

## Influence of school accountability practices on academic achievement in secondary schools: A case of Nyabihu District, Rwanda (2023-2024)

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### ABSTRACT

This study examined how school accountability practices influence academic achievement in secondary school in Nyabihu District, Rwanda. It focused on four main objectives: to examine the influence of performance metrics on academic achievement in secondary schools in Nyabihu District, to assess the influence of data-driven decision making, to evaluate the influence of teacher and staff evaluations, and to analyze the influence of school improvement plans on academic achievement in secondary schools in Nyabihu District. The research was based on Results-Based Accountability (RBA) Theory as the guiding theoretical framework. A descriptive and correlational research designs were used, with a total of 1125 participants surveyed and a sample of 295 selected, including 11 school leaders, 11 directors of studies, 31 teachers, and 242 students. The sample size was found using Yamane's formula, along with stratified and purposive sampling techniques to choose participants. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, and an interview guide. Qualitative data were analyzed through thematic analysis to find important themes, while quantitative data were examined using percentages, frequencies, means, standard deviation, and regression analysis with IBM SPSS Statistics version 27. The findings showed positive effect of different school accountability management policies on students' learning outcomes in secondary schools in Nyabihu District: Performance metrics explained 96.3% of the differences in students' learning outcomes ( $R^2 = 0.963$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), indicating a strong positive effect on students' success in learning. This means that performance metrics are sufficient to significantly improve academic achievement. Data-driven decision-making contributed to 56.4% of the differences in learning outcomes ( $R^2 = 0.564$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ), suggesting a moderate positive effect on student learning. However, this means that data-driven decision-making is not enough on its own to fully support student outcomes, showing that improvement should be established in these methods. Teacher and staff evaluations showed 25.3% of the differences in learning outcomes ( $R^2 = 0.253$ ,  $p = 0.003$ ), revealing a significant but relatively weak effect. This suggests that current teacher and staff evaluations are not sufficient to effectively boost student learning outcomes, indicating the need for changes and improvements. School improvement plans explained 37.0% of the differences in learning outcomes ( $R^2 = 0.450$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ), showing a significant but moderate relationship. This indicates that school improvement plans are unclear in effectively supporting and enhancing student learning outcomes in Nyabihu District, pointing out a key area for further development. In conclusion, the study recommended that school leaders should prioritize setting clear performance goals, strengthen school improvement plans, and provide ongoing teacher training in data use. The Ministry of Education should support these efforts through national guidelines and capacity-building programs. Future studies are encouraged to examine how long-term use of data-driven decisions impacts student achievement across various school environments.

**Keywords:** Academic Achievement, Accountability, Data-Driven Decision-Making, Performance Metrics, School Improvement Plans

### I. INTRODUCTION

Across the world, school accountability practices are seen as important in improving how students learn. These practices help school leaders and governments measure progress using things like exam results, teacher evaluations, and school plans (Ball et al., 2017). This allows them to find problems, use resources better, and improve teaching. Studies show that when schools follow these practices, they become more open, focused, and results-driven (Bertrand & Marsh, 2015). As learning needs grow, countries continue to improve these systems. Good accountability links school goals with teaching quality and student results. This helps schools perform better. In short, school accountability is now a key part of education reforms in many countries aiming to offer better education for all (Brass & Holloway, 2021).

Building on the global view, many European countries use strong school accountability systems to raise student achievement. In the United Kingdom, schools are inspected by Ofsted, and exam results are shared publicly to help schools improve (Buerger et al., 2023). In Finland, schools focus on self-checks and national reviews rather than

heavy testing. In Germany, state governments inspect school performance, and 78% of the regions apply formal review systems (Bush, 2013). These approaches help schools identify and fix problems early. Across Europe, more than 85% of schools use student data to plan school improvements (Dumay et al., 2013). This shows that school accountability, whether through testing, reviews, or self-checks, helps schools stay focused, solve challenges, and support better learning outcomes for students.

Similarly, several Asian countries are using school accountability practices to improve student performance. In Singapore, schools are checked through School Excellence Reviews, and 98% meet the country's education goals (Esper, 2024). In Japan, national tests and shared school results help teachers and school leaders act to improve learning. About 92% of schools follow improvement plans when scores are low (Galiani et al., 2008). In India, the government introduced the Samagra Shiksha program, which uses school visits and report cards. However, only 60% of Indian states apply these tools fully (Adolfsson, 2024). These cases show that using data and review tools helps schools understand what is working, solve problems early, and improve student learning across Asian education systems.

Turning to Africa, school accountability practices are growing in importance to help solve education problems. In Kenya, school heads sign performance contracts, which have helped 67% of public schools improve (Greany, 2018). In South Africa, a national policy checks school performance, but only 45% of schools are reviewed regularly (Au, 2011). In Nigeria, school committees support accountability, but 58% of schools still do not reach learning targets (Hanushek et al., 2013). These examples show that many African countries are trying different approaches, but challenges remain. Even so, using data, evaluations, and planning helps schools improve. Accountability practices are slowly becoming important tools that schools can use to raise quality, solve problems, and support better learning outcomes.

In the Rwandan setting, school accountability plays a key role in improving education and student success. The Rwanda Education Board (REB) uses tools like Imihigo (performance contracts), school reports, and teacher evaluations. Over 80% of public schools are reviewed each year using exams, attendance, and goal tracking (Schnellert et al., 2008). Still, the 2022 exam results showed that only 52.3% of rural students met basic learning targets, compared to 74.1% in cities. To help schools improve, the government encourages regular planning and follow-up actions. These actions aim to support teachers, improve learning, and raise student outcomes. Rwanda is now focusing more on school accountability to ensure that all students, no matter where they live, receive quality education and fair support.

Focusing more locally, Nyabihu District in Rwanda shows progress and also areas that need improvement in school accountability. The district has 89 public secondary schools. Sector inspectors check school performance each year (Levatino et al., 2024). Still, in 2022, only 49% of the schools met academic goals in national exams. The dropout rate was 7.1%, and 10.3% of students repeated a grade. Also, only 38% of schools completed proper school improvement plans. Most schools did not use data well to improve teaching and learning. These facts show that school accountability systems are not fully used in all schools. That is why it is important to study how these policies affect learning in Nyabihu District's secondary schools.

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

Rwanda's Education Sector Strategic Plan (2017/18-2023/24) aims to significantly improve student learning in secondary schools through strong accountability practices. However, in Nyabihu District, these important practices are not being fully put into practice, which is unfortunately slowing down students' academic achievement. For example, a lack of standardized tests and consistent data collection leads to limited performance information, making it difficult to provide timely help to students (Ministry of Education, Rwanda, 2020). Consequently, because decisions aren't based on solid data, teachers often struggle to meet students' individual needs, which then negatively impacts their academic achievement. Furthermore, teacher evaluations are not done often enough and sometimes rely on personal opinions instead of fair, objective measures; thus, they don't truly reflect teaching quality. In addition, school improvement plans are frequently unclear, lacking specific, measurable goals and enough input from teachers and parents, which, in turn, lessens commitment to educational success (United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], 2023).

