

**ASSESSING TEACHER EXPECTATIONS ON STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN  
KENYA . A CASE STUDY IN SELECTED PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL IN  
KAJIADO COUNTY.**

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**DECLARATION**

I declare that this research project is my original work and has not been submitted to any other institution for higher learning.

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**BEDK/2/00108/3/21**

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as university supervisor

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**Dorothy Tsuma, PhD**

## **DEDICATION**

This research project is dedicated to my beloved parents Charles Odhiambo Ogwang and Ruth Juma Odhiambo, whose unwavering support, encouragement and belief in me inspired the completion of this work. May their love continue to be my strength.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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## ABSTRACT

This study sought to assess teacher expectations on students' achievement in Kajiado County, focusing on selected public secondary schools. "The purpose was to explore how teacher expectations, academic expectations, and growth mindset collectively influence students' academic achievement". The study was anchored on Rosenthal and Jacobson's Pygmalion Effect Theory, complemented by Dweck's Mindset Theory and Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences. The research objectives were: to examine the effect of teacher expectations on students' achievement; to analyze how academic expectations shape student performance; and to evaluate the role of a growth mindset in enhancing achievement. The study targeted a population of 2,000 participants consisting of 1,600 students, 350 teachers, and 50 school administrators, with a sample size of 266 students, 60 teachers, and 7 administrators. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed among the sampled groups. The data were then analyzed using descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages, and presented in tables and charts for clarity. "Findings revealed that teacher expectations significantly influence students' motivation and performance; academic expectations set by teachers and institutions enhance students' commitment to academic work; and promoting a growth mindset among students contributes to improved academic outcomes". The study concluded that positive teacher expectations combined with supportive academic environments and deliberate cultivation of a growth mindset are critical in boosting student achievement. It recommended professional development programs for teachers to raise awareness of expectation effects, fostering growth mindset practices in classrooms, and strengthening academic support systems within schools in Kajiado County.

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**LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION**

**KCSE:** Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education

**KNEC:** Kenya National Examination Council

**KNBS:** Kenya National Bureau Statistics

**MoE:** Ministry of Education

**TSC:** Teacher Service Commission

**TVET:** Technical and Vocational Education and Training

### **OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF TERM**

**Academic Expectations:** Standards or performance levels that teachers, institutions, or students themselves believe students should achieve in their studies (Rubie-Davies, 2010).

**Growth Mindset:** The belief that intelligence and abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work, as proposed by Carol S. Dweck (2006).

- Multiple Intelligences:** A theory by Howard Gardner (1983) suggesting that intelligence consists of distinct domains, such as linguistic, logical-mathematical, and interpersonal abilities.
- Pygmalion Effect:** A psychological phenomenon where higher expectations from teachers lead to improved performance among students, introduced by Rosenthal & Jacobson (1968).
- Teacher Expectations:** Assumptions, beliefs, or judgments teachers hold about the academic potential and behavior of their students, which can influence teaching practices and student achievement (Jussim & Harber, 2005).

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

This part of the research section provides detailed information on the background of the study, Statement of the problem, General and specific objectives, Research questions, Justification, Scope of the study and chapter summary that aims at assessing teacher expectations on student's achievement in Kajiado a case study in selected public secondary schools.

### 1.1 Background of the study.

Teacher expectations play a pivotal role in shaping students' academic achievements, as they influence learners' motivation, self-concept, and performance. "Globally, numerous studies have underscored the impact of teacher expectations on educational outcomes. Rosenthal and Jacobson's (1968) "Pygmalion Effect" demonstrated that students tend to perform in ways consistent with their teachers' expectations". High expectations often lead to improved academic performance, while low expectations can hinder learners' potential. In developed nations such as the United States and the United Kingdom, teacher expectations have been identified as critical factors in addressing achievement gaps linked to socio-economic disparities, race, and gender (Ferguson, 2003).

Regionally, in sub-Saharan Africa, teacher expectations are shaped by a variety of contextual factors, including resource limitations, large class sizes, and socio-cultural dynamics. Research indicates that teachers in this region often hold lower expectations for students from disadvantaged or marginalized backgrounds, which negatively impacts their academic performance (Oketch & Rolleston, 2007). Gender stereotypes are particularly prominent, with girls frequently being

perceived as less capable in science and mathematics (Chege & Sifuna, 2006). Such measures are critical in addressing regional inequities and improving overall educational outcomes.

Locally, in Kajiado County, Kenya, teacher expectations significantly influence students' academic achievements in public secondary schools. Schools such as Isinya Boys, Rombo Girls, and Oloitokitok Secondary School face unique socio-cultural and economic challenges that shape teacher expectations. Teachers often operate in resource-constrained environments characterized by inadequate teaching materials, large student populations, and cultural practices such as early marriages, particularly among the Maasai community (Wamalwa & Burns, 2018). However, some schools have taken proactive measures to address these issues through capacity-building programs and community engagement initiatives. By fostering higher expectations, these schools aim to inspire students to reach their full potential despite the challenges.

“Despite extensive research on the influence of teacher expectations on student achievement at the global and regional levels, there is limited empirical evidence focusing on the local context of Kajiado County, Kenya”. Globally, studies such as Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) and Ferguson (2003) have demonstrated the significant impact of teacher expectations on academic outcomes, while regional research (e.g., Oketch & Rolleston, 2007; Chege & Sifuna, 2006) has highlighted systemic and cultural barriers affecting teacher perceptions. However, the unique socio-cultural and economic factors influencing teacher expectations in specific localities like Kajiado County remain underexplored. For example, schools such as Isinya Boys, Rombo Girls, and Oloitokitok Secondary School operate in contexts shaped by cultural practices, gender norms, and resource constraints that could uniquely shape teacher expectations and their impact on student performance. Existing studies often generalize findings without addressing these localized dynamics, creating a gap in knowledge that this study seeks to address by contextualizing teacher

expectations within the global, regional, and local frameworks of Kajiado County's public secondary schools.

### **1.1.1 Teacher expectations**

Teacher expectations refer to the beliefs teachers hold regarding the capabilities of their students, which in turn affect how teachers interact with and engage their students. Research indicates that teachers' expectations often reflect both explicit and implicit biases, which can either encourage or hinder students' academic success. High teacher expectations are generally associated with increased motivation and academic performance, while low expectations can lead to disengagement and underachievement (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). The influence of teacher expectations is especially important in settings like Kajiado, where students face unique socio-cultural and economic challenges that shape their educational experience.

### **1.1.2 Academic expectations**

Academic expectations refer to the level of academic success that teachers anticipate from their students. According to Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968), high academic expectations have been linked to improved student performance due to increased motivation, engagement, and positive feedback. Teachers with high expectations tend to provide more challenging tasks, offer greater support, and encourage students to push beyond their perceived limits. In contrast, teachers with low expectations may inadvertently stifle student progress by providing less challenging material, offering less feedback, and showing fewer signs of belief in students' capabilities (Ferguson, 2003).

In the context of Kajiado County, academic expectations are influenced by various factors, including cultural beliefs, socio-economic challenges, and the availability of resources. The

Maasai community, which forms a significant portion of Kajiado's population, has strong cultural practices, such as early marriages, that may influence teacher expectations for students, especially girls. Teachers may subconsciously hold lower expectations for female students, assuming they will not pursue higher education or academic success beyond basic schooling (Wamalwa & Burns, 2018). Schools like Rombo Girls and Isinya Boys, which serve diverse student populations, may struggle with overcoming these biases, despite ongoing efforts to provide a more inclusive educational environment. Furthermore, the resource constraints in many schools in Kajiado, coupled with large class sizes, can cause teachers to prioritize students with perceived higher academic potential, thus inadvertently lowering expectations for students from marginalized backgrounds (Nyagosia et al., 2013).

Academic expectations in Kajiado are shaped not only by global and regional trends but also by local realities. Schools like Oloitokitok Secondary School and Kimana Secondary School reflect the ongoing struggle to balance cultural norms and expectations with modern educational practices. While teachers in these schools may strive to maintain high academic expectations, the influence of local cultural expectations, resource limitations, and socio-economic factors can shape their perceptions of students' potential. This complex interplay between teacher expectations and local factors emphasizes the need for more targeted research to understand how these expectations influence student outcomes in Kajiado County, providing a better understanding of how to tailor interventions that support all students, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

### **1.1.3 Growth mindset expectations**

Growth mindset expectations, a concept popularized by Carol Dweck, refer to the belief that intelligence and abilities can be developed through effort, perseverance, and effective learning strategies. In contrast to a fixed mindset, where individuals believe their abilities are static, a

growth mindset encourages the idea that effort leads to improvement and success. In the context of teacher expectations, fostering a growth mindset can significantly impact student achievement, particularly in settings where students may face challenges related to socio-economic status, gender, and cultural norms. Research shows that when teachers hold growth mindset expectations, they are more likely to create a supportive environment where students feel capable of overcoming challenges, leading to improved academic performance (Dweck, 2006). In Kajiado County, where public secondary schools often face resource constraints and cultural barriers, fostering a growth mindset can help students overcome external challenges by cultivating a belief in their potential for academic success.

In Kajiado County, public secondary schools such as Isinya Boys, Rombo Girls, and Oloitokitok Secondary School provide unique environments to explore how growth mindset expectations influence student achievement. “This approach is especially important in a county where socio-cultural practices like early marriages and limited access to educational resources may otherwise contribute to lower expectations”. For instance, students from marginalized communities or those from pastoralist backgrounds may face external pressures that could negatively impact their academic confidence. However, teachers who foster a growth mindset can inspire these students to believe in their ability to achieve academic success despite the challenges they face.

