



Influence of Management of Peer Support during Remedial Teaching on Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Mwala Sub-county, Machakos County, Kenya

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Abstract: Peer support among students during remedial teaching plays a key role in students' academic performance in schools. However, in Mwala Sub-county, many public secondary schools are registering low academic grades in examinations. This study examined the influence of peer support during remedial teaching on students' academic performance in public secondary schools. The constructivist theory and the academic achievement theory guided the study. The study adopted a mixed methodology and a concurrent triangulation research design. The target population comprised 1,040 respondents, including 65 principals and 975 teachers, from which a sample of 288 respondents was determined using Yamane's Formula. This comprised a sample of 16 principals and 272 teachers. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically based on the objectives and presented in narrative form. Quantitative data were analyzed descriptively using frequencies and percentages and inferentially using Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 25) and presented using tables. The study found that many students register low academic performance in KCSE. This is partly attributed to peer support during remedial teaching programmes. The study has found that, despite teachers undertaking these programmes, it has not led to improved students' academic performance. Thus, teachers should encourage structured peer tutoring and collaborative learning during remedial lessons to enhance student understanding and motivation. As a policy, the Ministry of Education should establish a clear and standardized policy that guides the planning, implementation, supervision, and evaluation of remedial teaching programmes in public secondary schools.

Keywords: Public, Secondary schools, Students' academic performance, Principals, Peer support, Remedial teaching

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1. Introduction

Every student has a right to education, and this has led to a significant expansion of education systems worldwide. However, expansion of education has not been accompanied by an adequate number of trained teachers, physical facilities and instructional resources to promote

learning. This has caused some students to lag, thereby lowering the quality of education. To bridge this gap, secondary schools have adopted peer support during remedial teaching to bring these students to the academic level of their peers (Desai, 2023). According to Melton (2022), a remedial education programme is an educational programme that secondary schools routinely use to bring low-achieving learners' academic

performance closer to grade-level standards. In the same vein, Smith and Wallace (2023) further posit that a remedial teaching programme is a learning and teaching programme designed to bring learners who are lagging up to the level of achievement of their peers. In many secondary schools in India, remedial education, which embraces peer support, is considered necessary for learners who are cognitively average or above average and can therefore quickly assimilate missed concepts and relate them to the rest of the topic or area of study (Chakuchichi & Badza, 2024). This implies that the remedial education programme acknowledges the shortcomings that any educational system is bound to have, given human weaknesses, and therefore attempts to save students who might not otherwise achieve their full potential if there are no early detection and intervention.

In the words of Watson and Thompson (2023), peer support during remedial teaching entails the assistance, encouragement, and guidance that students provide to one another to enhance learning and academic improvement. It is based on the concept that learners can effectively help their peers understand difficult concepts, develop skills, and build confidence through collaboration and interaction. In the same token, Phillips (2024) also posits that, in remedial teaching, peer support plays a significant role in addressing learning gaps among students who experience difficulties in specific subjects or skills. According to Phillips (2024), through activities such as peer tutoring, group discussions, cooperative learning, and shared problem-solving, students learn from one another in a supportive and less intimidating environment. The concept is grounded in social learning theory, which emphasizes that learning occurs through observation, interaction, and mutual engagement. This implies that peer support promotes active participation, improves communication skills, and encourages a sense of responsibility among learners. It also helps struggling students feel accepted and motivated, reducing anxiety and fear of failure. In other words, students who provide support reinforce their own understanding of the subject matter while helping others. These initiatives are meant to improve students' academic performance in schools.

According to Reusen (2023), students' academic performance refers to learners' ability to understand, apply, and solve academic problems. Watson (2024) posits that performance is typically measured through assessments such as exams, quizzes, assignments, and class participation. In other words, high performance indicates a strong grasp of concepts and the ability to use them effectively in problem-solving contexts. For example, in Yemen, any secondary school learner who scores a mean grade of 75% or higher in examinations is considered to exhibit excellent academic performance (Peterson, 2024). Despite these postulations, many students still register low grades in their internal and national examinations. For example, a survey conducted

by Gedro, Hartman, and Suárez (2023) shows that in Haiti, only 24.8% of students achieved an impressive performance. In Guyana, Shaw, Levesque, and McKie (2024) posit that only 19.1% of students have improved their performance in examinations.

