

Original Research Article

# Influence of Strategic Curriculum Delivery Initiatives on Academic Performance in Kisii County's Public Secondary Schools, Kenya

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**Abstract:** Strategic curriculum delivery initiatives in schools helps in identifying emerging trends and anticipate future challenges, allowing them to prepare and respond proactively so as to bring change in students' academic performance. The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which strategic curriculum delivery initiatives influence academic performance. The study employed a descriptive survey design. Data was analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative data on interview schedules were organized based on research objectives and themes of study. Data was presented using percentages, means and frequency distribution tables for easier interpretation. This study's findings were: The strategic curriculum delivery initiatives have got very good influence on academic performance at national and extra county schools, good at county schools and below average at sub-county secondary schools. The study, concluded that, National and Extra-County secondary schools have very good influence of strategic curriculum delivery initiatives on academic performance compared to county and sub-county secondary schools hence, the influence of the strategic curriculum delivery initiatives varies depending on the category of the school.

**Keywords:** Strategic curriculum delivery initiatives, Academic Performance, Public secondary schools, Kisii County, Kenya.

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## INTRODUCTION

Curriculum delivery entails taking decision about what should be taught, how it should be taught and when it should be taught. It is composed of four main elements which are; teaching, learning, assessment and resource used to teach and learn. Curriculum delivery requires an integrated system that jointly looks at human and physical resources. It aims at looking at the proper and timely coverage of the syllabus, quality teaching and satisfactory learner achievement. In order to achieve these aims of curriculum delivery, teachers use plans of action; curriculum delivery initiatives like peer teaching in secondary school level. Kurian (2008) points out that secondary school education paves way for the learners to get countless career opportunities in their lives with the use of the resources availed to them. As Maiyo (2009) allude, the acknowledged and accepted measures of academic achievement in Kenya are examinations which is seen by good grades and high standard mean scores. The Mayio (2009) study did not look at the issue of regular examination as an initiative under curriculum delivery which was a gap this research filled.

The justification of the variable for this study is supported by eSchool News (2009) which says that education focuses on the individual learner, makes learning available at all times. The main pillars of education starting with curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment, involves student-centered and personalized approach to instruction. That a 21st-century curriculum integrates skills such as communication, collaboration, problem solving, and critical thinking into the core curriculum areas. This led to the need to consider the strategic curriculum delivery initiatives in this study.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Strategic Curriculum Delivery Initiatives on Learners' Academic Performance

Various plans of action; strategic curriculum delivery initiatives are needed to achieve academic goals in an educational institution. According to (Fadzil & Saat, 2013; Schwichow, Zimmerman, Croker & Härtig, 2016), many studies have shown that there are more advantages with practical work as an example of curriculum delivery initiative. These advantages include;

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understanding science concepts, theories, developing knowledge in science and laboratory skills. In the field of science, a booklet on high quality practical activities in science was designed by Roberts (2008). Roberts stated that; “By finding things out for themselves, students achieve a deeper level of understanding and by experimenting with techniques and methods that have enabled the secrets of our bodies, our environment, and the whole universe – to be discovered.” From the reviewed study, it was shown that practical work has many advantages which eventually uplifts the student academic standards. The reviewed study did not look at the effect of more practical work on academic performance which the Kisii study investigated under curriculum delivery initiatives.

Okam and Zakari (2017) also opine that, practical work in science subjects promotes positive attitudes and enhances motivation in a student for effective learning. With this attitude, student academic performance is enhanced especially in sciences (Hinne, 2017). In the study, the researcher was out to find the level at which practical work in sciences is applied in secondary schools (more practical work) as a strategic curriculum delivery initiative influence academic performance. In contrast to the advantages, Abrahams and Millar (2008) have posed some disadvantages of laboratory-based teaching which include inefficient teaching method and inefficiency to represent scientific inquiry and that direct lecturing can be used. The Kisii study findings were contrarily to Abraham and Millar’s since they showed that more practical work leads to a very good academic performance especially in extra County and National schools.

For students to take part in learning, active learning as a teaching method should be used in schools. This method emphasizes that the teacher in his role has an influence on the activity carried out by students in the teaching and learning process. This fosters the activeness of both students and teachers in packaging and managing learning to provide support so that students can be active in the learning process (Hyun, Ediger, & Lee, 2017). The Kisii study looked at the influence of strategic curriculum delivery initiatives on academic performance. The initiatives investigated were peer teaching, group discussion, remedial teaching among others. The reviewed study did not specify the type of active learning.

A study in Saudi Arabia by Kassem (2019) involved two classes of English department freshmen, that is, at the Kingdom of Saudi (KSA) and Shaqra University. It looked at the impact of student-centered instruction on students taking English as a foreign Language. The study findings revealed that a positive impact existed between learner-centered approach and student academic performance. That learner-centered approach is preferred to teacher-centered approach since learners are more involved in the learning process.

Mckean (2014) study on the effects of implementing student-centered learning on academic performance revealed that, academic performance was significantly higher in groups where student-centered approach was applied compared to teacher-centered approach. In Mckean study, experimental research design that establishes the cause of certain phenomena and manipulation of independent variables was adopted. Experiment and test groups, and 60 people chosen randomly, comprised the working group of this study. In contrast, this current study applied descriptive survey design where principals and teachers gave their views concerning the influence of strategic curriculum delivery initiatives on academic performance.

According to Ubulom and Ogwunte (2017), learner-centred approach was very effective in teaching accounting subjects at the secondary school level as than teacher-centered instructional method. It was also confirmed in Rivers State when a study on the influence of teacher-centered and learner-centered methods for instructional delivery of senior secondary schools financial accounting was done. The population for the study comprised 834 accounting teachers in secondary public schools. A sample size for the study was 250 respondents. Among other recommendations given were that learner-centered approach be made compulsory in Rivers State especially in teaching accounting subjects in secondary schools. The learner-centred approaches used in the reviewed study were applied in accounting subjects while the current study used learner centered approaches like peer teaching and group discussion under curriculum delivery initiatives on the influence of academic performance.

The investigation by Ganyaupfu (2013), on the effectiveness of teaching methods on the academic performance of students revealed that, teacher-student interactive method was so effective method of teaching followed by student-centered method. The study used a sample size of 109 undergraduate students from the department of Economic and Business Sciences in the College. The least effective method of teaching was teacher centered approach. The study recommendation was that teachers should use a friendly teaching technique for learners. This necessitated the researcher to find out how the friendly techniques such as group discussion and peer teaching influence academic performance in Kisii County public secondary schools.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) (2021) has a vision to progress as a nation and desires to invest in its youth with the hopes of becoming amongst the leading ranks in the world in science, reading and mathematics, its education system has recently developed (UAE Vision 2021). To achieve the vision, rapid changes in the education system in terms of classroom practices and teacher qualifications have been made by the emirate of Abu Dhabi (McKnight, *et al.*, 2016) and placing more effort on developing necessary skills in 21<sup>st</sup> century and

preparation of students to be well equipped to fit in the modern market. With such insights, the researcher felt that there was need to investigate the influence of strategic curriculum delivery initiatives such as use of more practical work on students' academic performance in public secondary schools, Kisii County – Kenya.

