

# The Effect of Goal Setting Practices on Teacher Performance Appraisal on the Achievements in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in Turkana West Sub-County, Kenya

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**Abstract:** *The performance of public primary schools depends majorly on teacher's performance. Goal setting is critical in performance appraisal since it outlines in advance the goals that an appraisee is expected to achieve. The main purpose of the study was to establish the effect of goal setting practices on achievements in KCPE in public primary schools in Turkana West Sub-County, Turkana County, Kenya. The study was guided by goal setting theory. A descriptive survey design was adopted. The target population was 500 teachers and 71 head teachers. With a sample of 200 teachers and 20 head teachers selected using simple random sampling. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used for primary data collection. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Measures of central tendency and variability were also used to give expected summary of statistics of variables being studied and describe dispersion of scores generated. Multiple regression analysis was used to determine the relationship that existed between the dependent and independent variables. The findings of the study were presented using tables, pie charts and graphs. It emerged that goal setting practices have a significant positive influence on KCPE achievement. The study recommends that goals should be set for teachers and they should link the achievement of such goals with rewards so as to motivate them towards better performance that translates to improved pupils' performance.*

**Keywords:** Goal-setting, Kenya Certificate of Primary Education, performance, performance appraisal, public primary schools, teachers

## 1. Introduction

According to Lunenburg (2011), the secret to success is the successful setting of goals. Whether it's career development, a new sport or a new friendship, we should give ourselves expectations before it ever happens. Setting goals allows us to evolve and develop, to change ourselves in ways we never imagined. We have to realize and feel like we are trying to do something in order to actually feel satisfied. "Progress equals happiness" says Tony Robbins and what we get there is to set targets.

Many times people feel they know how to set targets, but never actually accomplish what they want (Day & Tosey, 2011). One common explanation is that they don't accomplish or inspire their goals. You are far more likely that you will transform time and resources into something that will inspire you, so that your priorities will represent the same momentum. We talk about setting targets to get you out of bed ready to go in the morning. Think of an objective as a fantasy with a time limit. All we have to do now is to develop a blueprint for progress. The same needs to be applied to teachers' performance appraisal so that it can motivate them to perform better, thus increasing the chances of their pupils performing well in their KCPE exams.

### Creating and maintaining Momentum with SMART goals

Objectives are part of every aspect of life and business and provide a sense of direction, motivation and a clear focus. By setting yourself goals, you are setting yourself a goal. A SMART objective is used to guide the setting of the objectives. SMART is defined as an acronym by Werle Lee (2010) as Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and

Timely. A SMART objective therefore includes all these criteria, which helps to focus and increase the chances of achieving this objective.

Specific-Goals that are specific have a significantly greater chance of being accomplished. To make a goal specific, the five "W" questions must be considered:

Who: Who is involved in this goal?

What: What do I want to accomplish?

Where: Where is this goal to be achieved?

When: When do I want to achieve this goal?

Why: Why do I want to achieve this goal?

One general goal is, for example, "I want to become well-shaped" and "I want to get a fitness center membership and work four days a week to become healthier," as a more concrete goal.

Measurable – A SMART objective must have progress measurement criteria. You cannot determine your progress if there are no criteria and if you are on track to achieve your target. To make a goal measurable, ask yourself:

How many/much?

How do I know if I have reached my goal?

What is my indicator of progress?

For instance, building on the above specific objective: I want to have a fitness space membership in my local community center and to work out to be healthier four days a week. I try to lose a pound of body fat every week.

Achievable-A SMART target has to be accomplished and achieved. This helps you to find opportunities to accomplish and strive for this aim. The accomplishment of the objective

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should be generalized to make you feel challenged and well defined enough to accomplish it. Tell yourself, ask yourself: Am I able to achieve the objective with the capital and capacity? Otherwise, what's missing?

Have others succeeded in doing so before?

Realistic-A SMART objective must be realistic and, with the money and time available, the aim can be reasonably accomplished. If you think it can be done, a SMART objective is possibly achievable. Ask yourself: is the purpose practical and accessible? Provided the time and money, will the aim be achieved? Will you devote yourself to the objective?

Timely-A SMART goal has to be tied to timelines and have a starting and end date. There will be no urgency and no desire to accomplish the target if the goal is not limited in time. Ask yourself: Does the time limit for my goal? Where would you want your goal to be achieved?

