



# **Influence of Principals' Supervisory Practices on Teacher Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Tharaka South Sub-County, Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya**

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**Abstract:** *Principals' supervisory practices are vital in enhancing teachers' pedagogical activities and performance. However, in Tharaka South Sub-county, teachers' job performance had been low since many teachers did not cover the syllabus in time, which has led to low academic performance among their students. Thus, this study sought to investigate the influence of principals' supervisory practices on teachers' job performance in public secondary schools. The research was guided by management practice theory and theory of educational productivity. The study applied mixed methodology and adopted a concurrent triangulation research design. Target population was 804 respondents, which comprised 28 principals, 28 Chairs of school BoM, 746 teachers, and 2 Sub-county Directors of Education. A sample of 266 respondents was determined using Yamane's Formula. This consisted of 12 principals, 12 Chairs of school BoM, 240 teachers, and 2 Sub-county Directors of Education. Data analysis began by identifying common themes from the respondents' descriptions of their experiences. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically based on the objectives and presented in narrative form. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages and inferentially using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 25) and presented using tables. The study found that many teachers struggle to complete the syllabus on time, impacting student performance in the KCSE exams. Although principals implement various supervisory activities, these have not significantly improved syllabus coverage or academic outcomes. Thus, principals need to improve and continue their supervisory activities.*

**Keywords:** *Public, Secondary schools, Supervisory practices, Teacher performance, Tharaka*

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## **1. Introduction**

Supervisory practices of principals have long been considered crucial in shaping school performance, influencing teacher effectiveness, and promoting student success. The role of the school principal as a supervisor is pivotal in fostering a conducive learning environment

and ensuring high educational standards. In the USA, principals' supervisory practices typically center on instructional leadership, which includes providing feedback to teachers, setting clear expectations, and supporting professional development (Hallinger & Heck, 2021). According to Leithwood, Harris and Hopkins (2022), effective supervisory practices in the USA include regular classroom observations and fostering

collaborative work among teachers to improve teaching practices and outcomes. In contrast, principals' supervisory practices in France reflect a more centralized, hierarchical approach to school leadership. French principals are often tasked with maintaining order and managing administrative duties, with less emphasis on direct instructional supervision (Bordenave, 2023). However, the extent to which principals' supervisory practices influence teacher job performance in secondary schools is still fully unexplored.

According to Nadeem, Rana, Lone, Maqbool, Naz and Ali (2021), teachers' job performance refers to the work output registered by teachers. This entails syllabus coverage and producing students with quality grades in internal and national examinations. Despite these postulations, the number of teachers who cover syllabus in time and have students who register impressive grades in their internal and national examinations is low. For example, a report by Kimmelman (2022) shows that, in Bangladesh, 57.9% of teachers rarely cover syllabus in time with only 33.8% of their students registering good grades in national examinations. In New Zealand, the scenario is the same and Brandit and Rymenans (2024) note that 49.5% of teachers are not able to cover syllabus in time. This lends credence to the assertions of Ramsey (2023) who contends that, in an organization like the school, teachers and staff tend to live up to the image of the principal, who must be prudent in providing instructional leadership at all times.

In Mexico, principals' supervisory practices have been identified as crucial in shaping teacher behavior. Flores and Nickerson (2020) emphasize that principals who engage in regular classroom observations and provide constructive feedback foster a positive teaching environment. These practices not only improve teachers' instructional methods but also motivate them to strive for better performance. Similarly, in India, research by Singh and Purohit (2021) suggests that principals who prioritize professional development and mentoring contribute significantly to the enhancement of teacher competence. Teachers who receive regular feedback and training tend to exhibit higher levels of commitment and teaching quality.

In Nigeria, studies have highlighted the significance of principals' supervisory roles in improving teacher performance in public schools. According to Okojie (2020), principals in Nigerian schools who demonstrate active involvement in lesson planning, classroom management, and teacher evaluations significantly influence teachers' motivation and effectiveness. Effective communication and leadership by principals were also noted as important factors in improving both teacher morale and classroom outcomes (Adeyemi, 2022).

In Lesotho, research by Mohlakoana and Matsepe (2022) reveals that principals' supervisory practices are essential

for fostering a conducive teaching environment. Principals who engage with teachers through regular monitoring and feedback contribute to professional growth, which translates to improved teacher performance. Likewise, in Rwanda, the role of principals in supporting teachers through continuous supervision is acknowledged as a key to teacher development (Mukamurera, 2021).