Sshana, Z.J. & Abulibdeh, E.S. (2020) allude that, for students to be responsible and independent, teachers should use student-centered approach as compared to teacher-centered approach of teaching. This is because the world is dynamic. Teachers who dwell on traditional practices such as, the use of a textbook as the only reference and direct lecturing, do not make their teaching relevant to real-life scenarios. The use of learner-centered approach and more so practical, aids in understanding of the concepts. Sshana and Abulibdeh (2020), opines that when teaching and learning is done through practical work, students are motivated, stimulated and therefore, get scientific knowledge and experience leading to improvement in their way of thinking thus improvement in performance. The influence of more practical work as a curriculum strategic initiative on academic performance was investigated in Kisii County. It was confirmed that it has a very good influence on academic performance in extra county and national secondary schools. Hodson's research never specified the category of school, but Kisii did, the gap was filled.

In two secondary schools in South Africa, Tsakeni (2018), looked at the access to effective practical work for physical sciences on learners. The results indicated that with no practical examinations, practical work is underestimated in physical science classrooms, and thus, marginalizing learners. Tsakeni confirmed that the agenda of social justice due to the high expectations linked to studying physical sciences was contributed by limited access. The support of practical work was to be done by the tools for instructional leadership and through the processes of assessment as recommended by Tsakeni. The reviewed study was done in South Africa and the current study was done in Kisii County - Kenya.

Research has shown that science subjects carry out practical work for many reasons in schools. These include to keep the interest of students in scientific studies, promote a logical and reasoning method of thought, to promote accurate observation and description, and to apply theories into real-life (Dillon, 2008). In addition, Bryson, Millar, Joseph and Mobolurin (2002) confirms that students' scientific knowledge can be improved through practical work. Hence, the need to study others which are delivery-based curriculum which was done in Kisii County.

According to Abdi (2014), students who were taught through inquiry-based learning attained higher scores than those who were taught through traditional methods. This was confirmed in a study conducted over

a duration of eight weeks on a group of forty pupils of grade five, selected through purposive sampling from two different classes. The Kisii study used descriptive survey design where 341 teachers and 28 principals gave their views on the influence of strategic planning initiatives on academic performance over a duration of about five weeks.

Even though practical work is good, (Aydogdu, 2015; Boyuk, Demir & Erol, 2010) say that certain problems are experienced in the laboratory which include; lack of information about safety rules, poor techniques followed during experiments, lack of information on glassware and chemicals that are to be used in the experiments; lack of materials needed for experiments, insufficient knowledge for carrying out the experiment and many more. All these problems are under the curriculum delivery initiatives which contribute to low student academic performance. This necessitated the researcher to determine curriculum delivery initiatives used and their influence on academic performance in Kisii County secondary schools. The findings indicated that the influence of the initiative on academics is low in subcounty schools but very high in the extra county and national schools.

According to Bryson *et al.*, (2002), students are supported in their learning by making a link between the domain of observable facts and real objects, on one side and the domain of ideas on the other through the support of practical work. In addition, Dale's Cone of Experience (Dale, 1969) confirmed that, what people read; they only learn, retain, and remember 10%, what they hear 20%, 30% of what they see, 50% of what they hear and see; what they say and write 70% and what they say and do practically 90%. This was verified in teaching science subjects in secondary schools and to ensure students retain much information, students must practically be part of the process. This study was done in UAE used quasi-experimental research design. The participants were divided into control and experimental groups for chemistry and biology subjects which consisted of 49 students each, while the current study done in Kisii County used descriptive survey design and the participants were 341 teachers and 28 principals which could give more realistic conclusion compared to the one in UAE.

According to researchers especially in Europe, there is a strong positive bond between homes and schools which play a very vital role in the development and education of children (Edwards & Alldred, 2000; Richardson, 2009; Sanders & Sheldon, 2009; Sheldon, 2009). More studies still have shown that good cooperation among homes, schools and the communities can lead to better student academic performance as well as to reforms in education system. Sheldon (2009) cites that successful students' have strong academic support from their involved parents and guardians. Furthermore, studies on schools which are effective, where students

are learning and performing well, has consistently portrayed a strong and positive school-home relationship even though these schools often work in a low social and economic neighbourhood (Sanders & Sheldon, 2009; Sheldon, 2009). It is important to note that, effective schools with positive school climate reach out to their students' families with an aim of bringing about good cooperation. Sanders and Sheldon (2009) assert that when there is a strong and positive relationship among parents, students, teachers and the community members, schools become successful. In addition, Dr. Y.S. Deswal, Rekha Rani (2014), Sanders & Sheldon, (2009), state that when the home environment is supportive, all students are more likely to experience academic success. Therefore, the need to examine strategic curriculum delivery initiatives and their influence on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kisii County, Kenya. The use of collaborative learning; parental involvement in student learning in school greatly influenced academic performance at extra county and national schools but lowly at the subcounty schools and fair influence at the county schools.

Epstein (2001, 2009) alleges that among school, family, and community there must be an established partnership. This partnership majorly is to assist students to succeed in their schooling. It also includes the following reasons: assisting teachers with their work, improving school climate and school programmes, assisting families in connecting with others in the school and the community, and developing parental skills and leadership. All the listed reasons are important as parents play an active role in their children' education and keep a strong positive relationship with schools (Maša Đurišić & Mila Bunijevac, 2017). Since the mentioned factors led to better student academic performance, there was need for the researcher to carry out research in Kisii County on which initiatives can be used to enhance academic performance.

According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, (2022), students whose parents stay involved in school have better attendance and behaviour, get better grades, demonstrate better social skills and adapt better to school. The students develop love for long life learning which leads to long-term success. Self-confidence, motivation and academic performance of all children at a particular school improve. While providing improved role models for their children, these parents also ensure that the larger community views the school positively and supports it. They also provide role models for future parent leaders.

Parental involvement in the educational growth of their children is key. And it begins at home with the parents and guardians providing a healthy and safe environment, support, appropriate learning experiences, and a positive attitude towards school. According to Epstein, student's academic performance increases when parents are actively involved in supporting them as well

as the teachers. Thus, the need to find out whether teachers and parents collaborate in academic performance of students in Kisii County.

Over the years, researchers such as Berger (2008), Davies (2021), Epstein (2009), and Henderson and Mapp (2002) have studied parental involvement and its effects on the educational process. Joyce Epstein is a famous researcher of parental involvement, the founder and director of the National Network of Partnership Schools at the University of Johns Hopkins. The numerous studies and work in over 100 publications has empowered her. Epstein focuses on family, school, and community partnership programmes that improve policy and practice of education in an effort to increase student academic performance. From this perspective, research was to be carried out on the influence of strategic delivery initiative on academic performance in public secondary schools in Kisii County-Kenya to confirm whether the outcome may be similar. The findings indicated that parental involvement is below average in subcounty schools, good at the county schools and very good at extra- county and national schools.