In Thailand, for instance, there has been a struggle on how to improve students' academic performance from 21.7% to at least 50.0% (UNESCO, 2024). However, in schools where peer support has been effectively adopted during remedial teaching, students' performance has relatively improved. For instance, in New Zealand, teachers encouraged peer support among students, and academic performance improved with a record 11.3% in national examinations. This indicates that this approach is particularly effective for students who experience learning difficulties because it creates a supportive environment where they can receive assistance from classmates in a less intimidating setting than traditional teacher-centred instruction. In the Netherlands, Depay and Jensen (2023) assert that schools have successfully integrated peer-assisted learning into remedial education programs. Students who perform well academically are often paired with those who require additional support, enabling struggling learners to receive individualised guidance. According to Depay and Jensen (2023), this collaborative approach enhances understanding of concepts, particularly in mathematics and language studies, while also promoting social inclusion and positive relationships among learners. Similar practices have been observed in Italy, where Totti and Rossi (2023) assert that peer tutoring programs help students overcome learning gaps. According to Totti and Rossi (2023), students involved in peer-supported remedial sessions develop stronger academic skills and greater motivation to learn because they feel more comfortable asking questions and seeking clarification from their peers.

In Mexico, Gonzalez (2023) reports that many schools use cooperative learning groups during remedial lessons to support learners who are academically behind. Gonzalez (2023) further notes that through peer interaction, students improve comprehension, communication skills, and academic achievement. This indicates that peer-assisted learning is crucial, and schools often organize study groups in which high-achieving students mentor classmates who need additional academic support. These arrangements have been associated with improved examination performance and enhanced learner confidence. In other words, students who participate in peer-supported remedial programs show better academic progress, improved self-esteem, and stronger engagement in classroom activities. Across Africa, peer support continues to gain recognition as an effective means of addressing learning challenges, particularly in contexts with high teacher-student ratios and limited resources. By encouraging learners to help one another, schools maximize available resources while fostering teamwork and shared responsibility for

learning. In Ghana, for instance, Opong (2024) asserts that peer tutoring has significantly improved academic performance among learners who face difficulties in core subjects such as mathematics, science and English. Students benefit from explanations provided in familiar language by their classmates, making difficult concepts easier to understand.

In Rwanda, Ndasimiye (2022) asserts that peer learning initiatives have been integrated into competency-based education reforms. The author further notes that, through group work and peer mentoring, learners actively participate in knowledge construction, resulting in improved academic achievement and greater learner autonomy. In Kenya, Mwangi (2023) opines that peer support has become increasingly important in addressing learning gaps and enhancing academic success. According to Mwangi (2023), schools often organize peer tutoring sessions, group discussions, and collaborative learning activities to assist students requiring remedial support. These practices not only improve academic outcomes but also strengthen interpersonal skills and learner confidence. However, this has not fully translated into improved students' academic performance. In Mwala Sub-county, for example, public secondary schools have continued to register low KCSE grades (MoE, 2025). For example, a report by the Ministry of Education (2025) shows that Mwala Sub-county registered 45.1% in KCSE in 2021, 33.6% in 2022, 30.7% in 2023 and 27.1% in 2024, which paints a picture of declining academic performance in public secondary schools. This is despite embracing remedial teaching as a mitigating measure to the declining trend in academic performance in public secondary schools. However, much remained to be done to examine the influence of peer support during remedial teaching management on students' academic 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 students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Mwala Sub-county.
2. To examine the influence of peer support during remedial teaching on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Mwala Sub-county.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Empirical Literature

Peer support plays a crucial role in shaping the effectiveness of remedial teaching by enhancing learners' confidence, engagement, and academic outcomes across diverse educational contexts. In the