Principals' involvement in performance evaluations and their capacity to provide professional guidance help teachers align their practices with educational standards. Kenya has seen considerable research on the impact of principals' leadership styles on teacher performance. According to Mutisya (2020), principals who offer regular classroom observations and timely feedback, as well as encourage teachers' professional development, significantly enhance teacher performance. The findings align with those from Tharaka South Sub-county, where a study carried out by Kamau and Wang'ombe (2022) show that principals who provide adequate resources, engage in instructional supervision, and support teachers' well-being improve teacher performance and job satisfaction. These assertions point to the fact that principals who are actively involved in the supervision and development of teachers contribute to enhanced teaching quality and student achievement. However, in Tharaka South Sub-county, there have been reported challenges of low teacher performance.

For example, a study carried out in Tharaka South Sub-county by Kirimi (2020) found that many teachers do not cover syllabus in time which has led to low academic performance among their students. According to Kirimi (2020), close to 57.8% of teachers in secondary schools in Tharaka South Sub-county do not cover syllabus in time, which has occasioned a drop of 16.4% in their national examinations. These reports point to the fact that teacher performance has been on a low trend which has been a concern for many education stakeholders. This supports the findings of another assessment undertaken by Muriuki (2022) which revealed that timely syllabus coverage remains a big problem with close to 60.9% of them unable to cover their syllabus in time. This has been translated to low academic performance of their students in examinations. Despite these assertions, few empirical studies had interrogated the extent to which principals' supervisory practices influence teacher job performance in public secondary schools, hence the need for this study.

## 1.1 Research Objectives

The study sought to address the following objectives:

1. To assess the status of teacher performance in public secondary in Tharaka South Sub-county.
2. To examine the influence of principals' supervisory practices on teacher performance in public secondary schools in Tharaka South Sub-county.

## 2. Literature Review

Supervisory practices adopted by principals are significant factors in facilitating, improving, and promoting the academic progress of students. Joseph and Jo (2022) posit that instructional supervision refers to actions that a principal takes or delegates to others, to promote growth in student learning. According to Leithwood and Riehl (2023), supervision focuses on improved student achievement through close dynamically shared supervision between principals and teachers who are experts in their subjects. In the words of Lineburg (2023), instructional supervision is committed to the core business of teaching, learning and building a vital community of learners where the school principal serves as the "leader of leaders". Kafka (2021) agrees that there is a discernible relationship between school leaders' actions and student achievement. In practice, this means that the principal deliberately makes instructional quality the top priority of the school and strives to bring that vision to realization. According to Tony and Oduro (2023), a school principal is directly responsible for the quality of education given to learners. Tony and Oduro (2023) also noted that principals have an enormous task of exercising effective instructional supervision which would lead to improved learning and performance of individual learners. To ensure that every student receives the highest quality of instruction each day, Jenkins (2023) asserts that the instructional leader should prioritize shared decision-making, set clear goals, allocate resources prudently, manage curriculum, monitor teaching progress, evaluate teachers regularly to promote student learning, create plenty of room for inquiry and improvement, and support ongoing professional development for staff members. A study conducted by Lyons and Algozzine (2022) noted that the principal is tasked with the responsibility of ensuring that teachers are well equipped, prepared, and apply the best instructional strategies in the classroom when delivering curriculum content. These assertions agree with those of Kruger (2023) who indicated that the principal must provide and coordinate all the school resources and processes to promote student learning, manage the school resources to support and improve teaching, provide supervisory supervision, and empower teachers by including them in decision making. Cotton (2022) also emphasized that the role of instructional leaders include holding high expectations on students and teachers; articulation of a clear vision that the school should embrace; promotion of a conducive instructional climate; clear and open communication with all stakeholders; emphasis on managing curriculum and instruction through supervision of teaching process and monitoring of learner progress; use of data to evaluate students' progress and to make informed decisions for school improvement; and ability to link supervision and evaluations to the provision of continuous teacher professional development.