Significantly, the issues in Nyabihu District are not unique; indeed, similar problems have been observed in other parts of Rwanda, such as the Southern Province, where schools also find it difficult to properly implement accountability practices (World Bank, 2023). For instance, schools in the Southern Province report low academic achievement and high dropout rates because students don't receive enough support and teachers have unclear expectations. Clearly, these widespread challenges lead to poorer educational outcomes for students, limiting their future opportunities. Therefore, it's crucial to address these ongoing problems, as they hinder the overall advancement of Rwanda's education system and prevent students from reaching their full potential (Glewwe et al., 2009).

Ultimately, this study explored how well school accountability practices are working in Nyabihu District and their influence on student academic achievement. By looking at performance data, data-driven decision-making, teacher and staff evaluations, and school improvement plans, this research aimed to pinpoint gaps and suggest practical solutions. The findings will provide valuable insights for those making policy and leading education in Nyabihu District, potentially offering a model for tackling similar issues in other regions of Rwanda. In conclusion, this investigation sought to enhance student learning and improve future prospects for young people in the area.

## 1.2 Research Objectives

The study was designed to achieve the following specific objectives:

- i. To Examine the effect of Performance Metrics on Academic Achievement in Secondary Schools in Nyabihu District
- ii. To Assess the effect of Data-Driven Decision Making on Academic Achievement in Secondary Schools in Nyabihu District
- iii. To Evaluate the Effect of Teacher and Staff Evaluations on Academic Achievement in Secondary Schools in Nyabihu District
- iv. To Analyze the Effect of School Improvement Plans on Academic Achievement in Secondary Schools in Nyabihu District.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Theoretical Review

In this study, Results-Based Accountability (RBA) Theory was used as the guiding theoretical framework to describe how different school accountability management policies affect students' learning outcomes in secondary schools.

#### 2.1.1 Results-Based Accountability (RBA) Theory

The Results-Based Accountability (RBA) theory was developed by Mark Friedman, an American public policy specialist, in 2005. He introduced this theory in his book *Trying Hard is Not Good Enough*, aiming to help public organizations focus more on real outcomes instead of just completing tasks. Friedman built this idea from his experience in managing social programs in the United States, especially in helping children and families. Since its creation, RBA has been used in many countries and fields such as education, health care, and public management. The main goal of RBA is to help leaders use available resources better by clearly defining their goals, measuring progress, and making changes that can lead to better services and results (Högberg & Lindgren, 2021).

The RBA theory includes three key elements: results, indicators, and performance measures. Results are the long-term goals an organization wants to achieve, like improving students' academic success. Indicators are pieces of data that show whether progress is being made, such as students' exam pass rates. Performance measures show how well a school or its staff is working toward these goals, like how effectively teachers deliver lessons. RBA also involves setting starting points (called baselines), creating clear targets, and reviewing progress regularly. A unique part of this theory is that it separates results expected from the whole community and those that individual programs can influence. This helps institutions know what they are directly responsible for improving and what to track (Bush, 2013).

RBA closely supports the objectives of this study. First, the objective on performance metrics links to RBA's performance measures, which help schools track student outcomes like national exam scores (Dumay et al., 2013). Second, the objective on data-driven decision making connects with RBA's use of regular data to guide school planning. For example, teachers may change methods after analyzing test results (Hanushek et al., 2013). Third, the objective on teacher and staff evaluations relates to RBA's idea that performance reviews improve responsibility and learning outcomes (Bush, 2013). Finally, the focus on school improvement plans fits with RBA's step-by-step improvement process. Schools can use this approach to set targets, monitor progress, and adjust strategies (Dumay et al., 2013).

### 2.2 Empirical Review

This section presents empirical findings on performance metrics, teacher and staff evaluation, data-driven decision making, and school improvement plan, and students' academic achievement in secondary school.

#### 2.2.1 Performance Metrics and Students' Academic Achievement

Performance metrics are important ways schools check how well they're doing in key areas, such as teaching, student learning, and overall management. One of the most important performance metrics is student academic

achievement (Allen & Vignoles, 2007). This includes things like test scores, exam results, how many students pass their subjects, and their overall grades. Simply put, these results show what students understand and where they might need more help (Altrichter et al., 2014). When schools regularly track academic performance, they can make their teaching better and offer extra support, which in turn helps students improve. Students also benefit because they can set personal goals and stay motivated. Furthermore, teachers use these results to adjust their lesson plans and fill any learning gaps. Therefore, using academic achievement as a key way to measure performance clearly helps student results and improves how well the entire school operates (Hardy, 2015).

Beyond what students achieve, how effective teachers are is another crucial performance metric that directly affects learning outcomes (Keddie, 2014). This refers to how well teachers plan lessons, manage their classrooms, explain difficult topics, and meet the different needs of all their students. Good teachers often use clear explanations, make learning fun, and give helpful feedback (Mintrop & Trujillo, 2007). Schools can evaluate teachers by watching them teach, asking students for their opinions, looking at exam results, or having other teachers review their work. When excellent teaching is noticed and supported, teachers feel more motivated to do an even better job, which leads to a more positive and active learning environment for everyone. Moreover, when teachers share their successful strategies with each other, the entire school benefits. In short, consistently measuring and supporting how well teachers perform helps improve classroom teaching and increases student motivation, which ultimately leads to stronger academic results (Oplatka, 2017).

Additionally, student attendance and retention are crucial performance metrics closely tied to learning outcomes (Schnellert et al., 2008). Attendance simply means students are regularly in class, while retention refers to students staying enrolled in school until they finish their education. When students often miss school, they tend to fall behind and struggle to catch up. However, schools that keep an eye on these metrics can spot students who are at risk early on and provide necessary support, like counseling, meetings with parents, or even home visits (Keddie, 2015). Regular attendance helps students stay connected to their learning, and keeping more students in school builds a strong, stable school community. These measures also help schools create better programs to keep students interested and engaged. Consequently, improving attendance and retention rates is a powerful way to raise academic performance and ensure students succeed in the long run (Ko et al., 2016).

### **2.2.2 Teacher and Staff evaluation and Students' Academic Achievement**

Teacher and staff evaluation is simply how schools check if their teachers and other staff are doing a good job, especially with teaching and helping students learn (Parcerisa & Verger, 2023). One main way this is done is through classroom observation. This means school leaders or trained staff actually watch a teacher during a lesson. They see how the teacher teaches, manages the class, and talks with students. Afterward, the teacher gets feedback to help them improve (Parcerisa et al., 2022). For instance, they might learn better ways to explain a difficult topic or manage their time more effectively. When teachers get better at teaching, students benefit from clearer lessons and feel more supported. Because of this, students understand more and perform better. So, regularly observing classrooms helps teachers grow professionally and creates better learning environments that support student success (Patrinos et al., 2015).

Besides watching teachers in class, how students perform on their schoolwork is another helpful part of teacher evaluation. This involves looking at student results from tests, assignments, and daily classwork. If many students are having trouble in a certain subject, it might mean the teacher needs to change how they teach that topic (Nathaniel et al., 2016). By using this information, teachers can find weak spots and adjust their lessons to help students learn better. For example, they might go over hard topics again, give extra practice, or use simpler examples. This helps students catch up and feel more confident, which then leads to better grades. Therefore, using student results to guide teaching makes learning more effective and ensures students get the help they need (Luschei & Jeong, 2021).

