesson material in class while the students receive. Class attendance would enable both delivery and reception of a subject material to the advantage of a learner while a subject specialist finds a class conducive where all the learners assemble.

The study has established class attendance behavior as a factor influencing learners' academic achievement scores by virtue of enabling completion of syllabuses thus providing opportunity for revisions. It also allows interactions of a learner and a subject specialist which enables exchange and sharing of ideas critical to a subject of discussion to promote understanding of the subject matter delivered/received and acquisition of skills desired.

Writing Assignments Behavior

Writing of assignments is a behavior encouraged in secondary schools to impact on learner's academic achievement scores in some unique ways the study intends to establish.

i. Provoking the need to study

The data in table 11 indicate that 46.8% and 53.2% of respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that writing of assignments provoke the need to study amongst learners.

It is believed that assignment achievement results inform a learner his/her level of ability in a particular subject of study. The need to increase achievement scores in the subject provokes the learner to study widely and engage actively in class and out of class discussion besides being attentive during the process of subject presentation. The learner is likely to be receptive to advice from any quarter and improve performance in examinations, an attribute encouraged in educational institutions.

Table11: Provoking the need to study

Provoking the need to study				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	230	53.2	53.2	53.2
Valid Strongly Agree	202	46.8	46.8	100.0
Total	432	100.0	100.0	

It hereby observed that writing of examinations can mould a learner's character of hard work likely to apply later at workplace.

ii. Influencing confidence in writing examinations

Table 12 records 66% and 34% the number of respondents who strongly agree and agree respectively that writing assignments influence confidence in writing examinations.

Confidence in writing examinations is a requirement for higher academic achievement.

Table 12: Influence confidence in writing examinations

Influence				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	147	34.0	34.0	34.0
Valid Strongly Adree	285	66.0	66.0	100.0
Total	432	100.0	100.0	

Lack of confidence to write an examination creates anxiety and confusion, leading to uncoordinated thinking process and failure to answer questions asked correctly. It is therefore likely that confidence achieved in writing assignment behavior improves learner's academic achievement scores.

iii. Improving retention of important ideas learnt

Table 13 provide 81.3% and 18.8% the number of respondents who strongly agree and agree respectively that writing assignments improves retention of important ideas learnt in an examinable subject.

Table 13: Improving retention of important ideas acquired

Improving retention				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	81	18.8	18.8	18.8
Valid Strongly Adree	351	81.2	81.2	100.0
Total	432	100.0	100.0	

Writing assignments behavior allows a learner to search for answers from books through studying and engaging in discussions on the subject matter. It is believed that through this process, the learner learns and internalizes important ideas, likely needed to answer examinations questions in the future to improve academic achievement scores.

Discussion Behavior

Discussion behavior is encouraged in secondary schools for reasons the study intends to establish, particularly those influencing learner's academic achievement.

i) Sharing of ideas and academic achievement

Table 14 indicates 100% the number of respondents who strongly agree that discussions allow sharing of ideas important in a subject of interest.

Table 14: Sharing of ideas and academic achievement

		Sharing of ideas			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	432	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total		433	100.0		

Discussion behavior provides a learner an opportunity to participate in presenting to a group and also listening to other colleagues presentations. In this situation, learners share ideas they hold about the subject of discussion and expand their knowledge.

ii) Building of confidence to present

Table 15 indicates 65.5% and 28.2% the number of respondent who strongly agree and agree respectively that class discussion builds a learner's confidence to make presentation.

It is believed a class discussion behavior provides a platform to a learner for learning oratory skills for use at present and during work life in the future.

Table 15: building of confidence

		Building of confidence			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Uncertain	27	6.3	6.3	6.3
	Agree	122	28.2	28.2	34.5
	Strongly Agree	283	65.5	65.5	100.0
	Total	432	100.0	100.0	
Total		432	100.0		

Discussions are usually conducted in such a version as to give each participant an opportunity to listen and also to be listened in turns. Such an arrangement could be exploited by learners/participants to acquire knowledge and skills that meet their expectations which may include higher academic achievement.

iii) Revision of skills and concepts

Table 16 provides 68.5% and 31.5% the number of respondents who strongly agree and agree respectively that discussions allow revision of skills and concepts.

Table 16: Revision of skills and concepts

		Revision of skills and concepts			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	136	31.5	31.5	31.5
	Strongly Agree	296	68.5	68.5	100.0
	Total	432	100.0	100.0	
Total		432	100.0		

It is believed that while learners present to a group and also listen to others presenting, they learn a substantial amount of skills and concepts which may be relevant in boosting academic achievement scores. Such skills may include listening skills, speaking fluently, articulating important concepts and asking/answering questions correctly.