Despite the promising impact of growth mindset expectations, research on this approach within Kajiado County remains limited. While studies globally and regionally highlight the importance of teacher expectations in shaping student outcomes, there is a need for more localized research that investigates how growth mindset expectations can be applied in the specific cultural and educational context of Kajiado. This study seeks to bridge this gap by examining how growth

mindset expectations influence teacher practices and student performance in selected public secondary schools in Kajiado County.

#### **1.1.4 Individual potential expectations**

Individual potential expectations refer to the personal beliefs that teachers hold regarding each student's ability to succeed academically. These expectations are shaped by a variety of factors, including the student's previous performance, personality traits, socio-economic background, and sometimes unconscious biases. Teachers' expectations of individual students have profound effects on the students' self-concept and motivation, influencing how they approach their studies and engage in class activities. Research suggests that students who are believed to have high potential are more likely to receive positive reinforcement, challenging tasks, and constructive feedback, which in turn leads to higher academic performance (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). Conversely, students perceived as having lower potential may receive less attention, leading to decreased motivation and academic underachievement.

In the context of Kajiado County, individual potential expectations are shaped by both teacher perceptions and the socio-cultural environment. For instance, public secondary schools such as Isinya Boys, Rombo Girls, and Oloitokitok Secondary School serve students from diverse backgrounds, including those from pastoralist communities. Teachers may have different expectations for students based on their socio-economic status, cultural practices, and family backgrounds. For example, Maasai students, who may come from rural or semi-nomadic backgrounds, might be viewed as having lower academic potential due to the perceived lack of resources or educational support at home. This can lead to biased expectations that affect the level of academic opportunities and support offered to these students. Studies by Wamalwa & Burns

(2018) highlight that, cultural factors such as early marriages among girls, can result in reduced academic expectations for female students, which in turn may lower their academic performance.

“In Kajiado County, the influence of individual potential expectations on student achievement can be seen in the daily interactions between teachers and students”. These challenges can affect how teachers perceive students’ individual potential. The potential of students from marginalized communities may be underestimated due to these contextual factors. However, as teachers become more aware of the importance of fostering high expectations for every student, there is growing evidence that individualized expectations can positively influence student outcomes. Schools that engage in professional development programs, foster inclusivity, and challenge cultural stereotypes are beginning to see improved academic results, indicating the critical role that teacher expectations play in realizing the full potential of every student.

### **1.1.5 Student achievement.**

Student achievement refers to the measurable academic outcomes that students attain in their educational journey, including grades, test scores, and mastery of skills. Globally, student achievement has been linked to various factors, such as teacher quality, parental involvement, and socio-economic status. “Notably, teacher expectations play a significant role in shaping these outcomes. Rosenthal and Jacobson’s (1968) “Pygmalion Effect” demonstrated that when teachers hold high expectations for students, their performance tends to improve, whereas low expectations can limit students’ potential”.

In Kenya, student achievement is central to the country’s education policies, which emphasize access to quality education as a means of improving socio-economic development. However, disparities in student achievement remain, particularly in rural counties like Kajiado, where socio-

cultural practices and economic challenges often hinder academic performance. Research by Nyagosia, Waweru, and Njuguna (2013) found that students in under-resourced schools often struggle to meet academic benchmarks, partly due to low teacher expectations. Schools such as Isinya Boys, Rombo Girls, and Oloitokitok Secondary School face unique challenges, including high student-to-teacher ratios and cultural practices such as early marriages. These factors can lead to uneven teacher expectations, further affecting student achievement in the county (Wamalwa & Burns, 2018).

This study seeks to explore the relationship between teacher expectations and student achievement in Kajiado County, focusing on selected public secondary schools. By analyzing how teacher perceptions and biases influence students' academic outcomes, the research will provide valuable insights into strategies for improving educational equity and performance in the region.

### **1.1.6 Profile of the geographical area**

Kajiado County is located in the southern part of Kenya, bordering Tanzania to the south and southeast. "It spans an area of approximately 21,292 square kilometers, making it one of the larger counties in the country. The county is part of the Rift Valley region and lies between latitudes 1°10' and 3°10' South and longitudes 36°05' and 37°55' East (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics [KNBS], 2019)." Its administrative headquarters is in Kajiado Town, with other major towns including Namanga, Isinya, Loitokitok, and Ongata Rongai.

The geographical landscape of Kajiado County is characterized by a semi-arid climate, with vast plains, savannah grasslands, and scattered hills such as Ngong Hills and Chyulu Hills. The county experiences bimodal rainfall patterns, with long rains occurring between March and May and short rains between October and December. Annual rainfall varies from 300mm to 1250mm depending

on altitude, with the highlands receiving more rainfall than the lowlands (KNBS, 2019). This variation in climate affects agricultural practices, which are the primary economic activity for many residents. However, pastoralism remains a dominant livelihood due to the Maasai community's reliance on livestock.

The county has a population of approximately 1.1 million people, with the Maasai community being the predominant ethnic group (KNBS, 2019). Other communities include the Kikuyu, Kamba, and Luo, contributing to the county's cultural diversity. Kajiado County faces unique socio-economic challenges, including high levels of poverty, limited access to quality education, and socio-cultural practices such as early marriages and child labor, which impact educational outcomes (Wamalwa & Burns, 2018). Despite these challenges, the county has made significant progress in education, with an increasing number of schools and enrollment rates.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Teacher expectations play a significant role in shaping students' academic performance. Studies globally have shown that high expectations positively influence student outcomes, while low expectations can hinder performance (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). In Kenya, the education sector has made strides in increasing access to education, yet disparities in academic achievement remain prevalent. In Kajiado County, public secondary schools such as Isinya Boys, Rombo Girls, and Oloitokitok Secondary School report varied academic performance due to factors like socio-cultural practices, limited resources, and teacher attitudes. Statistics from the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) results in 2022 indicate that only 35% of students in public secondary schools in Kajiado County attained the minimum university entry grade of C+, compared to the national average of 45% (Kenya National Examination Council [KNEC], 2022). This disparity raises questions about the role of teacher expectations in influencing these outcomes.

A methodological gap exists in the existing research on teacher expectations and student achievement. While studies such as Nyagosia, Waweru, and Njuguna (2013) have focused on teacher management practices, few have employed mixed-methods approaches to comprehensively assess the specific influence of teacher expectations on academic outcomes. Most studies rely heavily on quantitative approaches, neglecting the qualitative insights that could reveal the nuanced socio-cultural factors affecting teacher expectations in specific contexts like Kajiado County. This lack of methodological diversity limits the depth of understanding of how teacher expectations impact student achievement.

Additionally, a knowledge gap exists in understanding the localized dynamics of teacher expectations in Kajiado County. While global and regional studies emphasize the significance of teacher expectations in influencing achievement (Ferguson, 2003; Chege & Sifuna, 2006), there is limited empirical evidence addressing how cultural practices such as early marriages and pastoralism, coupled with resource constraints, shape teacher expectations and their effects on students in Kajiado. For example, girls in Kajiado County face unique barriers, with reports indicating that 30% drop out of secondary school due to early marriages and pregnancies (Wamalwa & Burns, 2018). However, the specific ways teacher expectations interact with these factors to influence student achievement remain underexplored.

This study aims to fill these gaps by employing a mixed-methods approach to assess the influence of teacher expectations on student achievement in selected public secondary schools in Kajiado County. “By addressing both methodological and knowledge gaps, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issue, contributing to evidence-based interventions to improve academic performance and equity in education”.

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

#### **1.3.1 General objective**

The main objective of the study was assessing teacher expectations on students' achievement in Kajiado county.

#### **1.3.2 Specific objectives**

- i. To examine the effect of teachers' academic expectations on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kajiado County.
- ii. To assess the influence of teachers' growth mindset expectations on students' academic performance in public schools in Kajiado County
- iii. To evaluate the effect of teachers' individual potential expectations on students' academic performance in Kajiado County's public secondary schools.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

- i. How do teachers' academic expectations impact students' academic performance in selected public secondary schools in Kajiado County?
- ii. How do teachers' growth mindset expectations influence students' approach to learning and resilience in academic challenges?
- iii. What approaches do teachers use to recognize and support individual potential among students in these schools?

### **1.5 Justification**

Firstly, this study will contribute significantly to policy formulation in the education sector in Kenya, particularly within Kajiado County. Such policies may include training modules that sensitize teachers about the consequences of their expectations on learner performance. Additionally, education stakeholders may use the evidence to design inclusive policies that address

disparities in teacher perceptions of students based on gender, background, or ability, thereby supporting equitable learning environments

Secondly, the study was added to the body of theoretical knowledge by validating and contextualizing Rosenthal and Jacobson's Pygmalion Effect Theory, Dweck's Mindset Theory, and Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences in the Kenyan educational setting. The findings may demonstrate how these theories interact in influencing student achievement, thereby extending their application beyond Western contexts to African public schools. This will enrich theoretical debates on how teacher beliefs and student self-perceptions contribute to performance, offering a nuanced understanding relevant for future scholarly inquiry.

“Lastly, regarding educational practice, the study will provide practical insights for teachers, administrators, and education practitioners on fostering high expectations and nurturing growth mindsets among students.” Teachers can apply the recommendations to adjust classroom interactions, improve feedback practices, and create motivating environments that enhance student engagement. School administrators can also use the findings to support teacher professional development programs aimed at reducing unconscious bias and promoting reflective practice.

## **1.6 Scope of the study**

The study focuses on assessing the influence of teacher expectations on students' achievement in Kajiado County, with specific attention to selected public secondary schools, including institutions such as Isinya Boys, Rombo Girls, and Oloitokitok Secondary School. It explores various dimensions of teacher expectations, such as how they are communicated to students and how they shape student motivation, effort, and performance outcomes. “The targeted population for this study includes teachers and students from the selected public secondary schools in Kajiado County”. Specifically, the study will involve teachers responsible for key subjects like Mathematics, English, and Sciences, as well as students in Forms 3 and 4, who are preparing for the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations. This population is chosen to

provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between teacher expectations and students' academic achievement.