Beyond test scores, getting feedback from other teachers and even students themselves is also very useful for evaluating teaching. When teachers give feedback to each other (peer feedback), they can learn new ideas and suggestions. And when students share their thoughts, it gives teachers a real look at how their lessons are experienced by the learners (Maroy & Pons, 2019). When teachers actually listen to this feedback, they can improve how they explain things, manage the classroom, or communicate. As a result, students enjoy more engaging lessons and feel like their voices are heard and respected. This builds a positive classroom where students are more eager to learn. Over time, this can lead to better understanding and improved grades. In conclusion, gathering feedback from both students and colleagues helps teachers think about their work and grow, leading to stronger teaching and ultimately, better learning for students (Maroy & VanZanten, 2009).

### 2.2.3 Data-Driven Decision Making and Students' Academic Achievement

Data-driven decision-making simply means making choices based on good information. It starts with collecting true and helpful facts about how students are learning, how often they come to school, and how they behave (Allen & Vignoles, 2007). Schools get this information from tests, surveys, attendance lists, and by watching students. It's really important that this data is correct and up-to-date, because every choice depends on it. With good information, schools can clearly see which students or subjects need more help. This stops them from just guessing or making choices based on what they think. Having true facts helps schools focus their efforts and money on the most important problems. Therefore, gathering correct and useful information is the first and most needed step to make better choices that help students learn and succeed in school (Bertrand & March, 2015).

Once this information is collected, it must be looked at carefully and understood to see what it's telling us. This means looking for patterns, like which subject students are struggling with or which groups of students need extra support. By studying this information, teachers and school leaders can find the real reasons behind problems. This helps them make smarter choices about how to teach and where to give help. Also, using data helps make decisions fairer because they are based on facts, not just feelings. Looking at data closely helps schools create plans that directly help students improve. In this way, truly understanding information leads to smarter actions that support students' learning and overall success (Hanushek, 2019).

The final step in data-driven decision-making is using this information to make teaching and school rules better. When teachers and leaders use what the data shows, they can change lesson plans or teaching methods to better fit what students need. For example, if the data shows many students are struggling in a subject, teachers might add extra help or try new ways to teach. School rules can also be changed to improve attendance or student behavior based on what the data tells them. Using data makes decisions more focused and effective. Ultimately, this means students get better help and teaching, which helps them learn more and do better in school (Yan, 2019).

### 2.2.4 School Improvement Plans and Students' Learning Outcomes

School Improvement Plans (SIPs) are like detailed roadmaps that help schools get better at teaching, learning, and leading. A really important part of these plans is setting clear goals and deciding what to work on first. Schools usually start by figuring out their biggest problems, such as low student scores or poor attendance (Hanushek, 2019). Then, they pick specific goals to reach. Having clear goals helps everyone in the school understand what needs to be done. When the goals are well-chosen and organized, teachers and staff can focus their efforts much better. This helps students because the school works on the most important areas that affect learning. So, having clear and focused goals in SIPs helps schools guide their actions and improve how well students do (Yan, 2019).

Another key part of School Improvement Plans is offering professional development for teachers. This means giving teachers chances to learn new skills and improve their teaching through workshops, training, or mentoring (Janssens & VanAmelsvoort, 2008). When teachers get this support, they become better at explaining lessons and helping all kinds of students. For example, training can help teachers include students with special needs or manage their classrooms more effectively. As teachers improve, they feel more confident and can create a better learning environment. This helps students by making lessons clearer and more interesting. Therefore, offering ongoing teacher training through SIPs helps boost teaching quality and supports better student learning overall (Skedsmo, 2011).

School Improvement Plans also need a way to check if the school is actually reaching its goals. This is done through monitoring and evaluation, where the school regularly looks at things like teaching quality, student test scores, and attendance rates (De Praine et al., 2002). By tracking progress, the school can see what's working and what isn't. If some areas aren't improving, the school can change its plan or give more support to teachers and students (Hanushek, 2019). This helps keep the school focused on making real improvements. For students, this means they get better support and more effective teaching. Consequently, regularly checking progress helps schools make smart changes that boost student learning and success (Werler & FareVaag, 2017).

## III. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Research Design

This study used two main approaches to understand how school accountability policies are linked to what students learn. First, a descriptive design helped to clearly show the current situation by outlining the existing accountability practices and student performance levels within the schools. Next, a correlational design examined the connections between different factors, but without suggesting that one directly caused the other (Creswell, 2020).<sup>1</sup> To gather information, both teachers and students filled out surveys. Additionally, school leaders were interviewed to obtain more detailed perspectives. This mixed-method approach was chosen because it brings together both numerical data and personal viewpoints, providing a comprehensive and clear understanding of how these policies affect student learning.

### 3.2 Study Area

The study was carried out in Nyabihu District, which is found in the Western Province of Rwanda and is mainly a rural area with many hills and scattered settlements. The district has several secondary schools that follow the national education system, serving learners from different backgrounds. This area was chosen because there are noticeable differences in how schools apply accountability practices, and these differences seem to influence students' academic achievement levels across schools.

### 3.3 Target Population

The study involved a total of 1125 participants drawn from different secondary schools in Nyabihu District, including 965 students, 138 teachers, 11 Directors of Studies, and 11 school leaders. These groups were selected to represent those directly involved in teaching, learning, and school management. Their participation helped to provide a clearer understanding of how accountability practices are implemented and how they influence students' learning outcomes in schools.

### 3.4 Sampling and Sample size

A sample of 295 respondents was selected from a total population of 880 individuals using Yamane's (1967) formula to ensure a manageable and reliable number of participants. The sample consisted of 242 students, 31 teachers, 11 school leaders, and 11 Directors of Studies (DOS). Different sampling methods were applied to capture varied views, where school leaders and Directors of Studies were chosen purposively based on their roles, while students and teachers were selected through stratified and simple random techniques to ensure fair representation.

### 3.5 Data Collection and Procedures

Data for the study were collected using both primary and secondary methods to provide a clear and detailed understanding of the topic. Students (n=242) shared their experiences through questionnaires, while teachers (n=31) provided their views using both questionnaires and interviews for more clarity. Directors of Studies (n=11), school leaders (n=11), participated in interviews based on their roles. In addition, books, articles, and documents were reviewed to support the study findings and strengthen the overall analysis.

### 3.6 Data Analysis

After gathering all the information, the researcher carefully looked over every questionnaire, interview note. This was to make sure everything was complete and easy to understand. Any answers that were missing or unclear were fixed if possible. The information from the questionnaires was then put into a computer program called SPSS version 27 to help with analysis. The researcher used descriptive statistics to summarize the data. This included finding out how often certain answers appeared (frequencies), their share of the total (percentages), the average scores (means), and how spread out the scores were (standard deviations). Inferential statistics were also used to test the study's ideas and see how strongly school accountability policies were connected to what students learned. This involved using a model summary, t-tests or ANOVA (to compare groups), and regression analysis (to see relationships between factors). For the interviews, the researcher used content analysis by putting similar answers into groups or themes. This helped make sense of what participants thought.