Effective instructional leaders are servants to a shared vision of success for all students (Okinyi, Kwaba & Nyabuto, 2021). They also participate actively in the instructional process through prioritization of the learners' interest in the school's budget, timely provision of instructional resources, their observations of classroom instruction, and their discussions with teachers about instructional issues, keeping a record of the performance of every teacher through learner averages and subject averages, and interactions with teachers when examining student data (Lineburg, 2023). According to Asuga and Eacott (2023), the instructional leaders use data on student performance to motivate teachers according to their pre-set targets and the abilities of the learners, and also to determine areas of need for staff development and improvement. Teachers who need improvement are facilitated to attend workshops and seminars and to share these ideas with their colleagues (Okinyi et al, 2021). Above all, when milestone achievements are reached, the successful results are celebrated and individual teachers and students are rewarded (Arikewuyo, 2022). Thus, effective instructional supervision is the path to quality teaching and learning.

In public secondary schools in Tharaka South Sub-county, Wanjiru and Mwangi (2021) note that instructional supervision, which includes lesson observations, mentoring, and providing feedback, remains pivotal in enhancing teacher effectiveness. The study highlights that principals who continuously engage with teachers through both formal and informal evaluations tend to cultivate a culture of continuous professional development. In keeping with these assertions, Muthee and Gachahi (2022) carried out a study which revealed that supportive supervision, marked by principals' encouragement and provision of resources, significantly boosts teacher performance. When teachers feel valued and empowered by the support of their supervisors, they often exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction and productivity. The study further noted that, where teachers are actively involved in setting instructional goals and strategies, fosters a sense of ownership and accountability. This, in turn, enhances their performance in the classroom. However, much still needed to be done since Muthee and Gachahi (2022) as did other reviewed studies had not exhaustively interrogated how specific supervisory practices which principals possess influence teachers' performance in public secondary schools.

### 2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the supervisory theory whose proponents were William Taylor and James McGlynn in the year 2010. The principles of supervisory practice are rooted in key elements such as support, feedback, collaboration, and professional development. The primary principle of supervision is to foster a supportive relationship between the principal and the teachers,

aiming for growth rather than merely oversight. Effective supervision does not focus solely on monitoring but actively engages with teachers through constructive feedback and collaborative problem-solving. Another essential principle is the use of clear expectations and goals. Supervisors, especially principals, must set clear, measurable standards for teachers and ensure they have the necessary resources and professional development to meet these standards. Furthermore, supervision in schools should be developmental, focusing on long-term growth rather than short-term evaluations. The principal's role involves guiding teachers through reflective practice, encouraging self-assessment, and offering targeted interventions when needed. This approach shifts the supervisory process from a purely evaluative function to one that is more formative, helping teachers improve their pedagogical skills and classroom management.

In this study, this theory is applicable in various aspects of school leadership. Principals use these practices to monitor and assess classroom performance, provide regular feedback, and guide teachers through professional development programs. For instance, principals might implement classroom observations, where they observe teaching methods, student engagement, and overall classroom dynamics. After such observations, principals can engage in reflective conversations with teachers, offering suggestions for improvement and discussing strategies for addressing challenges. Additionally, professional development programs tailored to the specific needs of teachers, such as workshops, seminars, and peer collaboration, are essential tools for applying supervisory theory. These programs equip teachers with updated knowledge and strategies to improve their teaching methods. By applying principles such as support, feedback, and professional development, principals can foster an environment conducive to continuous improvement. The ultimate goal of supervisory practice is not just to evaluate but to empower teachers, helping them grow professionally while ultimately improving student outcomes. Effective supervisory practices are critical to achieving educational success and fostering a positive, dynamic school culture.

The study was also guided by the theory of educational productivity by Walberg (2012) as a robust foundational framework for evaluating and understanding factors that contribute to educational effectiveness. At its core, this theory highlights a triadic interaction among student characteristics, instructional practices, and environmental factors to determine educational outcomes. Walberg (2012) proposed nine main aspects which impact on learners' educational outcomes. These include learners' ability or prior achievement, motivation, age or developmental level, quantity of instruction, quality of instruction, classroom climate, parental involvement, home environment, peer group, and exposure to mass media outside of school. Walberg

(2012) show that psychosocial characteristics of classroom learning environments demonstrate incremental validity in predicting learner achievement. These traits are useful in curriculum evaluation studies and can provide teachers with useful information to arrange more optimally functioning classrooms. In this study, to increase educational productivity and efficiency, educational process goals as well as achievement goals must be considered. Thus, the relevance of this theory is that educational process goals are interpreted to include learner perceptions of the social environment, creativity, self-concept, participation in extra-curricular activities, and interest in subject matter.