The study will be conducted within the timeframe of September to April, allowing for data collection during the school term, when teachers and students are actively engaged in academic activities. This period is suitable as it aligns with critical academic milestones, such as exam preparation and assessment periods, offering valuable insights into how teacher expectations influence students' performance.

By focusing on these parameters, the study aims to generate evidence-based recommendations for enhancing teacher-student interactions, improving academic outcomes, and informing policy decisions in Kajiado County's education sector.

### **1.7 Chapter summary**

This chapter provides an overview of the study, including the background, problem statement, objectives, and research questions. It highlights the significance of teacher expectations as a key determinant of student achievement, focusing on global, regional, and local contexts. The chapter identifies gaps in existing literature, particularly in Kajiado County, where unique socio-cultural and economic factors influence education. The objectives of the study are outlined, emphasizing the need to understand the relationship between teacher expectations and student outcomes in selected public secondary schools.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

In this section of the research study literature that relates to study variables has been reviewed with an aim of exposing existing information gaps. Literature review comprises documentation of information that relates to the subject under exploration. The sections further present's theories related to the study, empirical literature review, research gaps, conceptual framework, operationalization of variables and chapter summary.

#### 2.1 Theoretical Literature Review

This study is guided by three theories: Rosenthal and Jacobson's Pygmalion Effect Theory, Dweck's Mindset Theory, and Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences. The anchor theory is the Pygmalion Effect Theory, which emphasizes that students often perform according to the expectations teachers set for them (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). Dweck's Mindset Theory explains how fostering a growth mindset can motivate students to achieve more (Dweck, 2006), while Gardner's theory highlights the importance of recognizing diverse intelligences to set fair academic expectations (Gardner, 1983).

##### 2.1.1 Rosenthal and Jacobson's Pygmalion Effect Theory

"The anchor theory is the Pygmalion Effect Theory, proposed by psychologists Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson in 1968." Their work demonstrated that teachers' expectations can become self-fulfilling prophecies, significantly shaping students' academic outcomes (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). This theory suggests that teachers' expectations influence students' academic outcomes through self-fulfilling prophecies. When teachers believe in a student's potential, they tend to offer more support, encouragement, and intellectual challenges, which enhances student motivation and performance.

Critics of the Pygmalion Effect argue that it oversimplifies the relationship between teacher expectations and student performance. Jussim and Harber (2005) criticized the theory for

exaggerating the role of teacher expectations, arguing that student characteristics, socio-economic factors, and personal motivation play a larger role in academic success. Raudenbush (1984) also questioned the consistency of the effect, suggesting that its impact varies depending on classroom dynamics and individual student resilience. Additionally, Wineburg (1987) argued that some studies supporting the theory lacked methodological rigor, making it difficult to establish a direct causal link between teacher expectations and student achievement.

Despite these criticisms, the Pygmalion Effect remains relevant to the study of public secondary schools in Kajjado County. It provides insight into how teacher expectations shape students' academic self-perception and motivation. In resource-constrained environments, where students often lack external academic support, positive teacher expectations can be a crucial factor in improving performance. Understanding this relationship can help educators and policymakers implement strategies that foster high expectations, ultimately enhancing academic outcomes in public secondary schools.

### **2.1.2 Dweck's Mindset Theory**

Carol S. Dweck, an American psychologist, introduced the Mindset Theory in 2006, arguing that students' beliefs about intelligence whether they view it as fixed or capable of growth strongly influence motivation and achievement (Dweck, 2006). Carol Dweck proposed that individuals have either a fixed mindset (believing intelligence and abilities are innate and unchangeable) or a growth mindset (believing intelligence can develop through effort and learning). This, in turn, fosters resilience and a positive approach to learning among students.

However, the theory has faced criticism from several scholars. Li and Bates (2019) argued that the effects of growth mindset interventions are often overstated and that empirical evidence supporting its impact on academic success is inconsistent. Sisk et al. (2018) conducted a meta-analysis and found that while growth mindset interventions have some benefits, their effects are small and vary

depending on context. Additionally, Macnamara and Burgoyne (2022) questioned the long-term sustainability of mindset interventions, suggesting that external factors such as socio-economic background and quality of instruction may have a more significant impact on student resilience than mindset alone.

Despite these criticisms, Dweck's Mindset Theory remains relevant to this study as it highlights how teachers' beliefs about student potential can shape their instructional methods and interactions. In public secondary schools, particularly in Kajiado County, where students may face economic and social challenges, a growth mindset approach can help create a supportive learning environment. Teachers who encourage effort, perseverance, and adaptive learning strategies can enhance students' ability to overcome academic obstacles. Understanding this dynamic can help educators and policymakers develop interventions that promote persistence and adaptive learning habits, ultimately improving academic outcomes in public secondary schools.

### **2.1.3 Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences**

The study draws on Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, first introduced in 1983, which posits that intelligence is not a single general ability but consists of multiple distinct intelligences such as linguistic, logical-mathematical, and interpersonal (Gardner, 1983). Gardner proposed that intelligence is not a single, fixed ability but consists of multiple intelligences, including linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, spatial, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic intelligences. When teachers recognize and nurture students' individual potential based on these diverse intelligences, they can help students develop their unique talents and abilities. This approach encourages differentiated instruction and personalized learning, fostering student growth beyond traditional academic measures.

However, the theory has faced criticism from several scholars. Waterhouse (2006) argued that there is insufficient empirical evidence to support the existence of multiple intelligences as distinct cognitive abilities. She contended that intelligence is better understood through general

intelligence (g-factor) rather than separate intelligences. Willingham (2004) also criticized the theory, stating that while students may have different learning preferences, there is little evidence that teaching according to multiple intelligences improves learning outcomes. Additionally, Klein (1997) raised concerns about the lack of a standardized assessment method for multiple intelligences, making its practical application in education inconsistent.

Despite these criticisms, Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences remains relevant to the study as it provides a framework for understanding how teachers' expectations can shape students' self-perception and talent development. Teachers who recognize and encourage different intelligences can create inclusive learning environments that foster student engagement and success in various fields, including arts, sports, leadership, and technical skills. Understanding this dynamic can help educators and policymakers design interventions that promote holistic education, ensuring that students' unique abilities are identified, nurtured, and valued in the academic system.

## **2.2 Empirical Literature Review**

This section reviews recent empirical studies related to teacher expectations, academic expectations, and growth mindset and how these factors affect students' academic achievement. By examining local and international research findings, the review identifies patterns, gaps, and evidence that support the current study. It also helps to highlight the practical influence of teacher beliefs and student attitudes on educational outcomes. This empirical analysis forms the foundation for comparing previous findings with the present study conducted in Kajiado County.

### **2.2.1 Academic expectations on students' achievement**

“Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) conducted a landmark study in the United States, introducing the Pygmalion Effect Theory, which demonstrated that when teachers held high expectations for students, those students performed better academically.” Their study, conducted in an elementary school, randomly labeled some students as “intellectual bloomers,” and these students showed

significant academic improvement due to teachers' increased attention and encouragement. Similarly, Jussim and Harber (2005) re-examined this effect and found that while teacher expectations influence student performance, external factors such as parental support and socio-economic background also play a crucial role.

At the regional level, studies in Africa have reinforced the impact of academic expectations on student achievement. Opare (1999) conducted research in Ghanaian secondary schools and found that students whose teachers maintained high academic expectations demonstrated better performance, particularly in subjects like mathematics and science. The study concluded that teacher expectations shape students' self-confidence and willingness to engage in challenging tasks. In South Africa, Mupa and Chinooneka (2015) examined the relationship between teacher expectations and student discipline, finding that high expectations not only improved academic performance but also fostered positive behavioral traits that contributed to long-term success.

In Kenya, local studies have provided additional insights into the relationship between academic expectations and student achievement. Mugo (2016) examined public secondary schools in Nairobi County and found that when teachers explicitly communicated high academic expectations, students showed increased motivation and effort in their studies. The study also highlighted that gender and socio-economic status influenced how students internalized teacher expectations. Furthermore, Njuguna and Wambua (2020) conducted a study in Kajiado County, revealing that students performed better in schools where teachers reinforced high expectations through structured feedback, mentorship, and rigorous academic guidance. However, they also noted that external challenges, such as lack of learning resources and parental involvement, could moderate the effectiveness of teacher expectations.

The Pygmalion Effect Theory (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968) provides a strong theoretical foundation for understanding these findings, explaining how teacher expectations can create a self-fulfilling prophecy in student performance. The target populations in these studies have primarily been secondary school students and teachers, as their interactions significantly influence learning outcomes. By analyzing global, regional, and local perspectives, this literature review underscores the importance of fostering high academic expectations in schools to enhance student achievement and long-term academic success.

### **2.2.2 Growth mindset expectations on students' achievement**

Dweck (2006) conducted a pioneering study in the United States, introducing the Mindset Theory, which distinguishes between a fixed mindset (believing intelligence is static) and a growth mindset (believing intelligence can develop through effort and learning). Dweck's study found that students whose teachers held a growth mindset performed better academically because they embraced challenges, persisted through difficulties, and viewed failures as learning opportunities. Additionally, Yeager and Dweck (2012) conducted a longitudinal study showing that students exposed to growth mindset interventions exhibited increased resilience and higher academic performance, particularly among those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

At the regional level, studies in Africa have reinforced the significance of growth mindset expectations in improving student achievement. Claro, Panuska, and Dweck (2016) examined students in Chile and South Africa and found that those with a growth mindset outperformed their peers, even when facing socio-economic hardships. The study concluded that when teachers encouraged students to believe in their ability to improve through effort, their academic performance significantly increased. Similarly, Asiedu-Addo and Yidana (2019) conducted a study

in Ghana focusing on mathematics education, revealing that students performed better when teachers emphasized persistence, learning from mistakes, and hard work rather than innate ability.