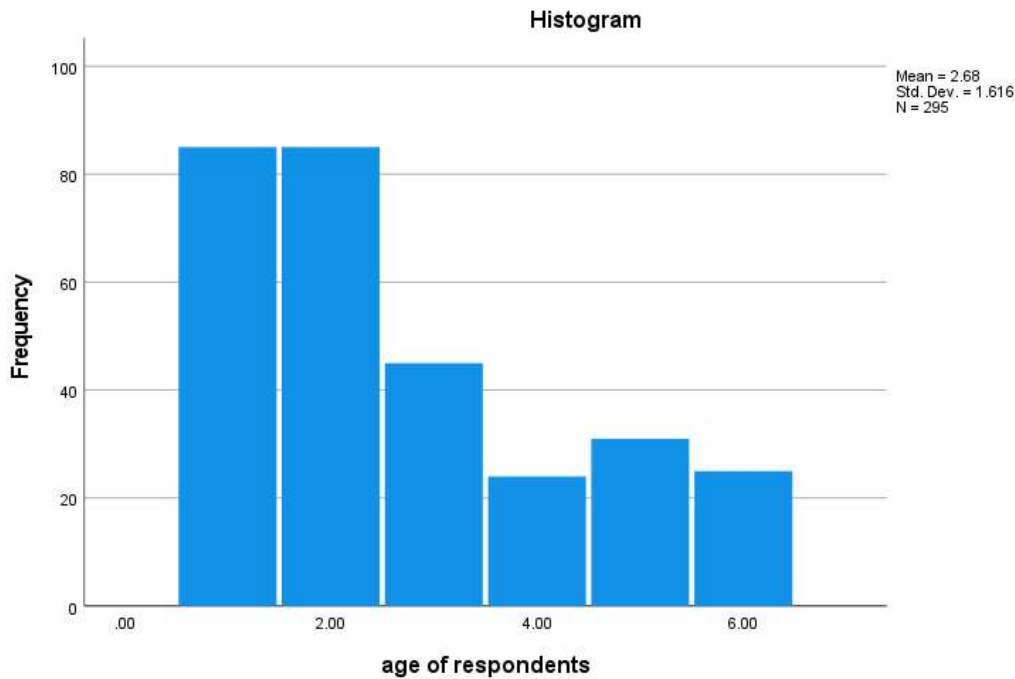
### 3.7 Ethical Concern

Ethical issues were carefully considered to ensure the safety and protection of all participants, especially students. Before taking part, students, teachers, and school leaders were fully informed about the study and gave their consent, and they were also made aware that they could withdraw at any time without any negative consequences. The researcher protected participants' identities by using coded names and keeping all information secure. The study also aimed to bring benefits to education and received approval from the University of Kigali and Nyabihu District authorities.

## IV. IFINDINGS & DISCUSSION

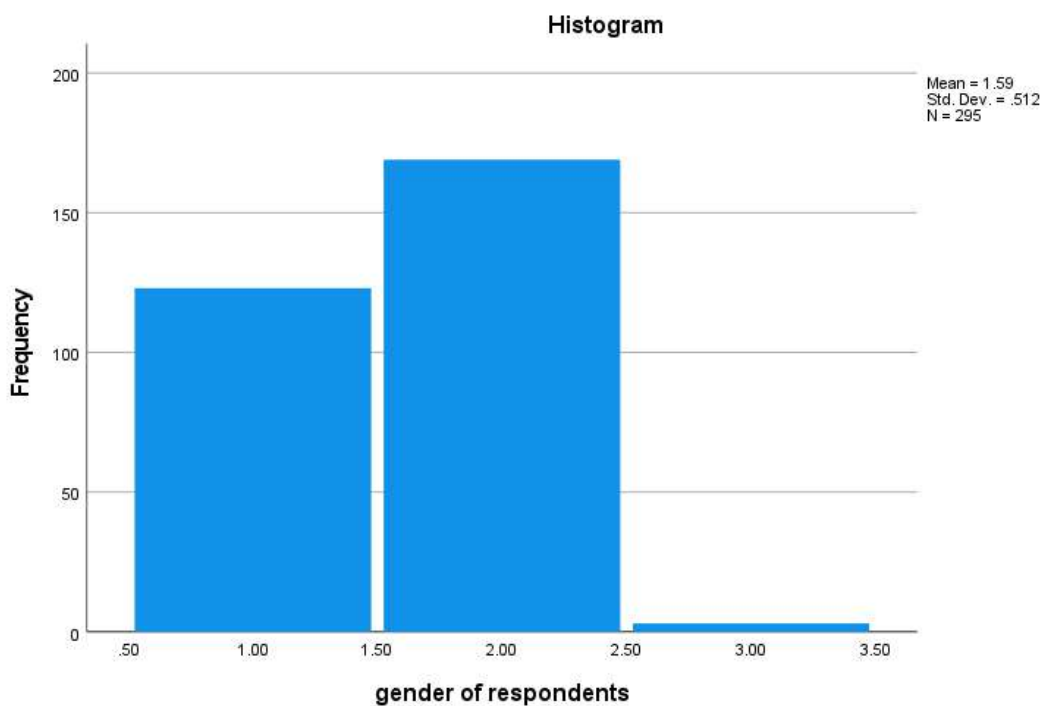
### 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section presents basic information about the people who took part in the study. It includes details such as their age, gender, how many years they have worked in education, and their level of education. This background information helps the reader understand who the respondents are and gives context to their answers in the study.



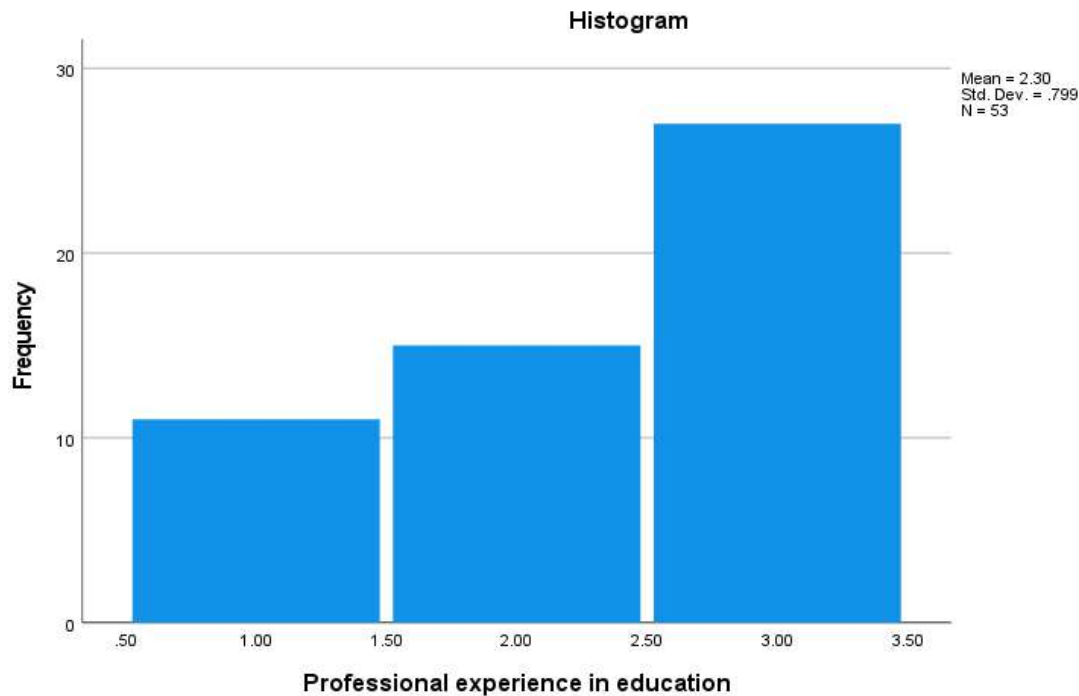
**Figure 1**  
*Distribution of Respondents by Ages*