The goals are described as the end according to Mayse (2016), to which effort is aimed. They are the product of a vision, of the planning and success of what one wishes to do. Objectives are set in all life fields from classrooms to military involvement. The aim offers organization and support to help them to execute their goals. The study says that every good organization or agency requires specific-established strategies which are intended to put individuals and a community together to the highest. It also reveals that targets help an individual excel and motivate the ones who set them.

### Reflection on Goal Setting

Bandura (2012) agrees that a primary motivator is the concept of objectives and self-efficacy, deciding success and the type of expectations people want and their ability to continue to function. The setting of goals and contemplation have had a strong influence on policy (Locke & Latham, 2018). The establishment of priorities is essential to the growth of autonomous learning and allows teachers to recognize what they need to do to enhance their practice.

If the priorities are genuinely influential, they need to be matched at all levels. Offer visibility to the individual employee priorities, departments and organizations. Be open to success towards targets and even struggle to reach goals. Popular awareness of the organization's priorities leads to collaboration, facilitates information exchange and encourages teamwork. It lets staff and departments see how their roles match into the business and helps to ensure that others' success is remembered.

If the goals are really relevant, they must be balanced at all stages. Provide visibility to the goals of specific employees, agencies and organizations. Be open to pursuing goals and even fail to accomplish aims. A popular interpretation of the goals of the organization contributes to cooperation, promotes the sharing of ideas and enables coordination. It lets employees and teams see how their positions integrate into the organization and ensures that the performance of others is heard.

Sahai and Srivastava (2012) studied that the role of setting goals and performance appraisal as a method for talent management. The study found that the method of setting goals provides an attractive and realistic approach to identify objectives and success measurement. In conclusion, the analysis found that setting deadlines provides staff clearer knowledge on what is required of them, while having concrete and quantifiable goals. Choon and Cheng (2016) undertook an analysis to study how employee productivity is influenced by the target set in Singapore. The study showed that establishing goals favorably impacts on the morale of workers and consequently increases operational productivity. The study further shows that the goal is a common idea that involves numerous concepts such as goal, undertaking, timetable, motive, intentions and meaning, as a controller. The study found that organizations often pursue ways to meet their targets. The research has also shown that the setting of targets is known to be a way for all staff to pull in a common way in order to boost results.

Khan and Fasih (2014) published an impact analysis on the success of teachers by creating goals and established that setting goals rises efficiency of teachers. Target setting impacts job efficiency favorably. The purpose of setting targets is to increase teachers' job efficiency, so they cannot work to their full capacity without a target. The principle of aim description suggests certain kinds of aims, such as precise and challenging objectives, which achieve greater results than goals, vague targets or objectives which are clearly achievable.

### Professional Learning and Practice

Professional learning reflects a shift from thought and supposedly 'baggage,' in association with poor-conceived, scattered, single-shoot and decontextualized seminars, to an ongoing learning process which is primarily school-based and specifically connected with the work of teachers. The teacher's competence and skills are strengthened by vocational learning which leads to improved teaching and better teaching. The task is to measure student accomplishment as a direct outcome of clinical learning while these causal influences have been established.

The effects of skilled learning on student success are calculated using different approaches (Van Veen, Zwart & Meirink, 2012) used to compare student outcomes over time and among classes. In nine experiments for instance, the impact of which was calculated by the progress of learners as a result of a vocational school activity was 0.53 to 2.39, with the average of 0.54. Likewise, Timperley et al. (2007) found effect sizes between 0.48 and English and identified a writing job environment in the field of technical training that saw effects sizes of up to 2.1 for those with the lowest scope. The role of performance evaluation on job performance was analyzed by Mbugua, Waiganjo and Njeru (2015). The study reveals that successful success goals should be precise, observable, attainable, practical and timely. The analysis also claimed that the main predictor of the job should be mirrored. The setting of priorities is considered fundamental for organizations, who aim to increase the possibility of individuals and entities working towards achieving goals. They also consolidate specific performance assessment criteria, which everyone knows. The GOK (2009) provides

that all sorts of occupations can always be calculated, even those that are most boring or routine.

Kareithi (2018) notes that the goal of setting is a commonly accepted corporate activity and a highly regarded topic in work environment literature. However, in specialized teaching education the essence is lower. The study indicated that recent research in high schools has shown that teaching provides an opportunity to pay close attention to the objectives of teachers. Teachers' priorities can affect their career development and teaching performance. In conclusion, no substantial change can be achieved without commitment to one's targets.