United Kingdom, Brown and Smith (2024) conducted a study that revealed that remedial programmes often integrate structured peer-assisted learning strategies in which stronger students guide those struggling with foundational skills. This collaborative approach reduces anxiety associated with academic failure and encourages active participation, particularly in literacy and numeracy interventions. Similarly, in Colombia, research conducted by Martinez and Enzo (2024) revealed that peer support in remedial classrooms has been associated with improved comprehension, as students often find classmates' explanations more relatable than teacher-led instruction alone. In the same vein, a study by Johnson (2024) found that, in Wales, peer-supported remedial teaching is frequently embedded in inclusive education policies that emphasise learner-centred approaches. Students who receive additional academic support benefit from peer modelling, in which observing competent classmates reinforces problem-solving strategies and study habits. Across the United Kingdom, schools have increasingly adopted peer tutoring systems to address learning gaps created by socioeconomic disparities, resulting in measurable gains in reading fluency and mathematical reasoning.

In the Middle East, Iran demonstrates how peer collaboration within remedial education supports students facing high academic pressure. A study conducted by Hassan and Osman (2023) revealed that peer groups provide emotional reassurance and shared learning strategies, which are particularly important in exam-oriented systems. In Egypt, peer-assisted remedial teaching has helped bridge achievement gaps in overcrowded classrooms by enabling students to reinforce concepts through discussion and cooperative problem-solving. Likewise, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kakwa (2022) noted that peer support becomes an essential supplement to teacher instruction, allowing learners to practice language and numeracy skills more frequently. In Uganda, Kabaka (2022) conducted a study with 12 students using a descriptive research design and found that peer support within remedial teaching is especially significant in improving academic performance. Kabaka (2022) revealed that peer learning groups help students overcome barriers such as large class sizes and limited instructional time. In other words, learners benefit from cooperative revision sessions, which strengthen retention and deepen conceptual understanding. In Kenya, peer-assisted remedial programmes have been widely adopted in schools to support learners struggling with foundational competencies, particularly in English and mathematics. That is, students working in pairs or small groups often demonstrate increased motivation and improved attendance, as peer accountability encourages consistency in study habits. In Mwala Sub-county, Muthusi and Wambua (2024) conducted a study that found that peer support during remedial teaching is particularly impactful in rural and peri-urban schools

where teacher shortages are common. The study further revealed that students rely heavily on peer explanation and group revision to compensate for limited one-on-one teacher attention. This not only improves academic performance but also builds communication skills and a sense of shared responsibility for learning outcomes. Muthusi and Wambua (2024) further found that peer support in remedial teaching consistently enhances academic achievement by fostering collaboration, reducing learning anxiety, and promoting active engagement. However, its effectiveness depends on educators' proper structuring to ensure accurate knowledge exchange and balanced participation among learners. Further, Muthusi and Wambua (2024), as did other reviewed studies, have not fully explored the effectiveness of different peer support management activities during remedial teaching on students' academic performance in secondary schools.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by Vygotsky's (1978) constructivist theory. This theory was premised on the idea that teaching methods must be student-centred, as this is the most popular and dominant perspective in remedial education for students with learning difficulties. According to Vygotsky (1978), constructivist learning theory explores the difference between students' actual developmental level and their potential for development through problem-solving and more capable peers. Vygotsky added that students' learning is influenced not only by the classroom but also by society and culture. He stressed that if learning can be influenced by social mediation, then schools can create conditions that help students learn. In the context of this study, this theory is relevant because it is based on remedial instruction, which emphasizes constructivism as a collection of educational practices that are student-focused, meaning-based, process-oriented, interactive, and responsive to students' personal interests and needs. Remedial teaching or constructivist classroom, according to this theory, is characterized by authenticity, a focus on students, and the creation of a relevant environment in which learning is functional; therefore, constructive learning is experiential in that people create knowledge and draw meaning from it through their own experiences and ideas. In this sense, it is believed that learning should be based on real-life situations to become meaningful for learners who construct their new knowledge on previous ones in a social and experiential context, which is in accordance with tenets of remedial education that focus on the identification of students with difficulties, their strengths and weaknesses.