Studying behavior

Studying behavior entails a learner reading notes written during class presentation and recommended materials which may include class texts or reference books.

i) Additional knowledge on a subject area of interest

Table 17 indicates 56.2% and 29.4% the number of respondents who hold that studying behavior allows for additional knowledge on a subject area of interest respectively.

Table 17: Additional knowledge on a subject area of interest
Additional knowledge on subject area of interest

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Uncertain	62	14.4	14.4
	Agree	127	29.4	43.8
	Strongly Agree	243	56.2	100.0
	Total	432	100.0	100.0
Total		432	100.0	

Students write notes in a point form during class presentation process in addition to organized notes prepared by the subject expert. These records of work would serve to remind a learner areas of work covered. The learner would always study examinable subjects by reading notes along with class text to assure concurrence. It is believed that studying widely to include reference materials in a library would facilitate addition of new ideas and concepts, thus leading to better understanding of subject matter.

ii) Reminding learner important ideas learnt earlier in the course

Table 18 provides 42.4% and 43.2% the number of respondents who hold that studying reminds learner important ideas learnt earlier in the course respectively.

Table 18: Reminding learner important ideas
Reminding a learner important ideas

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Uncertain	62	14.4	14.4
	Agree	187	43.2	57.6
	Strongly Agree	183	42.4	100.0
	Total	432	100.0	100.0
Total		432	100.0	

Learning is a process that entails the use of various methods of which studying is employed to a reminder of knowledge and concepts learnt earlier in the course. Reading notes, class text and reference materials, while preparing to write examinations, reminds a learner important ideas and concepts that can impact on academic achievement.

iii) Retention of knowledge acquired during teaching/learning process

Table 19 indicates 57.4% and 28.5% the number of respondents who believed studying allows for retention of knowledge acquired during teaching/learning process.

Table19: Retention of knowledge acquired during teaching/learning process
Retention of knowledge acquired

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Uncertain	61	14.1	14.1
	Agree	123	28.5	42.6
	Strongly Agree	248	57.4	100.0
	Total	432	100.0	100.0
Total		432	100.0	

It is believed that studying allows for internalization of ideas or concepts and their storage in the short term and subsequently in the long term memory. This situation enables retention of knowledge which is retrieved during the writing of examination to facilitate achievement of higher academic scores.

Teachers' demographic information

Teachers' demographic information is provided to inform the kind of persons who provided data for the study.

i) Gender

Table 20 indicates 56.9% and 43.1% the number of male and female respondents respectively.

Table 20: Gender distribution
Gender distribution

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	197	56.9	56.9	56.9
Valid Female	149	43.1	43.1	100.0
Total	346	100.0	100.0	

Gender inequality is observed and there is need for the government to address it to ensure employment of teachers consider factors likely to bring about gender parity.

ii) Age

There were 45.1% and 43.4% of respondents whose ages lie within 31-40 and 41-50 years respectively while the minority 2.3% and 9.2% were less than 30 years and 51-60 years respectively as observed in table 21.

Table 21: Age distribution
Age distribution

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 30 years or less	8	2.3	2.3	2.3
Valid 31-40 years	156	45.1	45.1	47.4
Valid 41-50 years	150	43.4	43.4	90.8
Valid 51-60 years	32	9.2	9.2	100.0
Total	346	100.0	100.0	

West Pokot county secondary schools are staffed with energetic teachers, informed by their age distributions in table 21, and could facilitate higher learners' academic achievement in their schools by virtue of engaging them in effective and varied learning activities.

iii) Professional status

Table 22 indicates 100% of respondents are trained teachers.

Table 22: Professional status
Professional Status

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Trained teacher	346	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total	346	100.0		

West Pokot secondary schools are staffed with trained teachers as provided in table 22. The subject experts could effectively guide the learners towards achievement of higher academic scores.

iv)Teacher responsibilities

Table 23 40.2% and 14.5% the number of respondents who were assistant teachers and class teachers respectively while 12.1% were heads of departments and 33.2% heads of subjects.

Table 23: Teachers' responsibilities
Teachers' responsibility

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Assistant teachers	139	40.2	40.2	40.2
Valid Class teachers	50	14.5	14.5	54.7
Valid Heads of department	42	12.1	12.1	66.8
Valid Heads of subject	115	33.2	33.2	100.0
Total	346	100.0	100.0	

Table 23 indicate that assistant teachers and subject heads were the majority who are directly involved in teaching, guiding and counseling students and could influence their academic achievement scores. Class

teachers and heads of departments engage in supervision of learning and teaching activities and could influence academic achievement scores.

v) Teachers' qualifications

There were 90.8 teachers with bachelor's degree and 9.2% holding masters or doctorate degrees as shown in table 24.