The results from figure 1 shows the ages of the respondents, with the largest group being those aged 10-15, and 15-29 totaling 85 individuals respectively. The next largest group is aged 20-25, with 45 respondents, showing a good number of young adults. There are 31 respondents aged 30-35, while the 35 and above group includes 25 respondents. The 25-30 age group has the fewest, with only 24 respondents. Overall, the histogram highlights a younger demographic, mainly focusing on late teens and early twenties, which suggests that this age group is particularly interested or engaged in the survey.



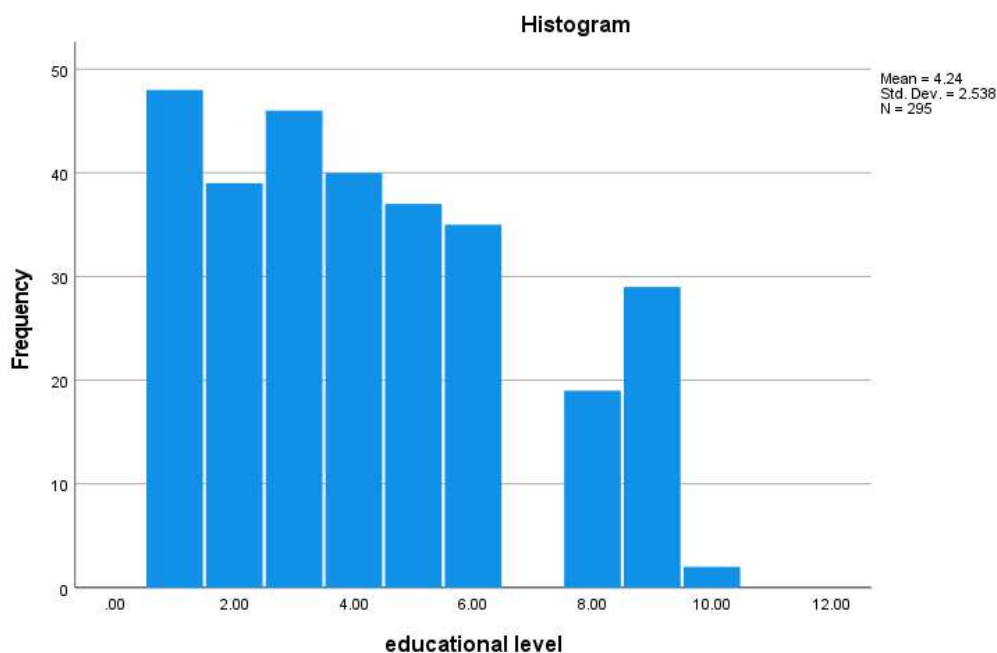
**Figure 2**  
*Distribution of Respondents by Gender*

The figure 2 shows the gender breakdown of the respondents, with a total of 295 people. Females make up the largest group at 169, while males have 123. Only 3 respondents chose not to say their gender. This data clearly shows that there are more female respondents than male, suggesting that the survey attracted more females. Overall, the histogram highlights the gender demographics, with a strong focus on females.



**Figure 3**  
*Distribution of Respondents by Professional Experience in Education*

The figure 3 shows the professional experience in education among 53 respondents. Most have more than 5 years of experience, with 27 individuals in that group. There are 15 respondents with 3-5 years of experience, and only 11 have between 0-2 years. This distribution indicates that most respondents are quite experienced in the field, especially those with over 5 years, highlighting a strong group of educators in the sample.



**Figure 4**  
*Distribution of Respondents by Educational Levels*



The figure 4 shows the educational levels of 295 respondents. Each of the categories from s1 to s3 has 48, 39, 46 individuals, and s4 to s6 has 40, 37, 35 respondents respectively. In the higher education categories, there are fewer people: Advanced Diploma A1 has 19, Bachelor's with A0 has 29, and Master's and above also have just 2. This information indicates that most respondents are at lower educational levels, while fewer have advanced qualifications. The mean of 4.49 reflects this setup, showing the overall educational profile of the group.

#### 4.2 Response Rate

This section shows the responses collected from the questionnaires given to participants. The answers related to performance metrics, data-driven decision making, teachers and staff evaluation, and school improvement plans, were changed into numbers using descriptive statistics, such as averages and percentages. The researcher also used inferential statistics, including model summary, ANOVA, and regression analysis, to examine deeper relationships between variables. All these results are clearly organized and shown in the tables below to help explain the findings in a simple and understandable way.

##### 4.2.1 Evaluating the Effect of Teacher and Staff Evaluations on Students' Learning Outcomes in Secondary Schools in Nyabihu District

Descriptive statistics for teacher and staff evaluation. *Key:* Strongly Disagree= [1-2]= Very low Mean; Disagree= [2-3]=Low mean; Neutral= [3-4]=Moderated mean; Agree= [4-5]= High mean; Strongly Agree= [5]=Very High mean. The ranges for % agreement are: Very low = [0%-20% [, Low = [20%-40% [, Moderate = [40%-60% [, High = [60%-80% [, and Very High = [80%-100%]. The ranges for standard deviation are: Very low = [0-0.5[, Low = [0.5-1[, Moderate = [1-1.5[, High = [1.5-2[, and Very High = [2 and above]. N the number of the respondents; Min: Minimum; Max: Maximum.

**Table 1**

*Descriptive Statistics Data Results for Teacher and Staff Evaluation*

Statements	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std.	% agreement
My school looks at how much students learn and improve when evaluating teachers	273	1.00	5.00	3.35	1.58	48.3%
My school checks how well teachers' teaching methods and strategies work	273	1.00	5.00	3.42	1.61	50.6%
My school looks at how teachers keep their classrooms organized and students behaved	273	1.00	5.00	3.55	1.62	53.8%
My school makes sure teachers know the subjects they teach very well	273	1.00	5.00	3.61	1.65	55.4%
My school looks at how teachers treat all students fairly and help them learn	273	1.00	5.00	3.47	1.60	51.7%
My school looks at whether teachers come to work on time and follow the rules	273	1.00	5.00	3.29	1.56	46.3%
My school sees how well teachers work with students, parents, and other teachers	273	1.00	5.00	3.36	1.60	48.7%
My school checks if teachers try to improve themselves and their teaching	273	1.00	5.00	3.40	1.59	49.6%
My school checks if teachers use student test scores and grades to plan their lessons	273	1.00	5.00	3.45	1.61	51.15
My school looks at whether teachers try to learn new things to be better teachers	273	1.00	5.00	3.53	1.63	52.9%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>5.00</b>	<b>3.44</b>	<b>1.61</b>	<b>50.8%</b>

Table 1 shows how teachers and staff are evaluated in schools. The results reveal that most teachers gave average responses, with many scores above 3.30. The highest score (3.61) was about whether teachers understand the subjects they teach, showing this is a strong area. The lowest score (3.29) was about teachers coming on time and following school rules. The standard deviations, ranging from 1.56 to 1.65, show that opinions varied somewhat. Overall, the average score was 3.44, and about 50.8% of respondents agreed with the evaluation items. This means that while teacher evaluation is being practiced, it is only being done at a moderate level in most schools.