In this study, this theory underscores the importance of using active learning techniques, where students are actively involved in the lesson, enabling them to learn and retain information more easily. In this sense, scaffolding students' learning is essential, particularly for low achievers. Besides, this theory underscores the

fact that teachers should be facilitators of learning and provide opportunities for individual learners to acquire knowledge and construct meaning through their own activities and through discussion, reflection, and sharing ideas with other learners. This theory holds that, with regard to learners' role in constructive learning, students should be active contributors to the learning process, which reflects the importance of the scaffolding process for students at the beginning of learning or remediation. Teaching methods should focus on what the student can bring to the learning situation as much as on what is received from the environment. In a constructivist environment, though teachers' role in explicit or direct instruction is to provide extrinsic motivation to elicit students' learning or behaviour, their primary role in constructivism is to motivate students to create their own knowledge through their personal experiences.

Walberg's theory of academic achievement also guided the study. This theory posits that the psychological characteristics of individual learners and their immediate psychological environments influence educational outcomes, namely cognitive, behavioural, and attitudinal. Walberg (2012) identified nine key variables that influence educational outcomes as: learners' prior achievement, motivation, 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) further asserts that psychosocial characteristics such as self-concept, attitudes, behaviours, intrinsic motivation, and overall learner engagement in learning are useful in curriculum evaluation studies and can provide teachers with information to arrange classrooms more optimally. In this study, to improve students' academic achievement and educational productivity, educational process goals and achievement goals must be considered. Thus, the relevance of this theory is that learning outcome goals are interpreted to include learner perceptions of the social environment, creativity, self-concept, participation in extra-curricular activities, and interest in subject matter.

3. Methodology

The study adopted a mixed methodology and therefore employed a concurrent triangulation research design, which involved the implementation of quantitative and qualitative methods during the same timeframe and with equal weight. The target population comprised 1,040 respondents, including 65 principals and 975 teachers, from which a sample of 288 respondents was determined using Yamane's Formula. Stratified sampling was used to create eight different strata based on the number of zones in Mwala Sub-county to ensure homogeneity during sampling. From each zone, two principals and 34 teachers were selected using purposive sampling, considering secondary schools that had registered low grades in KCSE in the previous five years. This sampling

procedure enabled the researcher to realize a sample of 16 principals and 272 teachers. Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data from teachers, whereas interview schedules were used to collect qualitative data from principals. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically along the study objectives and presented in narrative form. Quantitative data were analyzed descriptively using frequencies and percentages and inferentially using Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Analysis using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS 25), and presented using tables. In this study, an ethical clearance certificate was obtained from Mount Kenya Ethical Review Committee (MKU ERC) before embarking on data collection

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the study's findings in line with the research objectives, along with a summary of how the results are presented and discussed.

processes. The researcher undertook to keep private any information given by the respondents that touched on their personal lives. 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.

4.1 Response Rates

In this study, 272 questionnaires were administered to teachers, and 218 were completed and returned. In the same token, the researcher interviewed 12 principals. This yielded response rates shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Response Rates

Respondents	Sampled Respondents	Those Who Participated	Achieved Return Rate (%)
Principals	16	12	75.0
Teachers	272	218	80.1
Total	288	230	79.9

Source: Field Data (2026)

Table 1 shows that principals registered a response rate of 75.0%, whereas teachers registered a response rate of 80.1%. This yielded an average response rate of 79.9%, consistent with Creswell's (2018) assertion that a response rate above 75.0% is adequate. This information was important because it enabled the researcher to generalize the study's outcomes to the target population.