Table 24: teachers' qualification
Teachers' qualification

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Bachelors	314	90.8	90.8	90.8
Valid Masters/PhD	32	9.2	9.2	100.0
Total	346	100.0	100.0	
Total	346	100.0		

The secondary schools teachers of West Pokot County are qualified as observed in table 24 and could effectively influence learners' academic achievement scores. Based on their training, they are equipped with pedagogical skills likely to mould learners to products desired in the society.

vi) Teachers' experience

There were 56.6% and 43.1% of respondents with 6-10 and 11 or above years of teaching experience indicating that secondary school students of West Pokot County are under the care of experts who likely to influence their academic achievements.

Table 25: Teachers' experience
Experience

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 5 years or less	1	.3	.3	.3
Valid 6-10 years	196	56.6	56.6	56.9
Valid 11 years of above	149	43.1	43.1	100.0
Total	346	100.0	100.0	
Total	346	100.0		

Learner's behavior and academic achievement scores

The data of various behaviors are hereby presented to establish their relationships with academic achievement scores. It is hoped the findings would inform on behaviors of higher degrees of influence to be promoted in educational institutions.

i) Position of class attendance

Table 26 indicates 50.3% and 26.9% of respondents believe learners attend 70% and 100% of classes respectively while 22.8% of them attend 50% of classes.

Table 26: Position of class attendance
Position of class attendance

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 50%	79	22.8	22.8	22.8
Valid 70%	174	50.3	50.3	73.1
Valid 100	93	26.9	26.9	100.0
Total	346	100.0	100.0	
Total	346	100.0		

The findings inform absenteeism of learners from classes, a factor likely to influence their academic achievement scores negatively. It is observed that learners write examinations unprepared following insufficient material. There would be need to investigate causes of absenteeism amongst secondary school students of West Pokot County and addressed them.

ii) Influence of class attendance on academic achievement

Table 27 provides 35.8% and 32.9% of respondents who hold that class attendance facilitate acquisition of desired knowledge and allows practice of skills learnt respectively. There were 31.2% of respondents who believed class attendance allows reception of instructions from a subject specialist intended to facilitate achievement of higher academic scores.

Table 27: Influence of class attendance
Influence of class attendance

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Receives desired knowledge	124	35.8	35.8
	Practice skills learnt	114	32.9	68.8
	Receive desired instructions	108	31.2	100.0
	Total	346	100.0	100.0
Total	346	100.0		

It is observed that curriculum implementation takes place in a classroom and class attendance is a requirement which could allow a learner to receive all instructions intended. A classroom further provides an environment for sharing ideas through discussions which could likely influence learners' academic achievement, thus making class attendance critical in the life of a student.

iii) Response to assignments

Table 28 indicates 39.3% and 30.9% the number of respondents who dislike and welcome assignments respectively while 29.8 were uncertain.

Table 28: Response to assignments
Response to assignments

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dislike	136	39.3	39.3
	welcome	107	30.9	70.2
	uncertain	103	29.8	100.0
	Total	346	100.0	100.0
Total	346	100.0		

There are many students who write assignments unprepared, based on the data of those disliking assignments together with the uncertain group. Such learners are likely to perform decimally for failure to prepare for the assignments and are only forced by circumstances. It is believed that a learner, who welcomes an assignment adequately prepares for it, and would love to write it to inform his/her ability in the area of study for intervention purposes.

iv) Role of assignments

Table 29 provides 53.2% and 27.7% the numbers of respondents who believe assignments facilitate studies behavior and measures a learner's ability respectively while 19.1% of respondents agree that assignments facilitate interventions.

Table 29: Role of assignments
Role of assignments

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Measures ability	96	27.7	27.7
	Facilitate intervention	66	19.1	46.8
	Facilitate studies	184	53.2	100.0
	Total	346	100.0	100.0
Total	346	100.0		

It is believed that achievement scores informs a learner's ability in a subject which can provide a basis for decision making. Low academic achievement scores may inspire a learner to actively engage in discussions and increase his/her commitment in studies. Likewise a subject teacher may use achievement scores to guide the learner improve performance of certain class activities likely to influence achievement scores positively.

v) Engagement in discussion

Table 30 shows 57.2% and 31.2% the number of respondents who engage in discussions daily and weekly respectively while 11.6% of respondents engage in discussion monthly.