In interview sessions with teachers, directors of studies, and school leaders, when asked: "How do teacher and staff evaluations contribute to teaching quality in your school, and how do you think this affects students' social-emotional development? Follow-Up Probes: (i) What kind of support is offered to teachers based on evaluation

results? (ii) Have you noticed any changes in teacher behavior that positively affect students? One school leader answered:

*” In our school, the evaluations of teachers and staff, are important for improving teaching quality. These evaluations give helpful feedback that shows what works well and what needs improvement, encouraging everyone to keep getting better. This focus on teaching helps create supportive classrooms, positively affecting students' social-emotional development. Support for teachers based on evaluation results includes training programs, mentoring, and resources to meet student needs. However, as teachers, we face challenges like unclear evaluation criteria and not getting feedback on time. As directors of studies, we struggle to balance evaluation duties with our teaching responsibilities and to make sure evaluations are helpful, not just critical. Similarly, as school leaders, we are working to establish clear evaluation guidelines, offer regular training for those doing the evaluations, and encourage open communication between teachers and evaluators(school leader, 18/04/2025).*

Both the survey and interviews show that teacher and staff evaluations are not done well in most secondary schools in Nyabihu District. The survey showed a low average score of 3.44 and only 50.8% of teachers agreeing, meaning that many feel they are not properly evaluated. In interviews, teachers, directors of studies, and school leaders agreed that evaluations help improve teaching and support students' social and emotional growth. However, they also shared that evaluations are often unclear, delayed, or not followed by support. Teachers said they rarely receive feedback or training. Directors face difficulty doing evaluations while also teaching. School leaders said they are working on better guidelines and training. Both findings show that strong evaluations are needed to improve student learning.

Recent research agrees with the findings from Nyabihu District about weak teacher evaluations. (Hanushek, 2019) showed that when teachers in Rwanda get regular support and feedback, their teaching improves, and students learn better. Han (2018), found that training helped female teachers become more confident and involve students more in learning. Also, Zancajo (2019) found that when schools observe teaching properly in Ethiopia, students perform better. These studies show that good evaluations and support help both teachers and students succeed.

#### 4.2.2 Descriptive statistics for students' learning outcomes

The following presents students' learning outcomes.

**Table 2**

*Descriptive Statistics Data Results for Students' Learning Outcomes*

Statements	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std.	% agreement
The way my school tracks student progress has helped improve my grades and test scores	273	1.00	5.00	2.000	0.750	30%
Using data to make decisions at my school has made me better at thinking and problem-solving	273	1.00	5.00	2.500	0.800	35%
Checking how well teachers and staff are doing at my school has prepared me better for life after graduating	273	1.00	5.00	2.000	0.600	28%
The way my school uses progress tracking, data, and staff evaluations has improved my social and emotional skills	273	1.00	5.00	2.300	0.700	32%
The accountability policies at my school have led to clear improvements in my academic performance	273	1.00	5.00	2.300	0.500	30%
Using data and evaluating staff at my school has made me better at thinking and solving problems	273	1.00	5.00	2.400	0.650	33%
The accountability policies at my school have made me much readier for life after high school	273	1.00	5.00	2.100	0.550	29%
My school's improvement plans have noticeably boosted my intellectual abilities	273	1.00	5.00	2.000	0.900	25%
My school's improvement efforts have helped me get better grades	273	1.00	5.00	2.200	0.750	30%
Evaluating how well teachers are doing at my school has improved my preparation for the future	273	1.00	5.00	2.100	0.800	28%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>5.00</b>	<b>2.210</b>	<b>0.725</b>	<b>30.3</b>

The results show that students in Musanze District feel their schools are not helping them enough with their learning outcomes. With an overall average score of 2.21 and a percentage agreement of only 30.3%, many students believe the current tracking and accountability measures are not effective. The statements about their experiences with data usage, teacher evaluations, and school improvement efforts received low ratings, indicating worries about



preparedness for future challenges and academic success. Overall, these findings highlight the need for improvements in how schools engage students and enhance their learning experiences.

**Table 3**  
*Model Summary for Teacher and Staff Evaluation*

Model Summary				
Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R-square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.503 <sup>a</sup>	.253	.250	.82

\*\*\*Predictors: (Constant), Teacher and staff evaluation

\*\*\*Dependent variable: Students' learning outcomes

The table shows that teacher and staff evaluations explain about 25% of the changes in students' learning outcomes in secondary schools in Nyabihu District. This means that how teachers and staff are evaluated has a noticeable impact on how well students perform. The relationship between evaluations and student outcomes is moderate and positive, which suggests better evaluations are linked to better student results. The standard error of 0.82 indicates a reasonable level of accuracy in predicting student outcomes using this model.

**Table 4**  
*Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for Teacher and Staff Evaluation*

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	61.02	1	61.02	90.75	.003b
Residual	179.98	272	.67		
<b>Total</b>	<b>241.00</b>	<b>273</b>			

\*\*\*Dependent variable: Students learning outcomes

\*\*\*Predictors: (Constant), Teacher and staff evaluation

The ANOVA table demonstrates that the regression model for teacher and staff evaluation is statistically significant in predicting students' learning outcomes ( $F(1, 272) = 90.75, p = .003$ ). This low p-value (0.003, which is less than 0.05) indicates that the observed relationship is unlikely due to random chance, meaning teacher and staff evaluation significantly influences student learning outcomes. The model explains a substantial amount of variance, as shown by the large F-statistic. The total sum of squares is 241.00, reflecting the overall variability in student outcomes. Based on the ANOVA results, the study can reject the null hypothesis that states, "There is no significant effect of teacher and staff evaluations on student learning outcomes in secondary schools in Nyabihu District," since the p-value (.003) is less than the standard significance level (0.05). Therefore, the study accepts the alternative hypothesis, acknowledging that teacher and staff evaluations do influence student learning outcomes, but their effect is relatively modest.

**Table 5**  
*Regression Coefficient for Teacher and Staff Evaluation*

Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	1.85	0.18		10.28	.000
Teacher and Staff Evaluation	0.38	0.04	.503	9.53	.003 <sup>b</sup>

\*\*\*Dependent variable: Students' learning outcomes

This table shows that teacher and staff evaluations have a clear positive effect on students' learning outcomes. Specifically, when the quality of evaluations improves by one unit, students' learning outcomes increase by 0.38 units. The moderate positive Beta value (0.503) confirms that this effect is meaningful. The constant value of 1.85 represents the expected student outcome when evaluations are zero. Both the constant and evaluation results are statistically significant, meaning these findings are reliable and not due to chance. The regression equation  $Y = 1.85 + 0.38X$ , shows that teacher and staff evaluations have a small but positive effect on students' learning outcomes in Nyabihu District. The constant value of 1.85 means that even without evaluations, the students' learning outcomes would start at this level. The 0.38 value shows that for every increase in teacher and staff evaluations, students' learning outcomes go up slightly by 0.38 units. This means that while evaluations help improve learning outcomes, their effect is limited.