Dobson (2016) conducted a review into the essence and practice of the analytical environment in the assessment of students. The study concluded that to achieve the objectives of teachers, they should first assume that objectives are important and that they are willing to achieve them. The researcher discovered that goal-setting preparation is nowhere near enhancing university engagement. Objective establishment increases the success of teachers, which in turn enhances the educational attainment of the pupils.

### Research Design

The study adopted descriptive survey design since it is most appropriate for gathering information about people's practices, outlooks or sentiments.

### Study Area

The study will be carried out in Turkana West sub county, Turkana County, Kenya. Turkana West has an area of 1577 Sq. kilometers and a population of 207, 080 persons. The area have seven (7) administrative wards, Letea, Kalobeyei, Kakuma, Nanam, Songot, Lopur and Lokichoggio ward. It borders Uganda on the western side and southern Sudan on the North west side.

### Target Population

In this study, the target population comprised of all the public primary schools in Turkana West Sub-County, Turkana County, Kenya. Under which, the results of this study will be generalized. Therefore target population of this study was 500 teachers and 71 head teachers in the public primary schools in Turkana West Sub-County, Turkana County, Kenya.

### Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

All teachers in the sampled schools formed the sample size. Sample size was 200 teachers and purposive sampling was used to select 20 head teachers from 20 public primary schools giving a total of 220 respondents representing 30% of target population.

### Data Analysis Procedures

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to interpret results. Centralized propensity measures and variability measures were also used to summarize and discuss the dispersion of produced values in anticipated statistics of the studied variables. The relationship between independent variables was calculated by multiple regression tests. The data collection results have been described as graphs. Using frequency tables and maps, data was introduced. The

findings were summarized and organized in a manner that they answered the research questions as per objectives.

The relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables was depicted using a multiple linear regression model:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y represented KCPE Achievement

$X_1, X_2, X_3$  and  $X_4$  Represented goal setting practices,

performance feedback, nature and strategies of performance appraisal and reward system practices respectively.

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ , and  $\beta_4$  Represented the regression coefficients

$\beta_0$  Is the constant

$\varepsilon$  Is the error term

## 2. Findings and Discussion

### 2.1 Response Rate

A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed to the teachers. Out of these, 198 were returned and deemed adequate. This represented a return rate 99.0% (see Table 4.1). Fincham (2008) states that a 60% response rate is appropriate while Mangione (1995) is of the opinion that a response rate exceeding 85% is excellent for questionnaires that are self-filled. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) supports this by observing that 50% rate of response is adequate, 60% to less than 70% is good while response rate of 70% and above is very good. For this study, the response rate of 99.0% is excellent for analysis and generalization of the study findings.

### 2.2 Respondents General Information

#### Gender of the Teachers

The distribution of the teachers by gender is that 56.06% (111) male and 43.94% (87) female. This shows that both genders are adequately presented in the study.

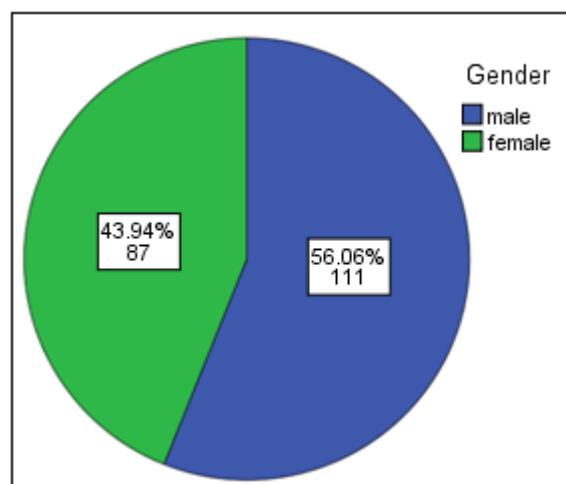


Figure 1: Distribution of the Teachers by Gender  
Source: Field Data (2020)

#### Age of the Teachers

According to the bar graph in Figure 4.2, 36.36% of the teachers are aged 41 to 50 years, 24.75% are aged 31 to 40

years, 25.25% are 30 years and below and 13.64% are over 50 years.