Table 30: Engagement in discussion
Engage in discussion

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Daily	198	57.2	57.2
	weekly	108	31.2	88.4
	monthly	40	11.6	100.0
	Total	346	100.0	100.0
Total	346	100.0		

Discussion, the act of sharing ideas in a group of two or more people, is believed to provide an environment of critical thinking healthy to a learner. By listening and responding to one another in turns, learners are likely to share detailed information of their subject of discussion and the frequency of this kind of engagement could likely influence academic achievement. The daily and weekly discussions as observed in table 30, is believed to motivate participation of learners in the search of information relevant to the subject of interest likely to influence performance in examinations.

vi) Role of discussion in learning

Observed in table 31 are 38.6% and 23.1%, the numbers of respondents who hold discussion improves confidence and facilitate understanding respectively while 38.0% believe discussion increases knowledge.

Table 31: Role of discussion in academic achievement
Discussion and its influence on academic achievement

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Improves confidence	134	38.7	38.7
	Facilitates understanding	80	23.1	61.8
	Increases knowledge	132	38.2	100.0
	Total	346	100.0	100.0
Total	346	100.0		

It is hoped that a learner engaging in a discussion has prior knowledge of the material presented in a manner that allows in-depth investigation and sharing. The data analysis of table 31 suggests that discussion improves confidence of a participant by virtue of providing an opportunity to present to a group and also respond to inspiring questions raised. In an interactive environment of presenting and sharing, a participant would tent to understand an area of discussion, leading to increased knowledge.

vii) Studying engagement

Table 32 indicates 66.8% and 33.2% the numbers of respondents who study daily and weekly respectively.

Table 32: Studying engagement
Studying engagement

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Daily	231	66.8	66.8
	Weekly	115	33.2	100.0
	Total	346	100.0	100.0
Total	346	100.0		

According to findings in table 32, secondary school students of West Pokot County study daily and weekly, a behavior encouraged in educational institutions. It is believed that high frequency of studying could influence a learner's academic achievement scores.

viii) Significance of studying

Table 33 provides 50.6% and 41.3% the numbers of respondents who suggest that studying increases knowledge and facilitates understanding respectively while 8.1% believe studying improves recall.

Table 33: Significance of studying in relation to academic achievement

		Significance of studying			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Improves recall	28	8.1	8.1	8.1
	Increases knowledge	175	50.6	50.6	58.7
	Facilitates understanding	143	41.3	41.3	100.0
	Total	346	100.0	100.0	
Total		346	100.0		

Studying, the act of reading books or notes keenly, is a behavior cultivated in educational institution to provide insight to learners of the material of interest. It is believed that studying would allow a learner acquire new information and have it internalized for purposes of application in other situations, indicating its significance in facilitating understanding and addition of knowledge.

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion the study found that class attendance was among behaviors enforced in educational institutions for its significance of allowing a learner and a teacher interaction in the process of curriculum implementation. A teacher would have the opportunity to meet all learners for a particular class and be able to teach and discuss a subject of interest, in a manner that each participant learner confirms achievement of intended objectives. A class attendance also allows the learners to share ideas among themselves, particularly when writing assignments for practice, an activity likely to enable acquisition of skills and abilities useful in a particular subject. The study also established that writing assignments inculcates, in a learner, the need to study and acquire knowledge necessary to meet expectations. The rigorous nature of writing assignments were believed to instill confidence in writing examinations amongst learners, an attribute that allows thinking widely over a subject of interest. A learner's performance in assignments is a feedback utilized by a subject teacher for purposes of interventions, which may include identification of learners for remedial classes and addressing gaps in teaching/learning resources. The study further learnt that discussion behavior provides learners an environment for sharing ideas in a dialectic manner where reasoning and dialogue are used to investigate truths of a matter. Thus discussion facilitates development of insight amongst learners, an attribute influencing retention of knowledge acquired and clarity in thinking. Finally the study also established that discussions inculcate desire to study, a behavior found to facilitate addition and retention of knowledge amongst participants.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Academic achievement scores are critical in the future life of a learner since they are used as criteria for admissions to higher institution of learning and to specialized programmes. The study made the following recommendations

- 1) The school management should ensure 100% class attendance by all learners to complete the syllabuses as scheduled by education authorities.
- 2) Regular writing of assignments should be made mandatory and no excuses allowed.
- 3) Assignment results should be released, analyzed and intervention taken to address non performance.
- 4) Discussion should be supervised to ensure dialectic method is applied correctly to allow dialogue that inspires learners to be inquisitive and to study.
- 5) Appropriate teaching and learning resources should be at the disposal of all learners and teachers in the school to facilitate writing of assignments and discussions.

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