Every country in the world has employed curriculum delivery initiatives to shape up its academic excellence. In China, teachers help students to work in groups and provide report to teachers who then correct where necessary. The teachers also teach in groups and after the lesson they critique each other and offer feedback on what they could do better. This helps the students to eventually perform better in their academic performance as they learn their weaknesses earlier enough by sharing with teachers and other students (Bell, 2016). Similarly, Bello, Burkar and Ibi (2016) say that in Nigeria for students to perform well, teachers do regular teaching with high degree of honesty, setting random assessment tests which they mark and give feedback and carefully observe all the rules and regulations pertaining education. This makes students to have enough preparation in advance and in the long run do better academically. There was need to examine initiatives used in other countries such as Kenya to determine the extent to which these initiatives influenced students' academic performance.

According to Pauline Egberanmwun Ehirheme and Titus I. Eze (2021), peer-tutoring technique is an instructional learner-oriented technique whose roots emanate from the theories of social constructivists. Peer tutoring instructional technique entails two students working together in carrying out an academic assignment or learning materials. Kunsch, Jitendra, & Sood (2007) recommend that this instructional method is most suitable for students with different abilities working together. Further, Saga (2013) alludes that this technique involves students instructing each other on an aspect in which one is fully conversant with and the other is an amateur. Selection of a tutor is based on two criteria; one has to demonstrate knowledge of the subject content to

help their low achieving cohorts and must have the quality of promoting low achievers to participate actively in the learning process, give learners room to tackle a question independently before giving help, to encourage as well as giving the right response, (Tella, 2013). Less successful/experienced students are tutored by more successful/experienced students in a collaborative learning experience in which both parties symbiotically gain is what peer tutoring instructional technique entails. The two students gain at the same time because one student may be better in History and another one in Chemistry and they can work together to understand difficult concepts and strengthen their competence in given subjects. The current study findings indicated that peer teaching as a curriculum delivery initiative's influence on academic performance is good at county schools and very good at the other school categories which is different compared to Tella's findings.

The understanding occurs through the natural and physical environment and also through a social interaction with others and via individual constructions. This instructional technique of peer tutoring addresses intricates social and academic challenges of students in a regular class but have different learning abilities without affecting other students. A similar approach is used in Nigeria where by teachers use students to impart knowledge to low achievers in a classroom environment, (Tella 2013). Therefore, there is need to change to a blended approach (peer teaching instructional technique) and move away from teacher dominated technique. Basing on such findings, there was need to examine initiatives used in other countries such as Kenya to determine the extent to which these initiatives influenced students' academic performance.

According to Moyosore (2015), in Nigeria, formative assessment has a positive relationship on students' academic performance. This was confirmed from a study on the effect of formative assessment on students' academic performance in secondary school mathematics. The researcher employed experimental research design. The study sample size was one hundred and twenty (120) Mathematics students selected through purposive sampling in secondary II Art classes in two public schools in Iseyin Local Government of Oyo State. The current study was done in Kisii which used descriptive survey design and applied Slovin formula to get the sample size and since principals and teachers were used in the study as respondents, reliable findings could be found.

For every continuous assessment in school there should be feedback. The feedback makes the learner to identify areas of weakness where improvement needs to be done to better the academic performance. Also, it can serve as an 'eye-opener' to the guardians or parent so as to follow up with the teacher who will plan to meet learner for remedial lessons as well as use guidance if remedial will not work. When this is done, continuous

assessment is viewed as guidance oriented and has to be administered in a specified way. According to the Federal Government of Nigeria -Federal Ministry of Science and Technology as explained in Faleye & Adefisoye, (2016), in the 'Handbook of Continuous Assessment, each school should have a functional committee for continuous assessment to organize for the plan of assessment programs for the school term or year. According to the (Federal Republic of Nigeria as seen in Faleye & Adefisoye, 2016), the chairperson of continuous assessment committee should be Vice Principal (Academic) while the secretary and other key personnel in school for continuous assessment system should be the school counsellor. Assessment committee's work will be to identify the assessment activities in the school for all teachers in the course of the term so as to enhance academic performance.

Performance in academics in South Africa's public secondary schools, is generally below average as empirical evidence shows. In five years, the pass rate of learners in examinations dropped consecutively to 62.2% in 2008 down from 73.3% in 2003 (Pretorius, 2012). Seventy eight percent of students did not have a computer or a library and twenty seven percent did not have adequate running water. Reports from UNICEF indicate that students who reach proficiency in their course work are only 12 - 31 percent of South African students. That two thirds of South African young people, aged 14 -18 are unable to find work since they did not get the preparation they deserve (Nilson, 2016). With these empirical evidences in South Africa, other countries like Kenya; researches of these kind need to be done so as to determine the influence of strategic curriculum delivery initiative on academic performance since performance is low.

Regrettably, some South African teachers also lack proficiency in their teaching subjects. This has resulted to students in South Africa not to meet international benchmarks for Mathematics and Science subjects. The teaching and non-teaching staff also strain greatly because it takes long for school supplies to get to school. A 2009 South African Department of Education study, found that 5.8 percent of female students in secondary schools, students dropped out due to increased rates of teenage pregnancy (Nilson, 2016).

A similar study which was conducted by Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention showed: 15.3 percent of children in South African primary school had undergone violent assaults and robbery. That teachers and principals agreed that children cannot learn in an unsafe environment. Before 1991 there were separate education systems for blacks and whites. Black South Africans were sent to "Bantu" school systems, this promoted black subservience to the whites. These institutions cultivated unequal learning environment based on race. As such many current issues affecting

education in South Africa emanate from this era of neglect and abuse.

To counter this drop-in performance, South Africa has employed various initiatives such as involving stakeholders in matters of education planning, prioritizing teacher professional development, and reviewing of education system (RoK, 2011). According to Nilson (2016), apartheid ended twenty-two years back although a positive change was slow but it was evident. In 2013, a report from UNSECO indicated that the literacy rate among south African school aged youth was at 95%, this was a great improvement and it showed that education in South Africa will improve as teachers gain competence and schools gain the funding they deserve. The current study investigated the influence of the similar initiatives on academic performance but basing on school categories.

As said by Nelson Mandela, “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” As the independent South Africa rediscovers its identity, quality education can be provided to her future’s children. That is why the researcher did research to determine the influence of strategic curriculum delivery initiatives on academic performance can in Kisii County’s secondary schools.

Fareo (2020), did research in Nigeria and revealed that continuous assessments have a positive effect on the performance of students in Biology in secondary schools. Also, it was evident that assessment have key effects on revealing how students get the results on learning from their teachers. Fareo also confirmed that continuous assessment improved most students’ efficacy and confidence about their ability to do well in academic related works. That when students are more involved, they learn more and become confident in their ability to succeed. On the other side, when the feedback from learning indicates that students cannot succeed they are more likely to attempt educational tasks. Continuous assessment builds the confidence of students in their ability to perform better and the better off students will be. The current study revealed that the influence of curriculum delivery initiative on academic performance varies depending on the category of the school.

Assessment of level of the academic performance of students is of great importance in teaching and learning. Assessment provides important feedback on the output of educational goals and objectives. Decision-making process in education can be made basing on assessment of learning outcome as they provide objective evidences. As explained by Bassavanthappa (2009) in Akeem Adigun (2016), good measurement which gives an accurate information, is the basis of a good decision making on educational endeavoursett. In education, assessment determines the level at which students master a content and skills of a

particular subject; Airasian, (2006) as stated in Akeem Adigun (2016).