In other words, ignoring these perceptions and experiences in favor of traditional goals measured by test scores would decrease motivation and ultimately lower performance. This theory holds that teachers are examined not only for their pedagogical skills but also for their capability to create a conducive learning environment and facilitate student engagement. By assessing their ability to deliver well-structured lessons aimed at specific learning outcomes, teachers can be guided to improve their teaching techniques. Professional development programs can utilize feedback based on educational productivity principles to help teachers refine their instructional methods. Efficient utilization of instructional time is crucial. Teachers who allocate appropriate durations for engaging with lesson material, discussions, and skill-building activities often see better results. Schools can monitor time-on-task metrics to identify areas where teacher performance might need interventions. The theory advocates tailoring instruction to reflect the diverse aptitudes, motivations, and cognitive styles of students. Teachers who actively assess their students' strengths and challenges and adapt their methods accordingly can maintain higher levels of academic productivity. Since parental involvement and peer influences play significant roles in student achievements, teachers who foster strong communications with families and promote positive peer interactions contribute to better learning conditions. Encouraging teachers to bridge the gap between the school and home environment aligns with boosting educational productivity. Utilizing modern teaching aids, educational media, and innovative resources can further enrich the effectiveness of instruction. Teachers proficient in integrating such tools within their lesson plans demonstrate higher performance levels according to the theory's principles.

### 3. Methodology

The study applied mixed methodology and adopted a concurrent triangulation research design. Target population was 804 respondents, which comprised 28 principals, 28 Chairs of school BoM, 746 teachers, and 2 Sub-county Directors of Education. A sample of 266 respondents was determined using Yamane's Formula.

This comprised 12 principals, 12 Chairs of school BoM, 240 teachers, and 2 Sub-county Directors of Education (TSC & MoE). Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data from teachers, whereas interview guides were used to gather qualitative data from principals, Chairs of school BoM, and Sub-county Directors of Education (TSC & MoE). Data analysis began by identifying common themes from the respondents' descriptions of their experiences. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically based on the objectives and presented in narrative form. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages and inferentially using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 25) and presented using tables. In this study, an ethical clearance certificate was obtained from Mount Kenya University Ethical Review Committee (MKU ERC) before embarking on data collection processes. The researcher undertook to keep private any information given by the respondents that touched on their personal life. The researcher assured the respondents that no private information would be divulged to a third party. The nature and the purpose of the research were explained to the respondents by the

researcher. The researcher explained to the respondents the procedure that would be followed during the data collection so that they could participate willingly. The raw data collected were filed for easy reference. Once the data were analyzed, computer printouts were filed while soft copies were stored in storage devices such as CDs and flash discs.

## 4. Results and Discussion

In this section, findings of the study as per the objectives are outlined besides highlighting presentation of findings as well as discussions.

### 4.1 Response Rates

In this study, 240 questionnaires were administered to teachers, and, in return, 234 questionnaires were filled and returned. In the same token, the researcher interviewed 10 principals, 10 Chairs of School BoM and 2 Sub-county Directors of Education (TSC & MoE). This yielded response rates shown in Table 1;

**Table 1: Response Rates**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Sampled Respondents</b>	<b>Those Who Participated</b>	<b>Achieved Return Rate (%)</b>
Principals	12	10	83.3
Teachers	240	234	97.5
Chairs of School BoM	12	10	83.3
Sub-county Directors of Education (TSC & MoE)	2	2	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>96.2</b>

Source: Field Data (2025)

Table 1 shows that principals registered a response rate of 83.3%, teachers registered 97.5%, Chairs of School BoM registered 83.3% response rate whereas the Sub-county Directors of Education (TSC & MoE) registered a 100.0% response rate. This yielded an average response rate of 96.2%, which is consistent with the assertions of Creswell (2018) that a response rate above 75.0% is adequate. This information was important since it allowed the researcher to generalize the study outcomes to the target population.