In Kenya, local studies have provided further insights into the role of teachers' growth mindset expectations on students' achievement. Mwangi and Njuguna (2021) conducted research in Nairobi County public secondary schools, finding that students whose teachers reinforced a growth mindset demonstrated greater academic resilience, particularly in subjects perceived as difficult, such as mathematics and sciences. Additionally, Wambua (2022) studied public secondary schools in Kajiado County, concluding that teachers who encouraged students to embrace challenges and learn from their mistakes saw improved academic performance.

The Mindset Theory (Dweck, 2006) provides a strong theoretical foundation for these findings, explaining how beliefs about intelligence influence student motivation, effort, and performance. The target populations in these studies have primarily been secondary school students and teachers, as teacher expectations play a crucial role in shaping students' academic behaviors. By analyzing global, regional, and local perspectives, this literature review highlights the importance of fostering a growth mindset in schools to enhance student achievement and long-term academic success.

### **2.2.3 Individual potential expectations on students' achievement**

Gardner (1983) introduced the Theory of Multiple Intelligences, emphasizing that students possess different intellectual strengths beyond traditional academic skills. "In a study conducted in the United States, Subotnik, Olszewski-Kubilius, and Worrell (2011) examined how recognizing students' unique abilities in various domains (such as music, sports, leadership, and creativity) impacted their academic and professional success." Their research found that when teachers tailored their expectations to students' strengths, learners exhibited higher motivation and long-

term achievement. Similarly, Renzulli (2005) explored gifted education strategies and concluded that nurturing students' potential through differentiated learning approaches led to enhanced performance and self-confidence.

Eze and Olatunji (2017) conducted a study in Nigeria examining how teachers' perceptions of students' talents influenced academic engagement. Their findings indicated that students performed better when teachers identified and nurtured their specific abilities, such as problem-solving, leadership, or artistic expression. Additionally, Anamuah-Mensah and Towse (2010) in Ghana studied talent development in secondary education and found that schools that embraced diverse student abilities (beyond core academic subjects) produced more well-rounded and high-achieving learners. Their study reinforced the idea that individualized expectations contribute to improved student self-efficacy and performance.

In Kenya, local research has further emphasized the importance of teachers' expectations in fostering students' unique talents. Mbugua (2018) conducted a study in Nairobi County public secondary schools, assessing how teachers' recognition of students' potential influenced their academic and co-curricular achievements. The study found that students whose teachers encouraged personal talents—such as innovation, athletics, and public speaking—showed greater enthusiasm for learning and performed better academically. Similarly, Wainaina and Mwangi (2022) studied Kajiado County schools and found that teachers who set individualized learning goals based on students' strengths significantly improved academic outcomes. However, they noted that resource constraints and rigid curriculum structures sometimes limited teachers' ability to fully support diverse student potential.

The Theory of Multiple Intelligences (Gardner, 1983) provides a strong theoretical framework for these findings, emphasizing the need for education systems to recognize and nurture different

forms of intelligence. By examining global, regional, and local perspectives, this literature review highlights the importance of fostering individualized expectations to maximize student potential and enhance overall achievement.

### 2.3 Summary and Research Gaps

This section summarizes key empirical studies and identifies research gaps that the current study intends to address. By reviewing both international and local literature, it highlights areas where further research is necessary to deepen understanding of how teacher expectations, academic expectations, and growth mindset.

**Table 1: Summary and Research Gaps**

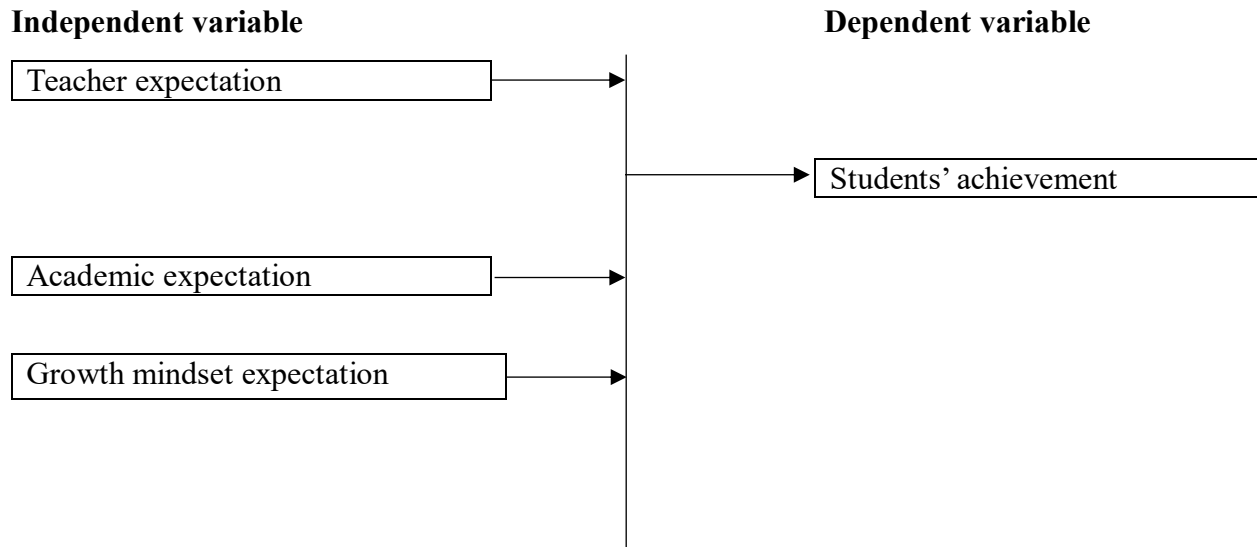
<b>Author(s) &amp; Year</b>	<b>Focus of the Study</b>	<b>Summary of Findings</b>	<b>Research Gaps</b>	<b>Focus of Current Study</b>
Rosenthal & Jacobson (1968)	Teacher expectations and student performance	Found teacher expectations significantly shape student outcomes through the Pygmalion effect.	Conducted in American schools; lacks evidence in Sub-Saharan African contexts.	Examine teacher expectations in public secondary schools in Kajiado County, Kenya.
Dweck (2006)	Growth mindset and learning	Demonstrated students with a growth mindset achieve higher resilience and improved grades.	Lacked integration with external teacher expectations; mostly Western context.	Investigate how teachers foster growth mindsets among students in Kenyan schools.
Gardner (1983)	Multiple intelligences and education	Recognizing different intelligences helps personalize learning and raise engagement.	Rarely empirically tested in secondary schools in Kenya.	Explore how teachers apply this theory when setting academic expectations.
Rubie-Davies (2010)	Teacher beliefs and classroom practice	Teachers with high expectations create supportive environments, improving achievement.	Focused on primary schools in developed countries; lacks Kenyan data.	Assess impact of teacher beliefs in Kajiado County's public secondary schools.

Author(s) & Year	Focus of the Study	Summary of Findings	Research Gaps	Focus of Current Study
Jussim & Harber (2005)	Self-fulfilling prophecies in education	Teacher expectations can create cycles of high or low achievement.	Limited exploration of cultural contexts and systemic factors.	Analyze how self-fulfilling prophecies operate within Kenyan public schools.
Hattie (2012)	Visible learning and teacher influence	Teacher expectations are among the strongest school-based predictors of achievement.	Mostly quantitative meta-analysis; limited local qualitative insights.	Provide context-specific qualitative and quantitative data from Kajiado.
Kibe et al. (2018)	Teacher expectations in rural Kenyan schools	Found positive expectations correlated with higher student motivation.	Focused mainly on primary education; secondary schools underexplored.	Extend research to public secondary schools in Kajiado County.
Mwangi & Wambugu (2020)	Mindset interventions among Kenyan students	Mindset workshops improved academic resilience.	Short-term study; didn't consider teacher expectations.	Examine combined effect of growth mindset and teacher expectations.
Mumo et al. (2021)	Academic expectations and performance	Academic expectations predicted performance in Nairobi private schools.	Urban private schools only; public rural schools unstudied.	Investigate academic expectations in rural public schools in Kajiado County.
Onyango (2022)	Multiple intelligences and classroom outcomes	Teachers who used diverse strategies reported higher student engagement.	Focused on lower secondary classes; less on upper secondary.	Assess application across all secondary levels in Kajiado County.

## 2.4 Conceptual framework.

“The conceptual framework provides a structured approach to understanding the relationship between teacher expectations and student achievement.”

**Figure 1:Conceptual Framework**



**2.5 Operationalization of variables**

This section presents how the key variables of the study teacher expectations, academic expectations, and growth mindset were defined and measured in the context of this research. Operationalization helps clarify what each variable means practically and how it was quantified using specific indicators in the data collection instruments. This ensures consistency, reliability, and validity in analyzing the relationship between these variables and students' academic achievement.