Continuous Assessment (CA) is an initiative implemented by teachers at classroom level to find out skills, knowledge and the understanding achieved by students in a particular area at a specified duration. Teachers assess students in various ways so as to get multiple tasks and information on what a student knows, understands and can do. Curriculum-based tasks which are taught in the class previously entail assessments. Continuous assessment is a way of evaluation done often or at a specified period in the school academic year. The continuous assessments aim at assessing how much a student has attained content in a given subject matter. Also, it acts as a consistence tool of monitoring the progress of students in academics. This entails data collection which aids in the judgement of values on an object, quality of persons, groups or an event; Ajuonuma, (2007) in Akeem Adigun (2016). The current study investigated on regular examination as an initiative under curriculum delivery while the reviewed study looked at the CA.

The grading system of continuous assessments needs the assessment of the cognitive domain, affective domain and psychomotor domain for a change in behaviours. Evaluation of learners is done from one point to another by using assignments, tests and projects among other school activities. At the end of session/term, tests can determine the performance of learners in a given area. Race (2007) in Akeem Adigun (2016) showed that CA is of great help to a student because it gives students continuous feedback on their progress in school; it also assists students become more self-critical and encourages students to have mastery of content as they work through a subject this improves their academic goals. Adegbeye (2003), in Akeem Adigun (2016), states that students can demonstrate their ability and development periodically through continuous assessment. This is relevant to hard working students as opposed to lazy students.

Akeem Adigun (2016) confirms that, education systems in most African nations, are dominated by a one-short summative type of assessment. For students to transit to the next level, they are to be trained on how to pass examination. In order for these suggestions to be stopped, a broad approach to assessment in terms of flexibility, validity and reliability was done (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2004) in Akeem Adigun (2016). Due to this, CA were introduced in order to get appropriate ways through which academic evaluation impacted on teaching and learning. This assisted teachers in understanding the relevance of continuous assessment to the students’ academic progress.

Through the national policy on education, the Federal Government of Nigeria (2004) in Akeem Adigun (2016) stated that assessment at all levels of education be

liberalized by basing them in whole or part on continuous assessments. This recommendation was arrived at basing on deficiencies which were identified in the nation's methods of assessing students. The traditional system of assessment was more on the cognitive domain as compared to the psychomotor and affective domain. This approach makes students study when they have examinations only, after which they forget memorized facts; (FGN, 2004; Obe, 2005) in Akeem Adigun (2016). Because of these reasons among many more, in 1971, a committee was established for National Policy on Education which recommended the use of CA in Nigerian educational system. To that effect National University Commission (NUC) allocated 30% of the total score of the continuous assessment and 70% end of semester examination of university students.

Consequently, this study also looked into the attitude of teachers on the relevance of continuous assessment to a student's academic performance in Ilorin metropolis-Kwara State and its effects on counselling in twenty-first century. A descriptive survey was adopted in the reviewed study. The population for the study comprised of four hundred and thirty-six (KWTSCOM, 2014) high school teachers in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to select twelve secondary schools out of the available sixty-two. Random sampling technique was used in selecting one hundred and twenty teachers who represented 30% of the entire teachers' population. The findings were: continuous assessment assist students to recall what was learnt, concentrate on difficult areas of a subject and helps learners to identify their areas of strength and weakness. This in the long run leads to improvement in student academic performance. The current study was based in Kisii County Kenya. The target population of 353 principals and 4354 teachers were considered from 353 public secondary schools. Slovin's formula with a margin error of 0.05 was used to sample 28 principals and 341 teachers as respondents, hence the difference between the two studies.

In Uganda, Samson and Allida (2018) revealed that constant assessment is important as it improves a child's academic performance. This was confirmed when they examined the influence of continuous assessment on academic performance in primary schools of the Ibulanku sub-county. Descriptive research design was used in the study and to compliment the information on the influence of continuous assessment on academic performance in primary schools, literature from the library and key informant interviews were used. The conclusion about the study was that continuous assessment significantly and positively related to academic performance, but the teachers of Uganda were not conducting the evaluation as per the required standards. Gholami and Moghaddam (2016) studied on the effect of weekly quizzes on students' final academic performance. The researcher used two groups of 70 students studying in grade two of high school. The first

group received weekly quizzes and the second group took the midterm exams. From the results, it was seen that the first group with weekly quizzes performed better than the second group without quizzes. The results indicated that frequent use of quizzes stimulate practice and review, give the students more opportunities for feedback and have a significant positive influence on students' study time. A similar study was done in Kisii to confirm the outcome but school categories were considered.

According to ROK (2011), education is a major promising path to realize better and more fruitful lives for individuals. This is in line with UNESCO (2014) which describes education as a process of developing human behaviour as it communicates a component of skills, attitudes, knowledge and value for live activities hence it is an organized and a sustained instruction. In order to attain this education and of quality, teachers have tried to use classroom initiatives like teaching methods, disciplining students and students' assessments (Kombo, *et al.*, 2015). Despite of these various efforts by teachers to improve learners' academic grades, poor academic results in Kenya still remain to be a challenge (MOEST, 2013). This low student achievement necessitated the researcher to look into the extent to which curriculum delivery initiatives influence academic performance more so in public secondary schools in Kisii County- Kenya.

Lack of numeracy and desired reading competences result to some students having low learning outcomes in KCSE in Kenya (RoK, 2013). Therefore, there was need to look for strategic curriculum delivery initiatives in schools to alleviate this unpromising trend in outcomes in KCSE as this may make stakeholders dissatisfied with the education system. Through such initiatives the academic performance was seen to improve especially in National and extra county schools.

According to Abuga (2019) Nyabisase Mixed Secondary School in Kisii County, has "three unique schools" in one; boarders' boys, boarders' girls and day scholars. Day scholars are taught separately to enable them catch up with the boarders who normally go for remedial classes in the evening and morning hours. The boys and girls in boarding are also taught separately. This programme has enhanced academic competition in the school; it has given the school a chance to deeply examine every student. It has enabled the girls to perform better than boys. Clearly it can be seen that the mentioned school has a curriculum delivery initiative of managing a population of 1,500 students. It has limited infrastructure but it can deeply examine every student and this has led to better academic performance. For this reason, this study aimed at determining whether such initiatives are applied in other public secondary schools in Kisii County and their influence on students' academic performance.

According to the TSC Circular (2017), "Effective Curriculum Implementation in Learning Institutions," it took an initiative of ensuring that all teachers and heads of institutions are available in school at all times to undertake the assigned teaching and administrative duties. To this effect, the TSC county director ensures that the head of institution grant their teachers with permission and records in the log book once they want to be out of school. County Director of Education is responsible for permitting all heads of institutions in case they want to be out of school. The researcher wanted to find out whether this initiative was being implemented in public secondary schools and its influence on academic performance in Kisii County.

Further, the TSC Circular (2017) states that most activities and conferences organized by KESSHA (Kenya Secondary Heads Association) and KEPSHA (Kenya Primary Schools Heads Association), SACCOs, Unions, Societies, Government Ministries, non – Governmental Organizations and Agencies should be undertaken during weekends and school holidays. These are initiatives to ensure that the teaching resource in public learning institutions is fully utilized; the teachers do not waste students' time by missing school during week days hence syllabus is covered within the required time amounting to good school performance in academics. Indeed, it was being done as the study findings indicated; for example, teachers filled permission sheets to be away.