### 4.2 Status of Teachers' Job Performance in Public Secondary Schools

The study sought to assess the status of teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Tharaka South Sub-county. This involved assessing how often teachers cover syllabus in time and KCSE performance between 2020 and 2024. Results are shown in Table 2;

**Table 2: Frequency of Syllabus Coverage by Teachers in Public Secondary Schools**

<b>Frequency of Timely Syllabus Coverage by Teachers</b>	<b>Number of Teachers</b>	
	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Often	58	24.8
Rarely	139	59.4
Never	37	15.8

Source: Field Data (2025)

Table 2 shows that most of the teachers, 139(59.4%), rarely cover syllabus in time, 58(24.8%) often do whereas 37(15.8%) never do. During the interviews,

principals also stated that most teachers do not cover syllabus in time. Principal, P1, noted;

*In my school, I have had cases where teachers do not cover syllabus in time to accord students adequate time for revision.*

These findings corroborate the assertions of Hofman and ve Hofman (2015) that, in the Netherlands, a performing or competent teacher is regarded as one who is able to cover syllabus in time and teach a particular subject very well that is, one who perceives his or her teaching competence and believe that they can exert a positive

effect on students' achievement. In the same token, a study carried out in Tharaka South Sub-county by Kamau (2021) highlights that delays in syllabus coverage are most notable during the third term, with many teachers struggling to complete the content before national exams. This trend has been linked to teachers' tendency to focus on exam-centric topics and neglect other essential areas, leading to an incomplete educational experience for students. The researcher further sought to assess the status of performance in KCSE for the last five years (2020-2024) as an indicator of teachers' job performance. Results are shown Table 3;

**Table 3: Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Tharaka South Sub-county between 2020 and 2024**

KCSE Results in Mean Score (Points)	Years of Examination				
	2020 %	2021 %	2022 %	2023 %	2024 %
1-2.9 points (Poor)	40.2	43.5	44.2	47.3	48.9
3-4.9 points (Below Average)	36.9	35.1	34.9	33.5	32.5
5-6.9 points (Fair)	15.4	15.1	14.8	13.7	13.4
7-8.9 points (Good)	5.3	4.4	4.3	3.8	3.6
9-11.9 points (Excellent)	2.2	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.6

Source: Field Data (2025)

Table 3 depicts a decline in academic performance of KCSE over the last five years. These findings are supported by the findings of a report authored by the Ministry of Education (2025), which also shows that KCSE performance has declined in Tharaka South Sub-county. This puts the level of teacher performance in question and the strategies therewith that the principals design to motivate the teachers. Overall, these findings are evidence of the performance of the job by the teachers entailing many facets such as increased efforts towards high yields, innovative measures towards the exploration of new better means towards the performance of duties, improved attitude towards the treatment of the customers, herein the students with courtesy and the performance of the schools generally

towards the teaching of the syllabi and the academic performance.

### 4.3 Principals' Supervisory Practices and Teachers' Job Performance in Public Secondary Schools

The study sought to determine how principals' supervisory practices influence teachers' job performance in public secondary schools. Descriptive data were collected from teachers and summarized into specific thoughts. Results are presented in Table 4;

**Table 4: Teachers' Views on the Influence of Principals' Supervisory Practices on Teachers' Job Performance in Public Secondary Schools**

Test Items	Ratings				
	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
Principals rarely observe how teachers manage their time at school which has affected teacher performance	55.4	14.4	5.8	16.5	7.9
Principals usually assess teachers' preparation of professional documents to improve teacher performance	59.7	7.2	3.6	26.6	2.9
Principals often supervise the teaching methods teachers use in class which has helped improve teacher performance	53.2	8.6	4.3	21.6	12.3

To improve teacher performance, the principals often supervise teachers' participation in CCAs	51.8	13.7	3.6	27.3	3.6
In public secondary schools, the principals rarely provide feedback after supervision which has negatively affected teacher performance	39.6	9.4	6.6	40.6	3.8

**Source: Field Data (2025)**

Table 4 shows that 130(55.4%) of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that principals rarely observe how teachers manage their time at school which has affected teacher performance whereas 18(7.9%) strongly disagreed. The study revealed that 140(59.7%) of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that, in public secondary schools, principals usually assess teachers' preparation of professional documents to improve teacher performance while 7(2.9%) strongly disagreed. The study revealed that 124(53.2%) of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that principals often supervise the teaching methods teachers use in class which has helped improve teacher performance whereas 29(12.3%) strongly disagreed. Majority 121(51.8%) of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that, to improve teacher performance, the principals often supervise teachers' participation in CCAs whereas 8(3.6%) strongly disagreed. However, only 97(39.6%) of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that, in public secondary schools, the principals rarely provide feedback after supervision which has negatively affected teacher performance whereas 9(3.8%) strongly disagreed.