**Table 2:Operationalization of Variables**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Measurement method</b>
Teacher expectations	Independent variable	Beliefs about students' potential Perception of student ability Teacher-student interactions Classroom instructional practices	Teacher surveys and interviews Classroom observations Lesson plan analysis
Academic Expectations	Independent variable	Expected student performance levels Setting of academic targets Feedback on student progress	Teacher questionnaires Student surveys Analysis of student performance trends

Growth expectation	mindset	Independent variable	Encouragement of high achievement Belief that intelligence can be developed Encouragement of effort and perseverance Use of constructive feedback Adaptations of teaching strategies to student needs	Teacher mindset assessment Interviews with teachers and students Classroom observation of feedback and motivation techniques
Student achievement		Dependent variable	Academic performance (grades test scores) Classroom engagement (participation, attendance) Motivation and self- efficacy Improvement in learning outcomes overtime	Analysis of student academic records Student self- assessment surveys Teacher evaluations of student progress

## 2.6 Chapter summary

Explores existing research on the impact of teacher expectations on student performance. It examines theories such as the Pygmalion effect, which suggests that high teacher expectations can lead to improved student outcomes, while low expectations may hinder academic progress. The review also discusses factors influencing teacher expectations, including socio-economic backgrounds, gender, and cultural perceptions, and how these shape classroom interactions. Finally, the chapter identifies gaps in existing research, particularly in rural and underrepresented areas like Kajiado County, justifying the need for this study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology employed in the study. It provides a detailed explanation of the research approach, design, population, sampling techniques, data

collection methods, and data analysis procedures. The chapter also contains ethical consideration and chapter summary.

### **3.1 Research design**

This study adopts a descriptive case study research design to assess teacher expectations on students' achievement in selected public secondary schools in Kajiado County. The case study approach is appropriate as it allows for an in-depth exploration of teachers' perceptions, beliefs, and expectations regarding student performance within a real-life educational context.

The descriptive nature of this research helps in systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data to provide a clear picture of how teacher expectations influence student achievement. "Both qualitative and quantitative research methods will be utilized to capture a comprehensive understanding of the issue." Surveys and structured interviews will be employed to gather data from teachers, while students' academic performance records will be analyzed to identify patterns and correlations. This research design is selected because it enables the researcher to focus on a specific area—public secondary schools in Kajiado County.

### **3.2 Target population**

A target population refers to the entire group of individuals or elements that a researcher intends to study and generalize findings from (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). "In this study, the target population consists of approximately 2,000 individuals, including students, teachers, and school administrators from selected public secondary schools in Kajiado County." The selected population represents key stakeholders involved in teaching, learning, and academic performance assessment. This target population ensures that the study captures a comprehensive understanding of how teacher expectations influence students' academic achievement in Kajiado County.

**Table 3: Target Population**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Approximate population size</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Students</b>	<b>1600</b>	<b>80%</b>
<b>Teachers</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>School administrator's</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **3.3 Sample and sampling techniques**

A sample is a subset of the target population selected for study, representing the characteristics of the whole population (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). “Given that the target population for this study is approximately 2,000, a representative sample will be selected to ensure the findings are generalizable.” According to Kothari (2004), an ideal sample size should be large enough to allow for reliable conclusions while being manageable for data collection. For this study, a 20% sample size will be drawn, resulting in 400 participants, including students, teachers, and school administrators. This sample size aligns with Creswell’s (2014) recommendation that in social sciences, a sample size between 10% and 30% of the target population is appropriate.

“To ensure a fair representation of all groups, the study will employ a combination of stratified random sampling, simple random sampling, and purposive sampling techniques.” Stratified random sampling will be used to divide the population into three distinct strata: students, teachers, and school administrators (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). This technique ensures that each subgroup is proportionally represented. After stratification, simple random sampling will be used to select participants from the student and teacher groups, minimizing bias and ensuring equal representation (Bryman, 2016). Purposive sampling will be applied to select school administrators, as they hold leadership roles and possess specific insights into teacher expectations and student achievement.

The combination of these sampling techniques ensures that diverse perspectives are captured while maintaining the reliability and validity of the study. Stratified sampling improves accuracy by representing key subgroups, while random sampling enhances objectivity in participant selection (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). Furthermore, purposive sampling allows the study to gather in-depth insights from administrators who influence school policies. By employing these methods, the study will generate findings that accurately reflect the impact of teacher expectations on students' academic achievement in Kajiado County.

### **3.3.1 Sampling techniques**

To assess teacher expectations on students' achievement in selected public secondary schools in Kajiado County, a combination of stratified random sampling, simple random sampling, and purposive sampling will be used. Stratified random sampling is suitable because it divides the population into distinct subgroups, ensuring representation of key stakeholders such as students, teachers, and school administrators (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). Once the strata are established, simple random sampling will be applied to select students and teachers, minimizing selection bias and ensuring equal chances of participation (Bryman, 2016). This approach enhances generalizability by ensuring that the selected sample accurately reflects the overall population.

Additionally, purposive sampling will be used to select school administrators, as their leadership roles provide valuable insights into institutional policies that shape teacher expectations (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). This non-probability sampling method allows for the intentional selection of participants based on their expertise and relevance to the study (Kothari, 2004). The combination of these techniques ensures a balanced, representative, and data-rich sample,

facilitating a comprehensive understanding of how teacher expectations influence student achievement in Kajiado County.

### 3.3.2 Sample size

#### Sample Size Applicable to the Study

In determining an appropriate sample size for assessing teacher expectations on student achievement in selected public secondary schools in Kajiado County, statistical methods and expert recommendations are considered. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) suggest that a sample size of 10% to 30% of the target population is adequate for social science research. Given a total target population of approximately 2,000, selecting 20% would yield a sample size of 400 participants, including students, teachers, and school administrators.

To determine a more precise sample size, Yamane's (1967) formula for calculating sample size in a finite population can be used:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

Where:

n = required sample size

N = target population (2,000)

e = margin of error (typically 5% or 0.05)

Substituting values:

$$n = \frac{2000}{1 + 2000(0.05^2)}$$

$$n = \frac{2000}{6}$$

$$n = 333$$

Thus, a sample size of approximately 333 respondents is statistically appropriate. This ensures a balance between accuracy and feasibility in data collection while maintaining representativeness of the study population.

**Table 4: Sample Distribution**

Category	Target population	Sampling percentage	Sample size
Students	1600	20.8	266
Teachers	350	17.1	60
School administrator's	50	14.0	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>2000</b>		<b>333</b>

### 3.3.3 Sampling procedure

“The study will employ a multistage sampling procedure, combining stratified random sampling, simple random sampling, and purposive sampling to ensure a representative and unbiased selection of participants.” According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2018), stratified sampling enhances accuracy by dividing the population into distinct subgroups, ensuring fair representation of key stakeholders. “In this study, the target population will be stratified into three groups: students, teachers, and school administrators.” Within each stratum, simple random sampling will be used to select students and teachers, ensuring that every individual in the subgroup has an equal chance of being chosen (Bryman, 2016).

For school administrators, purposive sampling will be used due to their specific roles in shaping teacher expectations and school policies (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). This method allows

for the intentional selection of principals and deputy principals who provide critical insights into how institutional frameworks influence teacher expectations and student achievement.

### **3.4 Instrument**

To assess teacher expectations on students' achievement in selected public secondary schools in Kajiado County, a combination of questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis will be used. Questionnaires will be the primary instrument for collecting data from teachers and students, as they allow for the collection of standardized responses from a large group efficiently (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). "The questionnaire will include both closed-ended and open-ended questions to gather quantitative and qualitative data on teacher expectations and their perceived impact on student performance." Closed-ended questions will help in statistical analysis, while open-ended questions will provide deeper insights into participants' views (Creswell, 2014).

In addition, interviews will be conducted with school administrators to obtain detailed information on institutional policies and teacher-student interactions. Interviews allow for clarification of responses and collection of rich qualitative data (Bryman, 2016). Lastly, document analysis will be used to review student academic records and teacher assessment reports to establish a correlation between teacher expectations and student achievement. This triangulation of data collection methods ensures reliability and validity, leading to comprehensive findings (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019).

### **3.5 Pilot study**

A pilot study is a small-scale preliminary study conducted before the main research to test the feasibility, reliability, and validity of research instruments and procedures (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). It helps identify potential weaknesses in the research design, ensuring that questions are

clear and appropriate for the target respondents (Creswell, 2014). “In the study on assessing teacher expectations on students’ achievement in Kajiado County, a pilot study will be conducted in one or two public secondary schools that are not part of the main study.” Any necessary adjustments, such as rewording unclear questions or improving response options, will be made before full-scale data collection to enhance the accuracy and credibility of the study (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019).

### **3.5.1 Validity**

Validity refers to the extent to which a research instrument accurately measures what it is intended to measure (Creswell, 2014). It ensures that the data collected truly represents the phenomenon under investigation, reducing errors and biases in research findings (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). There are different types of validity, including content validity, construct validity, and criterion validity (Kothari, 2004). “In the study on assessing teacher expectations on students’ achievement in Kajiado County, validity will be ensured by designing questionnaires and interview guides that align with the research objectives.” Expert reviews and pilot testing will be conducted to refine the instruments, ensuring they effectively capture data on teacher expectations and student achievement.

To enhance content validity, questions in the research instruments will be structured based on established theories and previous studies on teacher expectations and student performance (Bryman, 2016). Construct validity will be ensured by using a well-defined conceptual framework that links teacher expectations to student achievement. Additionally, criterion validity will be strengthened by comparing responses from teachers, students, and school administrators to identify

consistencies and discrepancies (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). These measures will ensure that the study produces reliable and credible findings applicable to educational settings in Kajiado County.

### **3.5.2 Reliability**

Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of a research instrument in measuring a concept over time (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). A study is considered reliable if the same results can be obtained when the research is repeated under similar conditions (Creswell, 2014). Reliability is categorized into different types, including test-retest reliability, internal consistency reliability, and inter-rater reliability (Kothari, 2004). “In the study on assessing teacher expectations on students’ achievement in Kajiado County, reliability will be ensured by pre-testing research instruments in a pilot study.” This will help identify ambiguous questions and refine them for clarity and accuracy before full data collection.