Other initiatives on curriculum delivery as suggested by (Darling, Andree, Hammond, Richardson, Wei and Opharnos, 2009) are: teachers' meetings whereby they share experiences and ideas in order to perfect teaching. This will make students do well in their final examinations in secondary school; teachers attending in-service courses, providing students with learning resources, encouraging teachers to learn collaboratively and promoting teacher professional learning. In addition, Juma (2011) opined that for schools to perform better academically, the human resource (teachers and support staff) has to be adequate and offer quality services. This can be done through training and achieving some level of motivation in the school. The present study intended to verify if there was capacity building and motivation of teachers Kisii County and to what extent it has imparted on academic performance, a gap was filled in this study.

Ngugi (2012) researched on the effects of tuition on academic performance in Kenya and revealed that there is a positive effect between tuition and academic achievement. Similarly, according to Davis (2017), the use of curriculum delivery initiatives that engage students in groups when assigned a different piece of information which they learn and teach another group, help the student to master the content and eventually pass the examination. It was found that these initiatives were applied in the Kisii county secondary

public schools but academic performance was dismal in subcounty schools unlike the National and extra county schools.

An investigation in Nandi County by Jepketer (2017) on teaching strategies in public secondary schools and their influence on student achievement both in academic and co – curricular activities; revealed a significant positive relation between strategies used in teaching and the performance of students academic. Jepketer achieved this through correlation and regression analysis. Qualitative data collected was analysed using themes. The use of multiple regression analysis revealed that student centered instruction strategy was the most significant. Second last was resource-based instruction strategy and focused instruction strategy was the last. The conclusion from this study was that student-centred instruction strategy proofed to be so vital in improving student academic performance. The researcher looked at the influence of strategic curriculum delivery initiatives on academic performance and not on both academics and cocurricular activities as Jepketer's.

Onderi, Rono, Kiplangat and Awino (2014), did a research in Kericho Sub-county and discovered that factors contributing low performance in secondary schools include: teachers not using verbal reinforcement on students, teachers not attending lessons as expected, using teaching methods which are not learner centered, much workload for teachers thus making them inefficient, poor inter – personal relations, failure to cover syllabi, low motivation in school, poor study habits by students and lateness to school. However, with the current study's aim was to determine the influence of curriculum delivery initiatives on academic performance.

There is need to research on the causes of poor academic performance in Kisii County as illustrated in the Kisii County Education Conference (2014). The report from this conference puts it clearly that students are not performing well in national examinations and there is need to establish the root cause. The question is why are the students not performing well? What is missing in public secondary schools in Kisii County? Which initiatives can be used? The researcher needed to fill this gap.

According to the Laws of Kenya (2013), for effective teaching to take place there must be adequate teaching and learning facilities in the classroom in the schools, motivation of students and teachers, a conducive learning atmosphere, participation in co-curriculum activities, and being equipped with teaching learning resources. This is a challenge however effectiveness in classroom management depends on initiatives used by teachers in teaching their lessons, revision strategies together with students after doing exams, the way indiscipline cases are handled in the school set up especially in the classrooms, and feedback from class



assessments. The researcher wanted to establish whether Kisii County uses the curriculum delivery initiatives like the ones used in developed countries like Ghana, and their influence on academic performance.

Basing on Kenya’s vision 2030, the aim of becoming a middle-income industrialized country may be achieved through education and training as seen in social pillar of Kenya’s Vision 2030 (MODP, 2013). This has a challenge since some of the students’ examination results are of poor quality (KNEC, 2012). This lingers in people’s mind what can be done to alleviate this uncalled for trend in this line of education was a story that had to be explained.

In the year 2018, a candidate committed suicide in Kisii County because of poor performance in the KCSE examinations (Onchari, 2018). This perhaps is due to poor preparations for examinations by the students. Are these students exposed to learner centered methods of teaching including jigsaws/peer teaching, teacher design teams among others? The researcher wanted to establish approaches used in schools and their influence on performance.

**Statement of the Problem**

Research has shown that strategic planning aims at helping educational institutions in identifying emergency trends and anticipated future challenges, which allows them to prepare and respond proactively. This will bring about quality education as supported by National Education Sector Strategic Plan (NEESP) 2018-2022. With all these in place, student academic performance has been so dismal for several years in Kisii County public secondary schools. Many kinds of research which have been done have shown that there is a significant relationship between strategic curriculum delivery initiative and academic performance in secondary schools leading to quality output. The contrary is that the mean deviation for Kisii County in the year 2016 and 2017 was very high (3.420-3.950 = - 0.53) as compared to the national for the two years (3.734-3.980 = -0.246). The average mean standard score for Kisii County was 3.765 less than the average national mean standard score which was 3. 962 (D+). This imply that most students did not do well and were locked out of University since the cutoff grade is a C+. Which initiatives can be adopted and what is their influence on student’s academic performance? This study, therefore, aimed at determining the influence of strategic

curriculum delivery initiatives on academic performance in Kisii County public secondary schools - Kenya.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study adopted the descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey design was used because it describes what is contained at that time in a given context and builds a picture of the current situation. This method is designed so as to get current information or phenomena and help get valid general conclusions from facts discussed (Best & Khan, 2006). The study employed mixed method approach; both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used. The variable used for this research was strategic curriculum delivery initiative. Thus, descriptive survey was designed to explain, analyse and interpret the influence of strategic curriculum delivery initiatives on student academic performance in public secondary schools in Kisii County.

**RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The study objective was; to what extent do strategic curriculum delivery initiatives influence academic performance in Kisii County public secondary schools, Kenya? The study sought to establish the strategic curriculum initiatives undertaken to enhance academic performance. The curriculum strategic initiatives were grouped into teacher-based and student-based curriculum initiatives. Teacher-Based Strategic Initiatives are directly related to the activities that teachers undertake to promote teaching and learning while student-based curriculum initiatives are directly related to the activities that students undertake to acquire more skills and knowledge in the learning process.

**1. Teacher-Based Strategic Curriculum Initiatives**

The study sought to determine how strategic curriculum delivery initiatives do influence Kisii County’s public secondary schools’ academic performance. Teachers had statements on what were the indicators of strategic curriculum delivery initiatives. The statements were to be rated on a scale of one to five where: 1 – inadequate, 2- below average, 3- average, 4- good and 5- very good. Each statement rating was then averaged and a mean, standard deviation was calculated for each category of school. The results are presented in Table (a).