These findings underscore the critical role of principals in offering instructional leadership, which is vital for enhancing academic performance. They align with Smith's (2021) research, which highlighted that principals often assess the teaching strategies used by educators to ensure their effectiveness in delivering the curriculum. According to Smith (2021), monitoring teaching methods is essential because it helps principals pinpoint areas where teachers may need additional professional development or support. The study also identified another key strategy employed by principals entails evaluating whether teachers prepare professional documents like schemes of work and lesson plans. Robinson (2020) asserts that preparing these documents is seen as a sign of teacher professionalism and organizational skills, which are expected to contribute to better teaching performance. However, some research suggests that the mere existence of these documents doesn't always result in improved teaching outcomes. Teachers may prepare them to meet administrative requirements, not necessarily to enhance their teaching quality (Ngugi, 2023).

In addition to overseeing teaching methods and document preparation, principals also monitor teachers' attendance. Regular attendance is crucial to maintain continuity in learning and provide students with consistent instruction. The study also notes that

principals evaluate how teachers interact with parents and colleagues, as these relationships are believed to impact teacher performance. This is in line with Pereira's (2023) findings, which showed that positive interactions with parents and colleagues foster a supportive environment that promotes professional growth. However, research also indicates that many teachers face challenges in communication and collaboration, particularly in schools where principals have not cultivated a culture of open communication. As a result, efforts to supervise these relationships may have limited effectiveness in improving teacher performance (Bermudez, 2022). Despite the various strategies principals use, research has consistently shown that teacher performance in public secondary schools has not seen substantial improvement. For instance, a study by Smith and Jackson (2022) revealed that, despite principals' supervisory efforts, teacher performance remained low in many schools. These findings confirm that, although principals utilize a variety of strategies to enhance teacher performance, these efforts haven't always resulted in the desired outcomes.

The lack of significant progress in teacher performance may stem from various factors, such as inadequate follow-up on supervision activities, limited professional development opportunities, and external challenges faced by teachers. It is evident that principal supervision must be accompanied by broader systemic changes to bring about lasting improvements in teacher performance. These findings reinforce that while principals' provision of instructional leadership is a key factor in improving academic performance, it is not always consistently or effectively executed. This suggests that when principals actively engage in curriculum planning, professional development, and fostering a collaborative school culture, it can have a profound effect on student learning outcomes. In other words, principals who are actively involved with teachers provide feedback, and promote continuous improvement can positively influence academic performance. This further suggests that effective instructional leadership encourages teacher accountability, student engagement, and a focus on high-quality teaching methods, all of which lead to better academic outcomes. Therefore, although instructional leadership by principals is not always carried out in a regular and systematic way, it remains a critical element in the success of schools and their ability to improve academic performance.

## 4.4 Inferential Analysis

To verify influence of principals' supervisory practices on teachers' job performance, data were collected from the 10 principals of the sampled public secondary

schools on how often (Very Often = 5, Often = 4, Sometimes = 3, Rarely = 2 and Never = 1) they supervise teaching activities, how often teachers cover syllabus in time and academic performance in KCSE for the year 2024. The results are shown in Table 5:

**Table 5: How Often Principals Supervise Teaching Activities and Teachers' Job Performance in Public Secondary Schools**

How Often Principals Supervise Teaching Activities (X3)	How Often Teachers Cover Syllabus in Time	2024 KCSE Results
2	2	2.14
2	3	3.78
3	5	4.81
2	3	2.80
1	2	3.48
2	2	5.89
1	1	4.99
4	4	6.98
3	3	9.07
4	4	10.06

Source: Field data (2025)