4.2 Status of Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools

The study sought to assess students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Mwala Sub-county. This was measured by taking stock and analyzing KCSE performance for the last five years, that is, between 2020 and 2024. Results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in KCSE in Mwala Sub-county (2021-2025)

Years of Examination	KCSE Results in Mean Scores	Percentage (%) of Students who Scored C+ and above
2021	3.841	56.2
2022	3.621	53.3
2023	3.701	49.1
2024	3.750	44.9
2025	3.786	40.5

Source: MoE (2026)

Table 2 shows that students' KCSE academic performance has been on a downward trend over the last five years, with minimal improvement. These findings corroborate a report by MoE (2025) that students' performance in Mwala Sub-county in KCSE has been on a downward trend. This indicates that a significant number of learners continue to record low grades,

reflecting deep-rooted challenges within schools and the wider society. This scenario has led to a decrease in the proportion of students who score C+ or higher. This indicates that when overall performance drops, fewer students meet the minimum university entry grade. In summary, these findings confirm that KCSE

performance has been low, resulting in fewer students attaining C+ or higher.

4.3 Management of Peer Support during Remedial Teaching and Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools

The study examined the influence of peer support management during remedial teaching on students' academic performance in public secondary schools. Descriptive data were collected from teachers and are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Teachers' Views on the Influence of Management of Peer Support During Remedial Teaching on Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools

Test Items	Ratings				
	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
Teachers always encourage students to learn from each other as a way of improving their performance	49.6	5.0	4.3	33.8	7.2
Teachers encourage students to share ideas during remedial teaching to improve their performance	52.5	12.2	2.9	26.6	5.8
During remedial teaching, teachers stress the need for healthy interpersonal relations with students as the key to improved academic performance	44.6	15.8	4.3	28.8	6.5
During remedial teaching, teachers encourage students to support each other as the best way to perform better	59.7	7.9	5.8	21.6	5.0
Focusing on peer support during remedial teaching has helped students perform better at school	64.2	9.4	4.7	17.9	3.8

Source: Field Data (2026)

Table 3 shows that 108(49.6%) of the teachers strongly agreed that they always encourage students to learn from each other to improve their performance, whereas 16(7.2%) strongly disagreed. This indicates that peer support during remedial instruction plays a significant role in improving students' academic performance. This is consistent with the findings of a study by Sadia, Kayani, and Hussain (2026), which revealed that teachers consistently encourage students to learn from one another as a strategy to enhance understanding and academic achievement. This demonstrates that teachers recognize the value of collaborative learning in helping students overcome learning difficulties. This further indicates that, when students interact with their peers, they can exchange ideas, clarify concepts, and gain confidence in areas where they may have challenges. In other words, students who actively engage in peer-supported learning environments tend to achieve better academic outcomes compared to those who rely solely on teacher-centred instruction. Slightly more than half, 114(52.5%), of the teachers strongly agreed that they encourage students to share ideas during remedial teaching to improve their performance, whereas 13(5.8%) strongly disagreed. This indicates that sharing ideas fosters an environment where students actively participate in discussions and problem-solving. This lends credence to the findings of a study by Li (2025), which revealed that, through these interactions, learners are exposed to diverse viewpoints and approaches to

learning tasks, thereby broadening their understanding of academic content. Collaborative learning also enables students to ask questions freely among peers, reducing fear and anxiety that may arise in formal classroom settings. This indicates that peer collaboration promotes academic engagement, motivation, and knowledge construction because students learn effectively when they communicate and solve problems together. The study revealed that 97(44.6%) of the teachers strongly agreed that, during remedial teaching, teachers stress the need for healthy interpersonal relations with students as the key to improved academic performance. In comparison, 14(6.5%) strongly disagreed. This implies that positive teacher-student relationships create a supportive learning environment where students feel respected, valued, and motivated to participate in learning activities. This supports the findings of research conducted by Parmar, Mistry, Michael, Dune, Lim, Alford and Arora (2025), which established that teachers who maintain healthy interpersonal relationships are more likely to identify students' academic challenges and provide guidance tailored to individual learning needs. In remedial teaching, students often require emotional encouragement in addition to academic support. These findings indicate that maintaining good interpersonal relations enhances learners' confidence, willingness to participate, and commitment to improving their performance. This further implies that supportive classroom relationships contribute significantly to

students' academic engagement and overall success. Slightly more than half, 130(59.7%), of the teachers strongly agreed that, during remedial teaching, teachers encourage students to support each other as the best way to improve, whereas 11(5.0%) strongly disagreed. The majority, 140(64.2%), of the teachers strongly agreed that focusing on peer support during remedial teaching has helped students perform better at school, whereas a paltry 8(3.8%) strongly disagreed.