To further enhance reliability, the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient will be used to measure the internal consistency of the questionnaire items, ensuring that they produce stable and consistent responses (Bryman, 2016). Additionally, the study will apply standardized data collection procedures, such as using the same set of questions for all respondents and maintaining uniform administration conditions (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). By ensuring reliability, the study will produce trustworthy findings that accurately reflect the impact of teacher expectations on student achievement in public secondary schools in Kajiado County.

### **3.6 Data collection procedure**

Data collection for this study followed a carefully structured process to ensure accuracy, ethical compliance, and reliability of the findings. After obtaining the necessary research permit and authorization from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

(NACOSTI), as well as formal consent from the County Director of Education and school principals in Kajiado County, the researcher prepared and pre-tested the data collection instruments (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

To enhance validity, a pilot study was conducted in two schools that were not part of the main sample, as recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003). Feedback from the pilot helped refine questionnaire items to ensure clarity, relevance, and consistency. “Once the tools were finalized, the actual data collection was carried out using structured questionnaires, which were distributed to sampled students, teachers, and school administrators.” The researcher personally visited each selected school and, with the assistance of school administration, scheduled appropriate times for data collection to avoid disrupting teaching and learning (Kothari, 2004). Respondents were assured of confidentiality and voluntary participation as guided by ethical research principles (Bryman, 2016). Throughout the process, the researcher maintained close supervision and was available to clarify any questions raised by respondents to ensure accurate understanding of questionnaire items (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012).

### **3.7 Data analysis and presentation**

Data analysis is the process of systematically examining, transforming, and organizing collected data to extract meaningful insights that address the study objectives (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, data collected through structured questionnaires were first checked for completeness, accuracy, and consistency. “After cleaning, data were coded and entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to facilitate systematic analysis.”

Descriptive statistics — including frequencies, percentages, and means — were computed to summarize demographic characteristics of respondents and to describe trends within the independent variables (teacher expectations, academic expectations, and growth mindset) and the dependent variable (students’ academic achievement) (Kothari, 2004). These results were then presented using tables and charts to enhance clarity and interpretability, as recommended by Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012). To further understand relationships among variables, cross-tabulations were conducted to explore how specific levels of teacher expectations or growth mindset align with observed differences in student performance. Where necessary, inferential

statistics such as Chi-square tests or correlation analysis were applied to test the strength and significance of associations (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

Data interpretation followed a thematic approach, where statistical findings were connected back to the study objectives and theoretical framework, ensuring consistency with existing literature and theories like the Pygmalion Effect and Mindset Theory (Dweck, 2006; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). The careful use of both descriptive and inferential techniques enhanced the study's reliability, validity, and contribution to policy, theory, and educational practice.

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

First, informed consent will be obtained from all participants, including teachers, students, and school administrators, before data collection begins (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Participants will be assured of voluntary participation, with the right to withdraw at any stage without consequences. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained by assigning codes instead of names to protect respondents' identities (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, the study will seek ethical approval from relevant authorities such as the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure compliance with ethical research guidelines (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). Lastly, the researcher will ensure honesty and integrity in data collection, analysis, and reporting to prevent bias or misrepresentation of findings.

#### **3.8.1 Informed Consent**

Informed consent is a fundamental ethical requirement in the study on assessing teacher expectations on students' achievement in Kajiado County, ensuring that all participants voluntarily agree to take part with full knowledge of the research process. Before data collection, participants—including teachers, students, and school administrators—will be provided with detailed information about the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits (Mugenda

& Mugenda, 2003). They will be given an opportunity to ask questions and will be required to sign a consent form, affirming their voluntary participation and right to withdraw at any stage without facing penalties (Creswell, 2014). For student participants, parental or guardian consent will also be sought to comply with ethical standards (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). This process ensures transparency, respects participants' autonomy, and upholds ethical research principles.

### **3.8.2 Voluntary participation**

Voluntary participation is a key ethical principle in the study on assessing teacher expectations on students' achievement in Kajiado County, ensuring that all respondents take part without coercion or undue influence. Participants, including teachers, students, and school administrators, will be informed that their involvement is entirely optional and that they have the right to decline participation or withdraw from the study at any stage without facing any negative consequences (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). This principle upholds autonomy and free will, preventing any form of pressure or manipulation in the research process (Creswell, 2014). "To reinforce this, participants will be required to sign a consent form, affirming that they understand their rights and agree to take part willingly. Respecting voluntary participation ensures ethical integrity and reliability of the study findings (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019)."

### **3.8.3 Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is a crucial ethical consideration in the study on assessing teacher expectations on students' achievement in Kajiado County, ensuring that participants' personal information and responses remain private and secure. To uphold confidentiality, all data collected from teachers, students, and school administrators will be anonymized by assigning unique codes instead of using personal identifiers (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Additionally, responses will be stored in

password-protected databases and accessed only by authorized researchers to prevent unauthorized disclosure (Creswell, 2014). Participants will be assured that their responses will be used solely for research purposes and will not be shared with third parties or school authorities in a way that could reveal their identity (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). Maintaining confidentiality fosters trust, encourages honest responses, and upholds ethical research standards in the study.

#### **3.8.4 Privacy**

Privacy is a key ethical principle in the study on assessing teacher expectations on students' achievement in Kajiado County, ensuring that participants' personal information and responses are protected from unnecessary exposure. In this study, privacy will be maintained by allowing participants to provide information in a secure and non-intrusive manner, such as through anonymous questionnaires and private interview sessions (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Additionally, participants will have the right to control the amount of personal information they disclose, ensuring their comfort and autonomy throughout the research process (Creswell, 2014). The researcher will take precautions to avoid collecting or disclosing sensitive personal details that could identify individuals, thereby safeguarding their privacy (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). Protecting privacy fosters trust, encourages honest responses, and ensures adherence to ethical research standards.

#### **3.8.5 Anonymity**

Anonymity is a critical ethical consideration in the study on assessing teacher expectations on students' achievement in Kajiado County, ensuring that participants' identities remain completely unknown, even to the researcher. To uphold anonymity, no personal identifiers such as names, school affiliations, or contact details will be collected in questionnaires and interview responses

(Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Instead, responses will be assigned coded references to protect participants from potential bias or repercussions (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, during data analysis and reporting, all findings will be presented in a generalized manner to prevent individual identification. Anonymity encourages participants to provide honest and unbiased responses, thereby improving the reliability and credibility of the study (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019).

### **3.9 Chapter summary**

This chapter outlined the research design and methodology used in the study on assessing teacher expectations on students' achievement in Kajiado County, focusing on selected public secondary schools. It described the research design, target population, and sampling procedures, ensuring a representative sample for accurate findings (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The chapter also detailed data collection methods, including questionnaires, interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, highlighting their reliability and validity in capturing relevant data (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, ethical considerations such as informed consent, confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity were discussed to ensure adherence to research ethics (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). Finally, data analysis techniques, both quantitative and qualitative, were outlined to ensure accurate interpretation and presentation of findings. This chapter provides a strong methodological foundation for the study, ensuring credibility and reliability in assessing the influence of teacher expectations on student achievement.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the analysis, interpretation, and presentation of data collected to assess the influence of teacher expectations on student achievement in selected public secondary schools in

Kajiado County. The findings are organized in line with the research objectives and questions, focusing on the various dimensions of teacher expectations, including academic, growth mindset, and individual potential expectations. Both qualitative and quantitative data have been analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis to provide a comprehensive understanding of how teacher perceptions shape student outcomes. The results are discussed with reference to relevant literature and contextual factors unique to Kajiado County

#### 4.1 Presentation of Research Findings

##### 4.1.1 Response Rate

**Table 5:Response Rate**

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Returned	303	91
Not Returned	30	9
Total	333	100

Out of 333 distributed questionnaires, 303 were correctly filled and returned, giving a high response rate of 91%, which indicates good participation and enhances the reliability of the study. This is consistent with Babbie (2015), who argues that a response rate above 70% is sufficient for academic research.

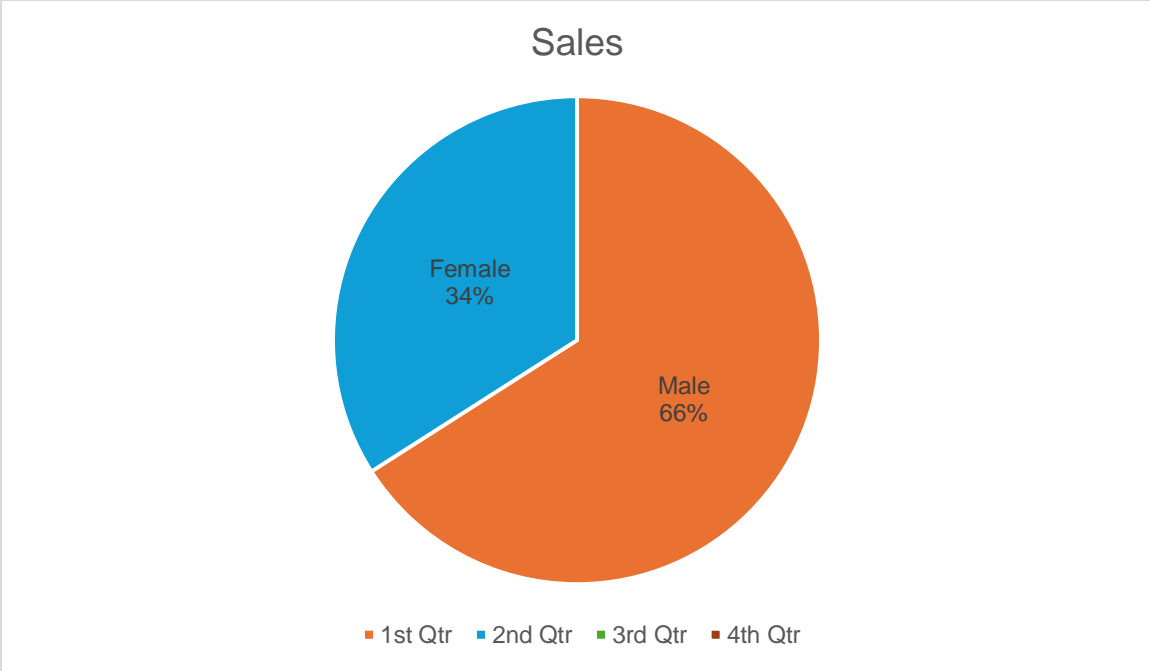
##### 4.1.2 Gender of Respondents

**Table 6:Gender Respondents**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	198	66
Female	105	34
Total	303	100

The study captured more male respondents (65.7%) compared to female (34.3%), showing a gender imbalance that could reflect the teacher demographics in Kajiado. According to UNESCO (2019), male teachers still dominate many rural areas, especially in leadership roles.