Table 5 shows that principals, who frequently undertake supervision, have teachers in their schools cover syllabus in time as well as improved students' academic performance in KCSE. This further indicates that regular supervision enables principals to monitor teaching strategies, identify challenges teachers may face, and provide timely interventions to enhance the quality of education. By frequently observing classroom activities, principals can offer constructive feedback and ensure that teachers adhere to the set curriculum timelines. This helps in covering the syllabus comprehensively and prevents delays that may hinder learners' preparation. Additionally, when principals engage in frequent supervision, they create an environment of accountability among teachers, motivating them to

maintain high teaching standards and stay on track with the syllabus. Moreover, consistent supervision allows for early identification of areas where learners may be struggling, enabling teachers to adjust their teaching methods accordingly. This targeted support improves student engagement, understanding, and overall academic performance. The positive impact of such supervision is reflected in improved KCSE results, as students benefit from a well-organized and focused learning environment. In essence, principals who prioritize supervision not only ensure syllabus completion but also foster academic excellence. The data in Table 5 were run through Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Test Analysis. Results are shown in Table 6:

**Table 6: Relationship between How Often Principals Supervise Teaching Activities and Teachers' Job Performance in Public Secondary Schools**

		X	A	B
<b>X</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	.509*	.534*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.029	.037
	N	10	10	10
<b>A</b>	Pearson Correlation	.509*	1	.808
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.029		.098
	N	10	10	10
<b>B</b>	Pearson Correlation	.534*	.808	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.037	.098	
	N	10	10	10

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Key: **X**- How Often Principals Supervise Teaching Activities; **A**- How Often Teachers Cover Syllabus in Time and **B**- 2024 KCSE Results

Table 6 shows that there is a strong correlation between principals' supervisory practices programmes and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools. That is, the higher the frequency of principals' supervision of teaching activities, the higher frequency with which teachers cover syllabus in time and improved

students' academic performance in KCSE ( $r(10) = 0.509$  and  $0.534$  at  $p = 0.029$ ,  $0.037$  at  $\alpha = 0.05$ ). This emphasizes that when principals are more involved in supervision, teachers tend to follow syllabus timelines more closely. This increased focus on curriculum ensures comprehensive instruction, covering all necessary topics

before exams. Supervision enables principals to monitor teaching practices, provide support, and pinpoint areas where teachers may need additional resources or guidance. By consistently overseeing teaching progress, principals are better equipped to address challenges that could hinder timely syllabus coverage. Additionally, teachers receive constructive feedback that improves their teaching methods, leading to better lesson delivery overall. Efficient syllabus coverage helps students better understand key concepts, improving their KCSE preparation. Consequently, stronger supervision is directly linked to improved student performance. This underscores the vital role of effective school leadership, where principals actively support and guide teachers to ensure students are thoroughly prepared for academic evaluations like the KCSE.

## 4.5 Thematic Analysis

During the interviews, the principals and Chairs of school BoM stated that they always undertake supervision of teachers. Principal, P2, noted.

*I always supervise teaching methods which teachers in my school adopt, whether they prepare professional documents such as schemes of work and lesson plans or not as well as their class attendance, how they relate with parents and colleagues.*

On their part, the Sub-county Directors of Education who noted that schools are expected to provide instructional leadership as a way of improving teacher performance. Similar to the quantitative results, these insights suggest that the supervisory practices of principals play a crucial role in enhancing academic performance. The qualitative findings reinforce that effective supervision ensures teaching standards are maintained, and educators receive the support needed to deliver high-quality lessons. As instructional leaders, principals are responsible for observing teaching methods, providing feedback, and creating an environment that encourages teachers' professional growth. Their active involvement in classrooms has a direct impact on the quality of instruction, which in turn leads to better academic outcomes. By reviewing lesson plans, evaluating teaching strategies, and offering professional development, principals help ensure that teaching remains both relevant and effective. Their engagement also allows for the identification and resolution of weaknesses in teaching, improving students' understanding of essential subjects. Additionally, principals' involvement fosters a culture of accountability among teachers, boosting motivation and commitment to academic excellence. These combined findings underscore the importance of supervisory practices, as they facilitate the identification of best

practices that can be shared with the teaching staff, further improving educational quality.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

### 5.1 Conclusion

Many teachers do not cover syllabus in time and this has occasioned low academic performance of students in KCSE. This has brought into question the effectiveness of principals' supervisory practices.

Principals often undertake supervisory activities such as assessing teaching methods use, teachers' preparation of professional documents and class attendance. However, this has not improved timely syllabus coverage nor academic outcomes.

### 5.2 Recommendations

Principals should continue undertaking instructional supervision activities which are, specifically aimed at improving teachers' pedagogy and thus, their performance. The Ministry of Education should continue enforcing regular training of principals on school management as a key step towards understanding how to improve teachers' job performance in schools.

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