This indicates that peer support enables students to work cooperatively to complete assignments, revise academic content, and prepare for examinations. This is consistent with the findings of a study by Babayiğit and Erkuş (2022), which showed that students who support one another develop teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills that are essential for academic success. Through peer interaction, learners can identify mistakes, provide feedback, and motivate each other to remain focused on their studies. Babayiğit and Erkuş (2022) further established that students involved in supportive group activities often achieve higher test scores and demonstrate improved classroom participation. Peer support also increases students' sense of belonging and reduces feelings of isolation, especially among learners experiencing academic difficulties. These findings indicate that focusing on peer support during remedial teaching has helped students perform better at school. Peer-assisted learning approaches provide opportunities for students to actively engage in the learning process rather than remaining passive

recipients of information. Through collaborative discussions, peer tutoring, and group problem-solving activities, students gain a deeper understanding of concepts and improve retention of the material they learn. In other words, peer teaching significantly improves academic achievement because students often explain concepts to one another in simpler and more relatable ways. In addition, peer-supported learning promotes students' confidence, independence, and self-regulated learning skills. These findings further affirm the fact that peer support is an effective strategy in remedial teaching. Teachers who encourage collaborative learning, idea sharing, healthy interpersonal relations, and mutual student support contribute positively to improved academic performance. Peer support not only enhances understanding of academic content but also promotes confidence, engagement, teamwork, and motivation among learners.

4.3.1 Inferential Analysis

To verify the influence of management of peer support during remedial teaching on students' academic performance, data were collected from teachers in the sampled public secondary schools on how often (Very Often = 5, Often = 4, Sometimes = 3, Rarely = 2 and Never = 1) they provide peer support to students during remedial teaching and students' academic performance in the 2025 KCSE. Results are shown in Table 4:

Table 4: How Often Teachers Provide Peer Support to Students and Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools

How Often Teachers Provide Peer Support (X2)	2025 KCSE Results
1	5.10
2	3.78
5	4.81
2	3.80
2	3.48
1	5.89
1	4.99
3	6.98
5	7.07
3	4.87
2	5.09
4	6.02

Source: Field Data (2026)

Table 4 shows that the more often teachers provide peer support to students during remedial teaching, the higher the students' KCSE performance. This further indicates that, when teachers consistently promote peer discussions, group problem-solving, and cooperative learning, students gain a better understanding of difficult concepts and improve their academic confidence. The findings indicate that students benefit academically when they are allowed to learn from classmates who can explain concepts in simpler, more relatable ways. Peer support also creates an interactive learning environment

where learners actively participate rather than remain passive recipients of information. Through frequent peer interactions, students improve communication skills, critical thinking, and knowledge retention, all of which contribute to higher KCSE performance. Additionally, teachers who regularly integrate peer support strategies during remedial teaching help reduce anxiety and fear associated with challenging subjects. Students become more motivated and willing to seek clarification from peers, leading to improved mastery of content. Therefore, the study concludes that increasing peer

support activities during remedial instruction significantly enhances students' academic achievement in KCSE examinations by fostering collaboration, engagement, and a deeper understanding of subject

matter. The data in Table 4 were run through Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Test Analysis. Results are shown in Table 5:

Table 5: Relationship between Management of Peer Support during Remedial Teaching and Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools

		Management of peer support during remedial teaching	Students' Academic Performance
Management of peer support during remedial teaching	Pearson Correlation	1	.557*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.029
	N	12	12
Students' Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	.557*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.029	
	N	12	12