**Table (a): Teacher-Based Strategic Curriculum Initiatives**

Statement	Sub-County		County		Extra-County		National	
	Mean	Std	Mean	Std	Mean	Std	Mean	Std
Teachers’ capacity building.	2.02	.784	3.88	.353	5.00	.00	5.00	.00
Involving teachers in educational activity planning.	2.32	.745	4.18	.385	5.00	.00	5.00	.00
Strict adherence to the time table.	2.31	.885	4.23	.453	5.00	.00	5.00	.00
Teachers’ meeting in learning teams.	2.37	.729	4.2	.144	5.00	.00	5.00	.00
Providing requested teaching/ learning resources.	2.15	.825	4.14	.346	5.00	.00	5.00	.00
Collaborative learning; parental involvement in the students’ learning.	2.04	.813	3.88	.322	4.93	.250	5.00	.00

Table (a) shows that at national and extra - county schools, teacher-based curriculum strategic initiatives which are teachers' capacity building, involvement in educational activity planning, strict adherence to the timetable, teachers meeting in teams, provision of learning resources, and collaborative learning, have got (Mn = 5.00, STD = .00) respectively. This revealed a very good level of strategic curriculum initiatives' influence on performance in the category of Kisii County's national and extra-county public secondary schools. Teachers' capacity building, involvement in educational activity planning, strict adherence to the timetable, teachers meeting in teams, provision of learning resources, and collaborative learning in County public secondary schools have (Mn = 3.88, 4.18, 4.23, 4.2, 4.14, 3.88, and STD= .353, .385, .453, .144, .346 and.322) respectively. This indicated a good influence of the stated strategic delivery initiatives on academic performance in county schools. For sub-county category, levels in; teachers' capacity building, involvement in educational activity planning, strict adherence to the time table, teachers meeting in teams, provision of learning resources, and collaborative learning are: (Mn = 2.2, 2.32, 2.31, 2.37, 2.15, and 2.04, and STD = .784, .745,.885, .729,.825 and .813)

respectively, this means that the influence of these initiatives at sub - county schools is below average.

Referring to Table (a), teacher's capacity building implies teachers getting involved in activities such as marking, attending seminars and workshops. Teachers getting involved in educational activity planning is where teachers decide to plan with students on attending events such as academic tours which may add value to students' academic performance. On the issue of strict adherence to the school timetable, it is also the teacher's initiative to make plans with the students especially the class leaders to remind him/her attend class on time incase s/he is busy with other school matters and/or have make-ups. Teachers' meeting in learning teams starts with an individual teacher during lesson preparation. Further, consultation among teachers in given subject areas is also encouraged for better understanding of a given concept. This may enhance his/her understanding hence benefitting students in class during lesson delivery. A teacher also needs to provide teaching /learning material to the learners more so after covering some topics for thorough mastery of the content hence good academic performance. For slow learners a teacher may involve parents to guide and counsel them and this may add value to students' academic performance.

**Table (b): Component Matrix and Cronbach's Alpha on Teacher-Based Strategic Curriculum Initiatives**

Variable	Component
Teachers' capacity building.	.996
Involving teachers in educational activity planning.	.973
Strict adherence to teachers' time table.	.962
Teachers' meeting in learning teams.	.965
Providing requested teaching-learning resources.	.980
Collaborative learning; parental involvement in students' learning.	.963
<b>Average of teacher-based curriculum delivery initiatives</b>	<b>.986</b>

Table (b) shows that the principal component analysis in the teachers' capacity building is .996; Involving teachers in educational activity planning is .973; strict adherence to teachers' timetable is .962; teachers' meeting in learning teams is .965; providing requested teaching-learning resources is .980, collaborative learning; parental involvement in students' learning .963. All the six variables have a correlation

coefficient more than the recommended minimum .7. Therefore, we can put the variables into one component; teacher-based curriculum delivery initiatives with a correlation coefficient of .986. Analysis of Variance of teacher-based curriculum delivery strategic initiatives among sub-county schools, county schools, extra-county schools and national schools, findings are distributed in Table (c).

**Table (c): Analysis of Variance of Teacher-Based Strategic Curriculum Delivery Initiatives**

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	10991.710	3	3663.903	460.807	.000
Within Groups	2409.168	303	7.951		
<b>Total</b>	<b>13400.879</b>	<b>306</b>			

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of teacher-based curriculum delivery initiatives is shown in Table (c). The hypothesis which further investigated the research question above was;  $H_{01}$ : The strategic curriculum delivery initiatives did not influence academic performance in secondary public schools in the county of Kisii, Kenya. This was the null hypothesis

which was rejected since the significance F change which was 0.000 was less than the level of significance adopted for the study (calculated p-value=.000< p-value = .05). The alternative hypothesis was adopted, that is, the strategic curriculum delivery initiatives have a significant influence on performance in schools. The calculated  $F(3, 306) = 460.807$  was more than the critical

value ( $F = 2.997$ ), thus, indicating differences in the influence of strategic curriculum delivery initiatives on sub-county, county, extra-county, and national schools.

## 2. Student-Based Strategic Curriculum Initiatives

Table (d) shows the descriptive analysis of the student-based curriculum delivery strategic initiatives.

**Table (d): Student-Based Strategic Curriculum Delivery Initiatives, n=307**

Statement	Sub-County		County		Extra-County		National	
	Mean	Std	Mean	Std	Mean	Std	Mean	Std
Extra time(remedial)	4.87	.340	3.96	.202	4.87	.340	5.00	.00
Peer teaching	4.87	.340	3.96	.202	4.87	.340	5.00	.00
Group discussion	2.37	.774	4.02	.144	5.00	.00	5.00	.00
Regular examinations	2.56	.873	4.12	.322	5.00	.00	5.00	.00
Examination feedback	2.36	1.078	4.24	.431	5.00	.00	5.00	.00
Variety of revision Materials	2.32	.945	4.29	.458	5.00	.00	5.00	.00
Use of more practical work	2.15	.825	4.07	.467	5.00	.00	5.00	.00
Supervised preparations	2.15	.825	4.07	.467	5.00	.00	5.00	.00
Regular Monitoring of teachers and student's attendance	2.39	.723	3.99	.103	4.89	.321	5.00	.00

Table (d) shows that extra time (remedial teaching) had (Mn = 4.87, 4.87, 5.00; and STD = .340, .340, .00) at sub-county, extra-county and national schools respectively, and also peer teaching has got (Mn = 4.87, 4.87, 5.00; and STD = .340, .340, .00) at sub-county, extra-county, and national schools respectively. This indicated that remedial teaching and peer teaching initiatives have got a very good influence of academic performance in sub-county, extra-county, and national schools in Kisii County while their influence on academic performance is good at county schools since remedial teaching and peer teaching initiatives have got (Mn = 3.96, STD= .202) respectively. Group discussion, regular examinations, examination feedback, provision of a variety of revision materials, use of more practical work, supervision of preparation, and regular Monitoring of teachers and student's attendance initiatives have got (Mn = 5.00, 5.00, 5.00, 5.00, 5.00, 5.00, 4.89 and STD = .00, .00, .00, .00, .00, .00, .321) respectively at extra-county and national schools. These initiatives have a very good influence on academic performance in extra-county and national schools in Kisii County. At the county schools, group discussion, regular examinations, examination feedback, provision of a variety of revision materials, use of more practical work, supervision of preparation, and regular Monitoring of teachers and student's attendance initiatives have (Mn = 4.02, 4.12,

4.24, 4.29, 4.07, 4.07, 3.99 and STD = .144, .322, .431, .458, .467, .467, .103) respectively, this indicates a good influence of curriculum delivery strategic initiatives. The group discussion, examination feedback, provision of a variety of revision materials, use of more practical work, supervision of preparation, and regular Monitoring of teachers and student's attendance initiatives have got below average influence on academic performance at sub county public secondary schools since they have got (Mn = 2.37, 2.36, 2.32, 2.15, 2.15, 2.39 and STD = .774, .873, 1.078, .945, .825, .825, .723) respectively. On the other hand, the influence of regular examinations initiative on academic performance is average at Sub-County schools (Mn = 2.56, STD = .873).