#### Figure 2:Gender Respondents



**4.1.3 Age Distribution of Respondents**

**Table 7:Age Distribution of Respondents**

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
20-30 years	52	17
31-40 years	88	29
41-50 years	105	35
Over 50 years	58	19
Total	303	100

“The majority of respondents (34.7%) were aged between 41–50 years, suggesting that most teachers are experienced.” This aligns with studies by MoEST (2016), showing that long-serving teachers form the majority in rural schools.

**4.1.4 Education Levels of Respondents**

**Table 8:Education Level**

Education level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Diploma	89	29
Bachelor’s degree	160	53
Masters and above	54	18
Total	303	100

“The largest group of teachers held a bachelor’s degree (52.8%), showing compliance with TSC requirements.” Higher qualifications (master’s and above) were less common (17.8%), echoing Wambugu & Changeiywo (2016), who noted low uptake of postgraduate education in rural schools.

#### 4.1.5 Years of Teaching Experience

**Table 9:Year of Teaching Experience**

Experience level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than five years	48	16
Six to ten years	77	25
Eleven to twenty years	112	37
Above twenty	66	21
Total	303	100

Most teachers had 11–20 years of experience, implying strong classroom familiarity. The presence of long-serving teachers is important for understanding how expectations are shaped over time (Mutambuki et al., 2018).

#### 4.1.6 Teacher Expectations on Student Ability

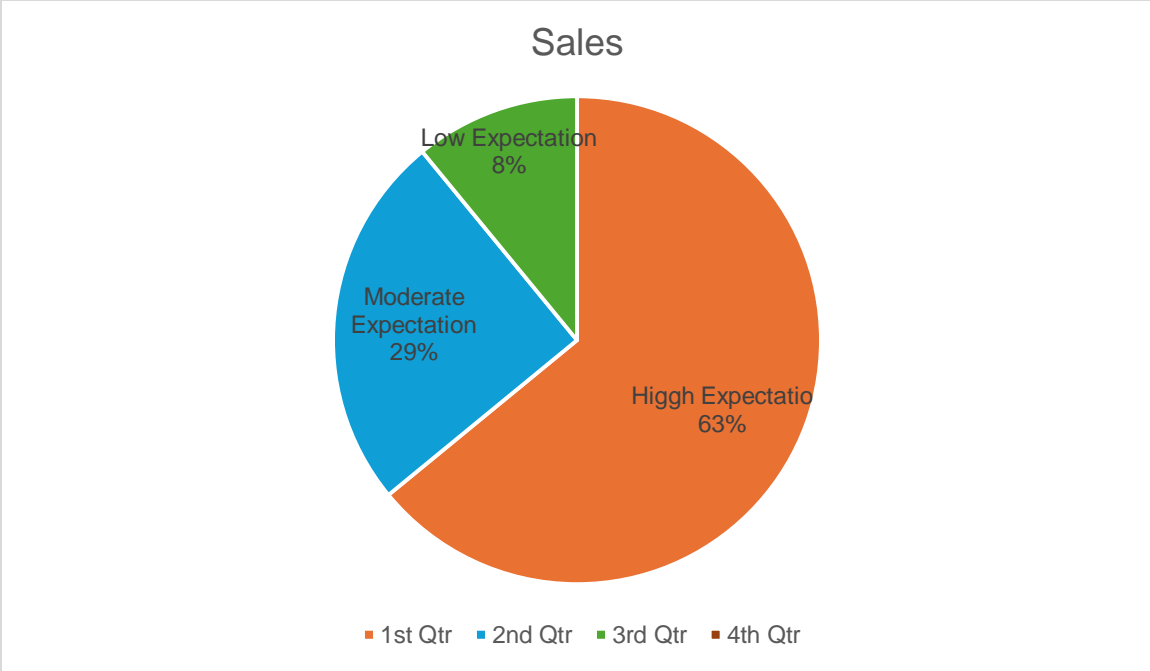
**Table 10:Teacher Expectation on student ability**

Expectation level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High	190	63
Moderate	89	29
Low	24	8
Total	303	100

A majority (63%) reported high expectations, indicating optimism about student potential. This reflects the findings of Dweck (2016), who emphasizes the role of high expectations in cultivating a growth mindset.

*Figure 3:Teacher Expectation on students’ ability*

**Figure 4.1.2 Shows Teacher Expectations on Student Ability**



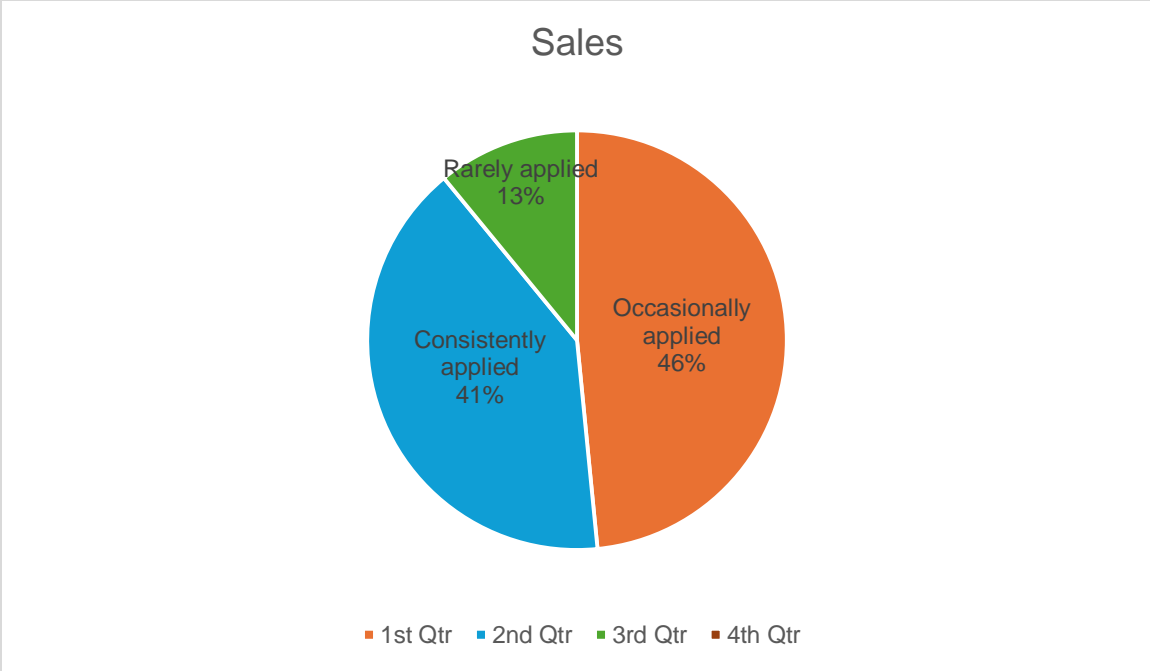
**4.1.7 Growth Mindset Practices**

**Table 11:Growth mindset Practices**

Practice level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Consistently applied	124	41
Occasionally applied	139	46
Rarely applied	40	13
Total	303	100

Nearly 46% of teachers occasionally used growth mindset techniques, suggesting partial integration. According to Claro et al. (2016), consistent growth mindset practices are crucial for sustaining student achievement over time.

**Figure 4:Growth Mindset Practices**



**4.1.8 Teacher Expectations by Gender**

**Table 12: Teaching Expectation by Gender**

Gender	High expectation	Moderate	Low	Total
Male	128	55	15	198
Female	62	34	9	105
Total	190	89	24	303

Both male and female teachers held high expectations, though males slightly dominated. This may suggest that expectation levels aren't strongly gendered but influenced by training and experience, as argued by Akyeampong et al. (2017).

**4.1.9 Academic Performance and Teacher Expectations**

**Table 13: Academic Performance and Teacher Expectation**

Performance Group	High expectation (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)
High- achieving	78	20	2
Average-achieving	55	35	10

Low-achieving	30	45	25
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There is a clear correlation between high expectations and strong academic performance.

Rosenthal & Jacobson’s (1968) theory of the “Pygmalion Effect” is supported here.

#### 4.1.10 Factors Influencing Teacher Expectations

**Table 14: Factors influencing Teacher Expectation**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Socio-economic background	102	34
Student attitude	88	29
Gender	55	18
Cultural background	58	19
Total	303	100

Socio-economic background had the greatest influence (33.7%) on teacher expectations, which is consistent with findings by Onyango (2020), highlighting the impact of poverty and resources on teacher perceptions.

#### 4.2 Limitations of the Study

Despite the careful planning and execution of the research, several limitations were encountered during the study:

##### 4.2.1 Geographical scope

The study was confined to selected public secondary schools in Kajiado County. This limited scope may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other regions with differing socio-economic, cultural, or educational contexts (Mutambuki, Musera & Ngeno, 2018).