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

Table 5 shows a strong correlation between the management of peer support during remedial teaching and students' academic performance in public secondary schools. That is, the higher the frequency of teachers' provision of peer support to students, the higher the students' academic performance in KCSE ($r(12) = 0.557$, $p = 0.029$, $\alpha = 0.05$). This implies that peer support involves students assisting one another through group discussions, collaborative learning, sharing academic resources, and encouraging positive study habits. When properly managed during remedial teaching programs, peer support creates an interactive learning environment that enhances learners' understanding and retention of concepts. Students who participate in structured peer learning activities often gain confidence, improve communication skills, and develop problem-solving abilities, all of which contribute to better academic outcomes. Effective peer support management ensures that learners remain focused on academic goals and actively participate in learning activities. Teachers play an important role in organizing peer groups, monitoring participation, and guiding students to maintain productive relationships during remedial sessions. Schools that encourage teamwork and cooperative learning tend to record improved examination performance and reduced failure rates. Additionally, peer support helps slow learners receive assistance from classmates in a less intimidating environment, which increases motivation and engagement in class activities.

4.3.2 Thematic Analysis

During the interviews, the principals also supported the view that teachers widely recognize peer-supported learning as an effective remedial teaching strategy for improving academic performance. Principal, P1, stated;

In my school, one of the most effective remedial strategies is encouraging learners to help one another understand difficult

concepts. When students discuss academic work together, weaker learners gain confidence and improve their performance significantly. As a result, peer learning has reduced fear among struggling students, as they feel freer to ask classmates questions.

These views demonstrate that peer-supported learning significantly improves academic performance during remedial teaching. Students learn effectively through interaction, discussion, and collaborative problem-solving. The results imply that collaborative instructional approaches enhance learner confidence, participation, and academic success. The principals also stated that encouraging students to share ideas during remedial teaching promotes active participation and a deeper understanding of academic content. According to the principals, the idea sharing also reduces anxiety and fear commonly associated with formal classroom settings, allowing learners to participate more confidently. On further probing, principal, P2, stated;

At my school, we encourage learners to share ideas freely because it helps them discover different ways to solve problems. Students become more active and motivated when they discuss academic issues together during remedial lessons. Collaborative discussions have built confidence among learners who are usually shy in traditional classroom settings.

These views further indicate that sharing ideas during remedial teaching enhances learners' participation, confidence, and knowledge construction. Collaborative interactions expose students to diverse learning approaches and strengthen academic engagement. This

further implies that collaborative learning environments encourage deeper understanding, improve communication, and reduce learner anxiety during academic activities. Regarding healthy teacher-student relationships, the principals stated that healthy interpersonal relationships between teachers and students are essential for improving academic performance during remedial teaching. Principal, P3, noted;

In my school, students perform better when teachers create a supportive, friendly learning environment. In remedial classes, emotional support is just as important as academic assistance. Teachers who relate well with learners easily identify students' weaknesses and guide them appropriately.

This indicates that healthy teacher-student relationships positively influence learners' confidence, participation, and academic engagement during remedial teaching. Supportive classroom environments encourage struggling learners to seek assistance and remain motivated. The principals further observed that mutual student support during remedial teaching contributes significantly to improved academic performance. Principal, P4, noted;

In my school, when students support each other academically, they become more motivated and committed to learning. Group activities during remedial teaching have improved teamwork and classroom participation among learners. Peer tutoring has helped struggling learners understand concepts in simpler and more relatable ways.

These mixed findings further indicate that mutual peer support significantly improves academic achievement during remedial teaching. Students who collaborate develop communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills necessary for academic success.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

Many students register low academic performance in KCSE. This has brought into question the effectiveness of the management of peer support during remedial teaching programmes. From the study, although teachers have encouraged peer support among students during remedial teaching programmes, these efforts have not

translated into improved academic performance in the KCSE examinations.

5.2 Recommendations

As a practice, teachers should encourage structured peer tutoring and collaborative learning during remedial lessons to enhance student understanding and motivation. As a policy, the Ministry of Education should establish a clear and standardized policy that guides the planning, implementation, supervision, and evaluation of remedial teaching programmes in public secondary schools. This policy should define criteria for identifying learners who require remedial support; guidelines for scheduling remedial lessons to avoid learner fatigue and conflict with normal learning hours.

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