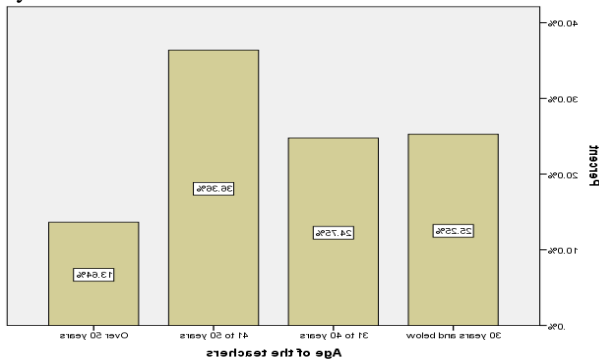


Figure 2: Distribution of the Teachers by Age  
Source: Field Data (2020)

**Working experience of the teachers**

Table 1: Distribution of the Teachers by Working Experience

Working Experience	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
0 to 5 years	29	14.6	14.6
6 to 10 years	70	35.4	50.0
11 to 15 years	78	39.4	89.4
16 years and above	21	10.6	100.0
Total	198	100.0	

Source: Field Data (2020)

Table 1 shows that 39.4% (78), 35.4% (70), 14.6% (29) and 10.6% (21) of the teachers have a teaching experience of 11 to 15 years, 6 to 10 years, 0 to 5 years and 16 years and above respectively.

**Level of Education**

Table 2: Distribution of the Teachers by Level of Education

Level of Education	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
PhD	16	8.1	8.1
Masters	20	10.1	18.2
Bachelors	38	19.2	37.4
Diploma/P1 Certificate	124	62.6	100.0
Total	198	100.0	

Source: Field Data (2020)

Majority of the teachers are diploma/P1 certificate holders as their highest level of education as shown by a response of 62.6% (124); 19.2% (38), 10.1% (20) and 8.1% (16) of the teachers have bachelors, masters and PhD respectively as their highest level of education.

**The effect of Goal Setting Practices on Achievements in KCPE in Turkana West Sub-County**

To achieve this first objective, the study first assessed the nature of goal setting practices and then evaluated how goal setting practices had an effect on achievements in KCPE.

Table 3: Likert Scale Responses on Goal Setting Practices and KCPE Achievements

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
There is goal setting by teachers at the beginning of every period of appraisal	4 (2.0%)	0 (0.0%)	32 (16.2%)	146 (73.7%)	16 (8.1%)
The goals set by teachers have similarities	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	39 (19.7%)	131 (66.2%)	28 (14.1%)
Goals set by teachers are always achieved	4 (2.0%)	8 (4.0%)	87 (43.9%)	87 (43.9%)	12 (6.1%)
Goal setting by teachers gives quantifiable performance objectives giving direction to the achievement expected in KCPE	0 (0.0%)	56 (28.3%)	39 (19.7%)	83 (41.9%)	20 (10.1%)
Goal setting practices positively influences teachers' effectiveness and hence influences achievement in KCPE	0 (0.0%)	16 (8.1%)	63 (31.8%)	84 (42.4%)	35 (17.7%)
Goal setting pulls teachers in the same direction with a view of enhancing achievement in KCPE	0 (0.0%)	17 (8.6%)	50 (25.3%)	69 (34.8%)	62 (31.3%)

Source: Field Data (2020)

According to the findings as reported in Table 3, 73.7% (146) of the teachers agree that there is goal setting by teachers at the beginning of every period of appraisal, 16.2% (32) are undecided, 8.1% (16) strongly agree and 2.0% (4) strongly disagree. The findings also show that 66.2% (131) of the teachers agree that the goals set by the teachers have similarities, 19.7% (39) are undecided and 14.1% (28) strongly agree. On whether the goals set by teachers are always achieved, a combined total of 50.0% (99) of the teachers agree and strongly agree, 43.9% (87) are undecided, 4.0% (8) disagree and 2.0% (4) strongly disagree. The findings also indicate that 52.0% (103) of the teachers agree and strongly agree that goal setting by teachers gives quantifiable performance objectives giving direction to the achievement expected in KCPE, 28.3% (56) disagree and 19.7% (39) are undecided.

These findings are supported by the responses from the interviews with the head teachers who cite existence of goal setting by teachers. For example, an opinion by Head

teacher 8 in support of goal setting by teachers indicated that:

*“Teachers in this school set goals in line with the ministry of education requirements of better performance in the final exams. ”*

Another head teacher (Head teacher 4) in support of setting exam targets stated that:

*“Every year, teachers set KCPE targets that they should achieve with the candidates. Therefore, I can say that there is goal setting in this school. ”*

On whether the goals set by the teachers are usually achieved, the interviews with the head teachers provided mixed responses. For instance, head teacher 11 in support that the goals are achieved stated that:

*“The KCPE targets set are achieved in most cases based on the fact that the performance in KCPE in this school has been improving every year. ”*



Head teacher 1 did not support achievement of the goals set by teachers by stating that:

*“The goals set by teachers, especially the targets in KCPE are not always achieved since they involve different parties such as pupils and parents who also determine a lot of the performance in national exams. If one party fails to play his/her part then the goals set ought not to be achieved.”*

The statement “Goal setting practices positively influences teachers’ effectiveness and hence influences achievement in KCPE” has 42.4% (84), 31.8% (63), 17.7% (35) and 8.1% (16) of the teachers agree, being undecided, strongly agree and disagree respectively. Table 3 also demonstrates that

34.8% (69) and 31.3% (62) of the teachers agree and strongly agree respectively that goal setting pulls teachers in the same direction with a view of enhancing achievement in KCPE, 25.3% (50) and 8.6% (17) of the teachers are undecided and disagree respectively. The significance of these responses was tested using t-test, with an indifference of 3 (undecided) and the findings are as reported in Table 4. All the p-values are less than 0.0001 (see column 5), which is less than 5% level of significance, meaning that the Likert scale responses are significant. From the findings it can be concluded that majority of the teachers are in agreement that goal setting has a significant influence on achievements in KCPE in Turkana West Sub-County.

**Table 4:** T-Test for Significance of Likert Scale Responses on Goal Setting

	Mean	Test Value = 3					
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
There is goal setting by teachers at the beginning of every period of appraisal	3.86	18.954	197	.000	.85859	.7693	.9479
The goals set by teachers have similarities	3.94	22.893	197	.000	.94444	.8631	1.0258
Goals set by teachers are always achieved	3.48	8.898	197	.000	.47980	.3735	.5861
Goal setting by teachers gives quantifiable performance objectives giving direction to the achievement expected in KCPE	3.34	4.770	197	.000	.33838	.1985	.4783
Goal setting practices positively influences teachers’ effectiveness and hence influences achievement in KCPE	3.70	11.478	197	.000	.69697	.5772	.8167
Goal setting pulls teachers in the same direction with a view of enhancing achievement in KCPE	3.89	13.175	197	.000	.88889	.7558	1.0219

Source: Field Data (2020)

Most of the key respondents interviewed seem to support the positive influence of goal setting on KCPE achievement. For example, Head teacher 8 stated that:

*“When teachers set a mean target that will be achieved, they work towards a common goal and ensure that pupils are working towards an improved mean score, thus influencing performance in KCPE.”*

For Head teacher 4

*“Goal setting influences KCPE achievement because when teachers have goals towards high scores in KCPE, they make sure that the pupils work hard so that the goals are realized.”*

Head teacher 11 supported the effect of goal setting on KCPE achievement by stating that:

*“Goal setting provides a clear path of action because the teachers know the performance that is expected of them which ensures that they are efficient and put energy which enhances achievement of good grades in KCPE.”*

According to Bandura (2012), goal setting is an important motivation source and has a powerful impact on action. Locke and Latham (2018) stated that goal setting enhances self-regulated learning capacity and enables teachers to pinpoint what they require to improve performance. Sahai and Srivastava (2012) on the other hand indicate that goal setting process creates a more attractive and objective strategy for defining expectations and performance assessment and conclude that goal setting enhances the creation of objectives that are measurable (quantifiable) providing clearness to the teachers on what is expected from

them. The findings of the study also align with Chong and Cheng (2016) who discovered that goal setting positively influences employee performance and eventually enhances organizational effectiveness. Chong and Cheng (2016) also found that goal setting helps employees pull in a similar way with an aim of increased performance. As Khan and Fasih (2014) found out, goal setting improve the efficiency and effectiveness of teachers influencing performance positively.

### 3. Conclusion and Recommendation

The objective of the study was to assess the effect of goal setting practices on achievements in KCPE in Turkana West Sub-County. More than three quarters of the teachers agreed that there is goal setting at the beginning of every appraisal period and that the goals set by teachers have similarities. Half of the teachers were of the opinion that the goals set by teachers are always achieved. More than half of the teachers agreed that goal setting by teachers gives quantifiable performance objectives giving direction to the achievement expected in KCPE, goal setting practices positively influences teachers’ effectiveness and hence influences achievement in KCPE and that goal setting pulls teachers in the same direction with a view of enhancing achievement in KCPE. The t-test for significance of the Likert scale responses on the effect of goal setting practices on KCPE achievement were all significant implying that goal setting practices significantly influence KCPE achievements in Turkana West Sub-County. Stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education, TSC and school administration should enhance teachers to set goals and link the achievement of such goals with rewards so as to motivate

them towards better performance that translates to improved pupils' performance.

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