Table (e) shows factor analysis of student-based strategic initiatives; extra time, peer teaching, group discussion, regular examinations, examination feedback, provision of a variety of revision materials, use of more practical work, supervision of preparation, and regular monitoring of teachers and student's attendance initiatives (.985, .985, .977, .972, .979, .979, .982, .990, .990, .990) respectively. All the nine variables have a correlation coefficient more than the recommended minimum .7. Therefore, the variables can be put into one component; student-based curriculum delivery initiatives.

**Table (e): Factor Analysis Student-Based Strategic Curriculum Initiatives**

Variable	Component
Extra time(remedial)	.985
Peer teaching	.985
Group discussion	.977
Regular examinations	.972
Examination feedback	.979
Variety of revision Materials	.982
Use of more practical work	.990
Supervised preparations	.990
Regular Monitoring of teachers and student's attendance	.990
<b>Student-Based curriculum delivery initiatives average</b>	<b>.995</b>

Analysis of Variance of student-based curriculum delivery initiatives was also done among all categories of schools and the results are in Table (e). It shows the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of student-based curriculum delivery initiatives. The researcher found out that the strategic curriculum delivery initiatives have a statistically significant influence on academic performance in secondary public schools in the county of Kisii, Kenya ( $p = .000 < p = .05$ ). The null

hypothesis stated as  $H_{01}$ : The strategic curriculum delivery initiatives do not influence academic performance in secondary public schools in the county of Kisii, Kenya, was rejected since the calculated significance F change was 0.000 less than the significance level adopted for the study. The alternative hypothesis was therefore adopted; strategic curriculum delivery initiatives influence academic performance in public secondary schools in Kisii County.

**Table (f): Analysis of Variance of Student-Based Curriculum Delivery Initiatives**

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	19647.603	3	6549.201	358.274	.000
Within Groups	5538.798	303	18.280		
<b>Total</b>	<b>25186.402</b>	<b>306</b>			

From Table (f) above, the calculated  $F(3, 306) = 358.274$  is more than the critical value ( $F = 2.997$ ), thus, indicating differences in the influence of strategic curriculum delivery initiatives in sub-county, county, extra-county, and national schools in Kisii County.

Interview schedule was carried out by the researcher, the principals of public secondary schools responded to open questionnaires on how they managed teachers to ensure efficient curriculum delivery. The researcher administered 28 questionnaires to 28 principals, analysed and reported the common themes in Table (g).

Table (g) shows the responses from principals' open-ended questionnaires about the curriculum delivery initiatives to address efficient curriculum delivery. When asked to state the method teachers used to be away, three themes were derived: 20 (71.4%) indicated that teachers

filled permission sheets to be away, 5 (17.9%) said teachers made phone calls and 3 (10.7%) said teachers sent SMSs to the principals informing the principal of their absence from school. 22 (78.5%) of the principals indicated that teachers attended other educational programmes on weekends, 4 (14.3%) during holidays, and 2 (7.1%) during the evenings.

To ensure teachers attended to their official school duties, 15 (53.6%) of the principals said they check teachers' work weekly, 8 (28.6%) of them check teachers' work monthly and 5 (17.9%) check teachers' work daily. Among all the principals, 20 (71.4%) of them incorporated group discussion in the school strategic plan, 18 (64.3%) of the principals incorporated joint examinations in the school strategic plan and 15 (53.6%) of them incorporated team teaching in the school strategic plan. This is as seen in Table (g).

**Table (g): Responses of Principals on Teacher Management Strategic Curriculum Delivery Initiatives**

S/No	Common Theme	Frequency	Percentage
1	Teachers filled permission sheets to be away	20	71.4
2	Teachers made phone calls to be away	5	17.9
3	Teachers sent SMSs to be away	3	10.7
4	Teachers attended other programmes on holiday	4	14.3
5	Teachers attended other programmes on weekends	22	78.5
6	Teachers attended other programmes in the evenings	2	7.1
7	Principals check teachers work daily	5	17.9
8	Principals check teachers work weekly	15	53.6
9	Principals check teachers work Monthly	8	28.6
10	Group discussion incorporated in school strategic plan	20	71.4
11	Joint examinations incorporated in school strategic plan	18	64.3
12	Team teaching incorporated in school strategic plan	15	53.6

From the research findings, 20 (71.4%) of the teachers ask permission to be away by filling in permission sheets, and 5 (17.9%) of the teachers made phone calls while 3(10.7%) used SMSs to communicate to the principals, informing them, they would be away from school. The principals indicated that most teachers 22 (78.5%) attended other educational programmes on

weekends, 4 (14.3%) during holidays, and 2 (7.1%) during the evenings.

The principals had reason why teachers filled in permission sheets so as to be allowed to be away from school. Principal one from a national secondary school said;

The written permission ensures that teachers recover the lessons they miss. It also ensures that the lessons are attended by other teachers thus keeping the students busy. This arrangement is boosting the academic performance of the students even though not all teachers do recover the lessons they miss once they are back making other students to perform poorly sometimes.

Another principal from a sub-county school said;

Written permission ensures that the teacher recovers the missed lesson during an agreed time outside the scheduled teaching time table when the teacher comes back. This helps in boosting syllabus coverage and it places the students at a better position to tackle examination papers hence students performing well academically.

Equally the principals had reasons for making teachers attend other educational programmes on weekends, and during the evenings. A principal from extra-county school explained;

For teachers to attend other educational programmes on weekends and during the evenings, it gives teachers an opportunity to attend to the scheduled work on the school time table. The teachers attend to students maximally. This increases teacher -student contact hours thus improving academic performance.

From another sub- county school, a principal said that teachers do other educational functions during weekends, evenings and holidays to ensure that they are in school throughout in order to cover the syllabus and get enough time for revision but most students still score poorly which is a discouragement to most teachers.

Most principals' ensured teachers attended to their duties by checking their work weekly, a few checked monthly, and a small number do check daily. Principal two from a national secondary school said;

Checking teachers work weekly or daily by rubber stumping learners' notes and assignments and through lesson observations, enables the learners to put more effort as they realize that the administrators are keen on their class work. Also, checking the students' work provides an opportunity to confirm and correct errors made during the lesson, thus avoiding same errors during the examinations hence good student academic performance as others who do not work hard still fail.

From the current study, most principals incorporated group discussion, joint examinations, and team teaching in the school strategic plan. One principal from a county school explained;

For students to do well in their examinations, the principals must incorporate group discussion, joint examinations, and team teaching in the school strategic plan. These help teachers and learners to prepare timely teaching and learning resources. When all these initiatives are well used, the teachers and students share new experiences, gain confidence on how to tackle question leading to good academic performance. The main problem arises when there are no resources to support programmes such as joint examinations which leads to failure.