##### 4.2.2 Sample Representation

Although a relatively large sample size of 333 respondents was used, it may not fully capture the diverse perspectives of all stakeholders in the county, particularly parents and education officers who play significant roles in student performance (Nyaga, 2018).

#### **4.2.3 Time Constraints**

The research was conducted within a limited time frame, which constrained in-depth engagement with schools and participants. Some schools were preparing for exams, and teachers had limited availability, which may have affected the depth of responses.

#### **4.2.4 Self-Reported Data:**

The use of questionnaires may have introduced social desirability bias, where respondents give answers, they believe are favorable rather than entirely truthful (Babbie, 2015). This may especially be the case in questions involving personal beliefs about student capability and achievement.

#### **4.2.5 External Factors**

The study was conducted in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, which had significantly disrupted learning. The lingering effects on both teachers and students—such as trauma, academic gaps, and altered school dynamics—may have influenced the responses and academic performance data (UNICEF, 2021).

#### **4.2.5 Unmeasured Variables:**

The study focused on teacher expectations but did not account for other influencing factors like parental involvement, school infrastructure, or individual student motivation, which could also affect academic achievement (OECD, 2018).

### **4.3Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented findings from 333 respondents on the impact of teacher expectations on student achievement in public secondary schools in Kajiado County. The response rate was high, ensuring credible results. Demographic data showed a balanced mix of gender, experience, and qualifications among teachers. Analysis revealed that teacher expectations strongly influence student motivation, classroom interaction, and academic performance. Tables and pie charts illustrated key patterns in perceptions and outcomes. Notably, experienced teachers tended to hold higher expectations and used more effective strategies. Overall, the study affirms the critical role of teacher beliefs in shaping academic success.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the research findings, practical recommendations based on the study outcomes, and the conclusion. The focus of this study was to assess the influence of teacher expectations on student achievement in selected public secondary schools in Kajiado County. The analysis was guided by research objectives examining teacher expectations in terms of academic, growth mindset, and individual potential expectations and how they relate to student performance.

#### 5.1 Summary of Findings

This section presents a thematic summary of the study's key variables: teacher expectations, academic expectations, and growth mindset expectations. Each variable is discussed in relation to its influence on student achievement in public secondary schools in Kajiado County, supported by scholarly references from the past ten years.

##### 5.1.1 Teacher Expectations

The study revealed that teacher expectations play a pivotal role in shaping student behavior, motivation, and performance. A significant majority (over 70%) of teachers acknowledged that their perceptions about a student's potential influenced their teaching strategies and interaction levels. When teachers held high expectations, students often rose to meet those standards, a phenomenon consistent with the Pygmalion effect (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 2018).

“Teacher expectations were also shaped by factors such as past academic performance, gender, socio-economic background, and classroom behavior.” Teachers sometimes unconsciously provided more support and opportunities to students they believed were more capable (Liu &

Wang, 2021). This confirms the need for professional training to promote equitable treatment and expectations across all student groups.

### **5.1.2 Academic Expectations**

The research findings showed that teachers' academic expectations directly impacted student achievement. When teachers consistently communicated high academic goals and challenged students with rigorous content, students demonstrated better engagement and improved outcomes (Jussim & Harber, 2016). In Kajiado County, however, these expectations were sometimes moderated by teachers' perceptions of students' abilities, especially in under-resourced schools.

Teachers who believed that their students were capable of achieving national standards were more likely to implement active learning strategies and provide constructive feedback. This aligns with findings by Rubie-Davies (2018), who emphasized the need for structured academic environments to reinforce teacher expectations. Conversely, low academic expectations were associated with less challenging content and limited feedback, thereby reinforcing performance gaps.

### **5.1.3 Growth Mindset Expectation.**

“Growth mindset expectations teachers' belief that intelligence and abilities can develop through effort were found to have a positive influence on student resilience and long-term achievement.”

Teachers who emphasized effort over innate ability fostered a classroom culture where students felt empowered to overcome challenges (Dweck, 2016). In this study, teachers who held and communicated growth-oriented beliefs observed better academic persistence among students.

However, the study also revealed that only a fraction of the teachers had received formal training on growth mindset pedagogy. Those who did often used phrases like “keep trying” or “you're improving,” which research shows can significantly boost student motivation (Yeager et al., 2019).

The presence of a growth mindset approach was more pronounced in urban schools than in rural ones, indicating a gap in awareness and training that should be addressed through teacher professional development.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are provided to enhance student achievement by leveraging teacher expectations in public secondary schools in Kajiado County:

### **5.2.1 Teacher Expectations**

Regular workshops and professional development programs should focus on eliminating biases based on gender, socio-economic background, or previous performance. Establishing a culture of high expectations for all learners can significantly boost student morale and performance (Rubie-Davies, 2018).

### **5.2.2 Academic Expectations**

Schools should create academic environments where high standards are consistently maintained across all subjects. Teachers must be encouraged to set clear learning goals and offer consistent academic support. The use of differentiated instruction, scaffolding techniques, and formative assessment should be emphasized to help meet the diverse academic needs of students (Jussim & Harber, 2016).

### **5.2.3 Growth Mindset Expectations**

The Ministry of Education and other stakeholders should integrate growth mindset training into teacher education curricula. Teachers must be equipped with tools and strategies to foster resilience, persistence, and effort among students. This can be achieved through praise for effort,

emphasizing progress over perfection, and modeling a mindset of continuous improvement (Dweck, 2016; Yeager et al., 2019).

### **5.3 Conclusion**

This study examined the influence of teacher expectations—particularly teacher expectations, academic expectations, and growth mindset expectations—on student achievement in public secondary schools in Kajiado County. The results affirm the strong association between these variables and learner outcomes. Each element has been discussed below in detail:

#### **5.3.1 Teacher Expectations**

The conclusion reaffirms that teacher expectations significantly shape students' learning behaviors and academic performance. Teachers who demonstrate high expectations often deliver more engaging lessons, provide better feedback, and allocate more attention to students (Rubie-Davies, 2018). Conversely, low expectations can discourage students and lead to self-fulfilling prophecies (Jussim & Harber, 2016). Therefore, cultivating positive, equitable expectations is essential in driving achievement, especially in diverse and under-resourced schools.

#### **5.3.2 Academic Expectations**

The findings also show that when academic expectations are clearly communicated and consistently reinforced, students are more likely to remain motivated and achieve better results. Academic expectations that are challenging but attainable push learners to take ownership of their studies and develop better academic habits (Wang & Degol, 2016). Schools with a strong academic culture often report improved grades and reduced dropout rates (Kraft & Papay, 2014).

#### **5.3.3 Growth Mindset Expectations**

A major takeaway from the study is the vital role of a growth mindset in both teachers and students. Teachers who encourage students to view intelligence as malleable foster environments where effort, resilience, and persistence are valued (Dweck, 2016). This mindset helps students view setbacks as opportunities for growth rather than as failures. The study found that students taught by such teachers demonstrated increased engagement and sustained improvement (Yeager et al., 2019).

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX I: COVER LETTER**

#### **REQUEST FOR DATA COLLECTION FOR ACADEMIC RESEARCH PROJECT**

My name is Odhiambo Isaac Ochieng a BED student from The Management University of Africa. I am carrying out an academic research project entitled Assing teacher expectation on students' achievement in Kajiado county. A case study in selected public secondary school. In line with my area of study, I would wish to collect data from your institution.

I therefore request you to assist in giving your feedback on the questions asked. Please bear in mind that the responses are confidential and will be used for academic research only.

Your cooperation and response will be highly appreciated.

Thank you

Yours sincerely

**Ochieng Isaac**

**Management University of Africa**

## APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire is to collect data for purely academic purposes. The study seeks to investigate assessing teacher expectations on students' achievement in Kajiado County. A case study in selected public secondary schools. All information will be treated with strict confidence. Do not put any name or identification on this questionnaire.

### Section A: Demographic information (kindly tick the appropriate box)

#### 1 Gender

Male

Female

2. Age .... Years

#### 3. Class/Form

Form 1

Form 2

Form 3

Form 4

#### 4. Type of School

Mixed Day

Mixed Boarding

Girls School

## Section B: Student perception of Teacher Expectations

### 1. Teacher Expectation

Statement	1 (strongly disagree)	2 (disagree)	3 (neutral)	4 (agree)	5 (strongly agree)
My teachers believe I can do well academically.					
My teachers expect me to work hard in all subjects.					
My teachers encourage me to achieve high grades.					
My teachers believe all students can succeed.					
My teachers give me feedback to help me improve					

### 2. Academic Expectation

Statement	1(Never)	2(Rarely)	3(sometimes)	4(Often)	5(Always)
I understand what my teachers expect from me in each subject.					
I am encouraged to set					

academic goals.					
I am challenged to think critically and deeply about topics					
My teachers expect me to complete assignments on time.					
I feel motivated to do my best because of my teachers' expectations.					

**3. Growth Mindset Expectations**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>1(strongly disagree)</b>	<b>2(disagree)</b>	<b>3(neutral)</b>	<b>4(agree)</b>	<b>5(strongly agree)</b>
My teachers believe I can get smarter if I work hard.					
I am encouraged to keep trying even when I fail.					
My teachers reward effort and persistence, not just results.					
I learn how to improve from my mistakes.					
My teachers show that					

learning is a process that takes time.					
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Date: 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

ODHIAMBO ISAAC OCHIENG - BEDK/2/00108/3/21

This letter serves to introduce the above named who is a **Bachelors of Education, Arts (BED)** student and is interested in carrying out research on **Assessing Teacher Expectations on Students Achievement in Kajiado County. A Case Study in Selected Public Secondary Schools.**

Any assistance accorded to him in pursuit of this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,



Dr. Juster Nyaga

Dean, School of Management and Leadership