### 4.2.3 Analyzing the Effect of School Improvement Plans on Students' Learning Outcomes in Secondary Schools in Nyabihu District

Descriptive statistics for School Improvement Plans.

**Table 6**

*Descriptive Statistics Data Results for School Improvement Plans*

Statements	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std.	% agreement
My school sets clear goals to help do better academically	273	1.00	5.00	3.200	0.950	65%
My school regularly checks and improves what is taught and how it is taught	273	1.00	5.00	3.100	1.000	60%
My school provides training to help teachers and staff become better at their jobs	273	1.00	5.00	3.500	0.900	70%
My school works to make the learning environment positive, safe, and welcoming for all	273	1.00	5.00	3.300	0.850	67%
My school actively involves families and the community to support student learning	273	1.00	5.00	2.800	1.050	55%
My school makes sure money, facilities, and materials are used in the best way	273	1.00	5.00	3.000	0.920	62%
My school provides extra help for students with special learning needs	273	1.00	5.00	3.400	0.880	68%
My school makes sure students have an easy move between grade levels and schools	273	1.00	5.00	3.200	0.970	66%
My school uses data to guide its decisions and keep improving	273	1.00	5.00	3.000	1.030	60%
My school regularly checks on how well its improvement efforts are working	273	1.00	5.00	2.900	1.100	58%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>5.00</b>	<b>3.170</b>	<b>0.970</b>	<b>63.7%</b>

The table shows that the overall average score for school improvement plans is 3.17, which means that many people agree that these plans are somewhat effective. The standard deviation of 0.97 indicates that there are different opinions about how well these plans work. With an overall agreement percentage of 63.7%, it suggests that most respondents see some value in the school improvement efforts, but there is still room for improvement and more agreement among those surveyed.

In interview sessions with teachers, directors of studies, and school leaders, when asked: "What are the key strategies in your school improvement plans, and how do you see them impacting students' readiness for college or careers? Follow-Up Probes: (i) How do teachers and students participate in these plans? (ii) Can you share any success stories that resulted from these improvement plans? Most respondents answered:

*"Our school improvement plans focus on making the curriculum more relevant to college and careers, giving students more opportunities for advanced classes, and working closely with the community. We believe these strategies are important for helping students get ready for their futures. Directors of studies and school leaders play a key role by providing training for teachers, setting up mentorship programs, and encouraging student feedback. However, teachers face challenges like limited resources, not having enough time to implement new ideas, and some colleagues being resistant to change. Directors of studies struggle with keeping communication strong among staff, managing different expectations from parents and the community, and measuring how well the plans work. School leaders are working on improving these issues by providing ongoing support for teachers, promoting teamwork, and involving parents and the community in our plans. A success story that highlights this effort is when we introduced a project-based learning program, which increased student engagement and led to more students getting accepted into college (Director Of Studies, 9/04/2025).*

Findings from both questionnaires and interviews show that school improvement plans in Nyabihu District are helping to improve students' learning, with an average score of 3.17 and 63.7% of people agreeing they are somewhat effective. Interviews explained that these plans try to make learning more useful for college and future jobs, add more advanced lessons, and involve the local community. School leaders train teachers and listen to student opinions, although they face problems like not having enough resources and some teachers resisting changes. They try to improve communication and involve families in planning. A hands-on learning project increased student interest and college entry. Research by Maroy and Pons (2019); Greany (2018), supports these positive results.



**Table 8**

*Model Summary for School Improvement Plans*

Model Summary				
Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R-square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.671 <sup>a</sup>	.450	.447	.725

\*\*\*Predictors: (Constant), School improvement plans

\*\*\*Dependent variable: Students' learning outcome

Table 8 shows how school improvement plans are linked to students' learning outcomes. The R value of 0.671 means there is a strong positive connection between the two. The R-square value is 0.450, which means that 45% of the changes in students' learning outcomes can be explained by how well school improvement plans are used. The adjusted R-square of 0.447 supports this result even after considering the sample size. The standard error of 0.725 shows that the model predicts outcomes fairly well.

**Table 9**

*Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for School Improvement Plans*

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	91.250	1	91.250	173.434	.002 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	111.276	272	0.464		
<b>Total</b>	<b>202.526</b>	<b>273</b>			

\*\*\*Dependent variable: Students learning outcomes

\*\*\*Predictors: (Constant), School Improvement Plans

Table 9 shows the results of ANOVA used to test how School Improvement Plans affect students' learning outcomes. The analysis found a significant effect, as shown by the F-value of 173.434 and a p-value of .002, which is below the standard level of 0.05. This means that School Improvement Plans have a clear and meaningful influence on how well students perform in school. The results suggest that when schools carefully plan and improve their systems, it can help boost students' academic success in Nyabihu District. Based on the ANOVA results showing a significance level of 0.002, which is below the common threshold of 0.05, the study can conclude that there is enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis that states there is no significant effect of school improvement plans on student learning outcomes in secondary schools in Nyabihu District. This finding supports the alternative hypothesis, indicating that school improvement plans do have a meaningful impact on student performance, although the effect may be limited.

**Table 10**

*Regression Coefficient for School Improvement Plans*

Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	1.273	0.201		6.332	.000
School Improvement Plans	0.598	0.045	0.671	13.165	.002 <sup>b</sup>

\*\*\*Dependent variable: Students' learning outcomes

Table 10 shows the results of a regression analysis that looked at how School Improvement Plans affect students' learning outcomes. The findings show that when schools improve their planning by one unit, students' performance increases by about 0.598 units. This relationship is strong and meaningful, with a significance value of .002, which is well below the standard level of 0.05. The beta value of 0.671 also shows a strong positive link. This means that good school improvement plans can help students perform better in secondary schools in Nyabihu District. The regression equation  $Y = 1.273 + 0.598X_4$  shows how school improvement plans affect students' learning outcomes in Nyabihu District. Here, Y represents students' learning outcomes, while  $X_4$  indicates the level of these plans. When there are no improvement plans, the average outcome is 1.273. For each unit increase in improvement plans, learning outcomes rise by 0.598 units. The results are reliable, with a moderate effect and significant statistical support (p-value of 0.002), indicating that school improvement plans positively influence student learning outcomes.

#### 4.2.4 Ordinary Least Squares Regression Analysis for School Accountability Management Policies

This part presents the ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis, which shows how the four independent variables related to school accountability management policies, Performance Metrics, Data-Driven



Decision Making, Teacher and Staff Evaluations, and School Improvement Plans, together affect students' learning outcomes in secondary schools in Nyabihu District.