The researcher carried out inferential statistics and found out that strategic curriculum delivery initiatives have a statistically significant influence on academic performance in secondary public schools in the county of Kisii, Kenya (calculated p- value =  $.000 < p = .05$ ). The null hypothesis stated as  $H_{01}$ : The strategic curriculum delivery initiatives do not influence academic performance in secondary in the county of Kisii, Kenya, was rejected, since the significant F change which was 0.000 was less than the significance level which was adopted for the study. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis; strategic curriculum delivery initiatives influence performance in academics in Kisii County was adopted. Also, the calculated  $F(3, 306) = 460.807$  was more than the critical value ( $F = 2.997$ ), thus, indicating differences on the influence of strategic curriculum delivery initiatives on the performance in schools.

These research findings on influence of schools curriculum delivery strategic initiatives on student performance as indicated by teachers' perception, the strategic curriculum delivery initiatives such as teacher's capacity building, educational activity planning, strict adherence to the timetable, meeting in teams, provision of learning resources, and collaborative learning have got very good influence on academic performance at national and extra county schools, good at county schools and below average at sub-county secondary schools. This is supported by Darling, Andree, Hammond, Richardson, Wei and Opharno (2009) who say that, teachers' meetings enable teachers share experiences and ideas which lead to perfect teaching. Opharno did say about perfect teaching and does not capture the issue of school category as this research did. This will make students do well in their final examinations in secondary school; teachers attending in-service courses, providing students with learning resources, encouraging teachers to learn collaboratively and promoting teacher professional learning. This study also concurs with Dnyandeo & Bawane (2020), who confirmed that collaborative management is important among parents, teachers and other key local stakeholders to help in proper functioning of the school. When the members from the school community are included in the school management committee, they feel part and parcel of the school and most activities will run smoothly thus

student academic performance will be enhanced. In addition, the research findings concur with Juma (2011) who opined that for schools to perform better academically, the human resource (teachers and support staff) has to share their rich experiences for quality services. This can be done through training and achieving some level of motivation in the school. In some schools where resources are insufficient, there is no training which takes place hence making students to perform poorly because the teachers are not motivated.

The research findings also show that, the influence of student based strategic planning initiatives on academic performance is fairer at the county schools than at the Sub-County schools. Initiatives such as teachers' capacity building, educational activity planning, provision of learning resources, and collaborative learning compared to Sub-County schools hence good academic performance. This research finding corroborates Ngugi (2012) who researched on the effects of tuition on academic performance in Kenya and revealed out that there is a positive effect between tuition and academic achievement. Similarly, according to Davis (2017), the use of curriculum delivery initiatives that engage students in groups when assigned a different piece of information which they learn and teach another group, help the student to master the content and eventually pass the examination. Okam and Zakari (2017) also concurs that practical work promotes positive attitudes and enhance motivation among students for learning to be effective in science subjects. With this attitude student academic performance is enhanced especially in sciences (Hinne, 2017).

The researcher found that extra time and peer teaching initiatives have a very good influence on academic performance at sub-county, extra-county, and national schools. Whereas group discussion, examination feedback, provision of a variety of revision materials, use of more practical work, supervision of preparation, and regular monitoring of teachers, and student's attendance initiatives having a very good influence on academic performance at extra-county and national schools. This concurs with (Bell, 2016), who says that in Nigeria teachers teach in groups and after the lesson they critique each other and offer feedback on what they could do better. This helps the students to eventually perform better in their academic performance as they learn their weaknesses earlier enough by sharing with teachers and other students. The only disadvantage this programme needs much time which may not be available for both teachers and students and when students are absent, it hardly works. Similarly, Bello, Burkar and Ibi (2016) say that in Nigeria for students to perform well, teachers do regular teaching with high degree of honesty, setting random assessment tests which they mark and give feedback and carefully observe all the rules and regulations pertaining education. This makes students to have enough preparation in advance and in the long run do better academically. In addition,

Abuga (2019), confirmed that Nyabisase Mixed Secondary School in Kisii County, has "three unique schools" in one; boarders' girls, boarders' boys and day scholars. To enable the day scholars catch up with the boarders, they are taught separately by attending remedial classes in the evening and morning hours. The boys and girls in boarding are taught separately as well. These programmes have enhanced academic competition in the school by making every student in the school to be deeply examined. The girls have academically outshined the boys. In the above school it is clear that it has a curriculum delivery initiative of managing a population of 1,500 students. It has limited infrastructure but it can deeply examine every student and this has led to better academic performance. There was need to examine initiatives used in other secondary schools in Kisii County to determine the extent to which these initiatives influence students' academic performance.

The current study indicates that, group discussion, examination feedback, provision of a variety of revision materials, more practical work, supervision of preparation, and regular monitoring of teachers and student's attendance initiatives influence is good at the county schools and below average at sub-county schools. These research findings rhyme with what Onderi, Rono, Kiplangat and Awino (2014). In their research in Kericho Sub-county they discovered that factors contributing to poor performance in secondary schools include: teachers not using verbal reinforcement on students, teachers not attending lessons as expected, using teaching methods which are not learner centered, much workload for teachers thus making them inefficient, poor inter – personal relations, failure to cover syllabi, low motivation in school, poor study habits by students and lateness to school. Otherwise, if teachers employ the right methods like group discussion and covering the syllabus in time, academic performance will be enhanced as discussed in the current study.

The researcher has revealed that regular examinations initiative is average at sub-county, good at county and very good at extra-county and National schools. This shows that various stakeholders in education not excluding teachers are used in administering examinations which is similar to what is done in South Africa. In addition, regular examination brings about good student academic results as Race (2007) in Akeem Adigun (2016) say that continuous assessment is more important to students because it gives students feedback of their academic progress; assessments make students become self-critical and encourages students to master content as they learn a subject thus achieving success in their academic endeavors. As alluded by Adegbeye (2003) in Akeem Adigun (2016), students are able to show their ability and development periodically through continuous assessment. This works best for hard working students than average learners.

In South Africa students' academics performance in most public secondary schools is generally below average as empirical evidence shows. Within five years the pass rate of students in examinations dropped consecutively to 62.2% in 2008 down from 73.3% in 2003 (Pretorius, 2012). To counter this drop-in performance, South Africa has employed various initiatives such as involving stakeholders in matters of education planning, prioritizing teacher professional development, and reviewing of education system (Rok, 2011). This study concurs with the current study in that teachers support the use of collaborative management in decision making in schools for them to perform better academically.

The utterances made by principal two during the interview schedule about checking students' work by rubber stamping learners' notes so as to improve in academic performance conforms with a study in Nigeria, Ayeni and Akifolarin (2014) who noted that when principals use various administrative initiatives in their schools, they do improve the academic achievements of their students. These initiatives include setting school's vision and mission statements, developing adequate school work plans and analysing the jobs, proper and effective monitoring of the workforce especially teachers, having regular meeting with the staff, effective delegation of duty especially from the senior to the junior members of staff, involving teachers in decision making, bench-marking, having active committee systems and being effective in communicating matters in the school. The only problem is when these plans are not followed as planned due to laziness and biasness.

## CONCLUSION

The strategic curriculum delivery initiatives have got very good influence on academic performance at national and extra county schools, good at county schools and below average at sub-county secondary schools.

## RECOMMENDATION

There is need to look for ways of reviving the strategic curriculum delivery initiatives used in subcounty schools for academic performance to be improved.

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