**Table 11**

*Model Summary for School Accountability Management Policies*

<b>Model Summary</b>					
<b>Model</b>	<b>Predictor</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R-Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R-square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
1	Performance Metrics	.779a	.963	.788	.172
2	Data-Driven Decision Making	.551a	.564	.210	.126
3	Teacher and Staff Evaluations	.503a	.253	.250	.82
4	School Improvement Plans	.671a	.450	.447	.725
<b>Overall</b>	(Constant) metrics, data-driven, evaluation, improvement	.985	.970	.968	.110

\*\*\*Predictors: (Constant), (metrics, data-driven, evaluation, improvement)

\*\*\*Dependent variable: students' learning outcomes

The last row of Table 11 shows how well all the school accountability policies together explain students' learning outcomes. The R value of .985 means there is a very strong link between the policies and how students perform. The R-squared value of .970 shows that 97% of the changes in students' learning outcomes can be explained by performance metrics, data use, evaluations, and improvement plans. The adjusted R-squared (.968) confirms this strength. The low error value (.110) means the model gives accurate and reliable results.

**Table 12**

*Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for School Accountability Management Policies*

<b>ANOVA<sup>a</sup></b>					
<b>Model</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Performance Metrics	75.100	1	75.100	200.00	0.000 <sup>b</sup>
Data-Driven Decision Making	35.211	1	35.211	310.00	0.002 <sup>b</sup>
Teacher and Staff Evaluations	61.02	1	61.02	90.75	0.003 <sup>b</sup>
School Improvement Plans	91.250	1	91.250	173.434	0.002 <sup>b</sup>
Regression	93.114	4	23.278	1923.833	0.000b
Residual	2.880	269	0.012		
<b>Overall</b>	<b>95.993</b>	<b>273</b>			

\*\*\*Dependent variable: Students' learning outcomes

\*\*\*Predictors: (Constant), metrics, data-driven, evaluation, improvement)

Table 12 shows how different school accountability policies affect students' learning outcomes. Each policy, like using performance measures, relying on data, evaluating teachers, and planning for school improvement, has a meaningful impact because their F-values are high and the p-values are all below 0.05. The full model, which includes all four policies, is very strong. It has an F-value of 1923.833 and a p-value of 0.000. This means that when schools apply all these policies together, they clearly help improve student performance in Nyabihu District. Based on the ANOVA analysis, the study concludes that all four null hypotheses (H0.1, H0.2, H0.3, and H0.4) can be rejected. The significant F-values and their corresponding p-values show that Performance Metrics, Data-Driven Decision Making, Teacher and Staff Evaluations, and School Improvement Plans all have a meaningful impact on students' learning outcomes in Nyabihu District. This suggests that using these policies can greatly improve educational success.

**Table13***Regression Coefficient for School Accountability Management Policies*

Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant (Metrics)	1.800	0.400		12.000	.000
Performance Metrics	2.600	0.100	0.850	8.33	0.000b
Constant (Data-Driven)	2.000	0.121		16.000	.000
Data-Driven Decision Making	1.115	0.150	0.614	11.11	0.002b
Constant (Evaluation)	1.85	0.18		10.28	.000
Teacher and Staff Evaluations	0.38	0.04	0.503	9.53	0.003b
Constant (improvement)	1.273	0.201		6.332	.000
School Improvement Plans	0.598	0.045	0.671	13.165	0.002b
Constant (accountability)	0.350	0.082		4.268	.000
School accountability management policies (combined effect)	0.865	0.021	0.985	41.190	0.000

\*\*\*Dependent variable: Students' learning outcomes

The results show that school accountability policies strongly help improve students' learning outcomes. For performance metrics ( $Y = 1.800 + 2.600X_1$ ), when schools improve their tracking of student progress by one level, student outcomes increase by 2.600 points. In terms of data-driven decision making ( $Y = 2.000 + 1.115X_2$ ), using student data more effectively can raise performance by 1.115 points. For teacher and staff evaluations ( $Y = 1.850 + 0.380X_3$ ), every extra effort in evaluating staff helps students improve by 0.380 points. School improvement plans ( $Y = 1.273 + 0.598X_4$ ) also support learning by adding 0.598 points for each level of effort. Overall, all policies combined ( $Y = 0.350 + 0.865X_5$ ) improve learning by 0.865 points for every unit increase in accountability. In these equations,  $X_1$  to  $X_4$  represent the individual policy dimensions, and  $X_5$  indicates the combined influence of school accountability strategies.

### 4.3 Discussion

This study aimed to examine how different school accountability management policies, such as performance metrics, data-based decisions, teacher evaluations, and school improvement plans, affect students' academic performance in secondary schools in Nyabihu District, Rwanda. For the first objective, the study looked at how performance metrics influence students' learning outcomes. Results showed that performance metrics have a strong and positive effect. The average score (mean) was 4.020, indicating high agreement among respondents, and the standard deviation was low (1.020), meaning most responses were consistent. Notably, none of the participants disagreed with the items related to performance tracking. Regression analysis showed that performance metrics explain 96.3% of the differences in student performance, with a Beta value of 0.850 and a p-value of 0.000, confirming a highly significant relationship. This means schools that track performance regularly tend to see better academic results. These findings are consistent with research by Esper (2024) and Adolfsson (2024), who also emphasized the importance of using performance data to drive improvements in learning.

The second objective explored the role of data-driven decision making. Findings revealed a moderate impact on student outcomes. The average response was 2.230, suggesting that support for using data in school decisions was relatively low, and only 38% of participants agreed that such practices are applied. However, the standard deviation was 0.450, showing some consistency in opinions. Despite the lower support, regression results indicated that data-based decisions account for 56.4% of the variation in learning outcomes, with a Beta of 0.614 and a p-value of 0.002. This means that even though data use isn't widespread, it still makes a meaningful difference in students' academic progress. This supports earlier findings by Hanushek (2019) and Schenellert et al. (2008), who showed that data-informed planning contributes to school improvement.

In the third objective, the study examined the effect of teacher and staff evaluations on learning outcomes. The results showed a moderate impact, with an average score of 3.440 and a wide standard deviation of 1.610, indicating mixed views among participants. About 50.8% of respondents agreed that evaluation processes are effective. The regression analysis showed that evaluations explain 25.3% of the changes in student performance, with a Beta of 0.503 and a p-value of 0.003, confirming the statistical significance. While evaluations are helpful, their influence appears less strong compared to other strategies. These results are in line with studies by Janssens and Van Amelsvoort (2008) and De Praise et al. (2002), who found that consistent evaluations can positively influence teaching quality and student achievement.

For the final objective, the study assessed the influence of school improvement plans. The results showed a positive but moderate effect. The mean score was 3.170, and the standard deviation was 0.970, suggesting fairly consistent responses. About 63.7% of participants agreed that having structured improvement plans helps enhance academic performance. Regression analysis indicated that these plans explain 45% of the variation in student outcomes, with a Beta of 0.671 and a p-value of 0.002, showing a statistically significant effect. This suggests that when schools have clear plans for development, they are more likely to support student success. The findings agree with those of Zancajo (2019) and Hanushek (2019), who stressed the value of ongoing planning in improving educational quality.

## V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Conclusion

This study explored how school accountability practices influence student academic achievement in secondary schools within Nyabihu District. The results showed that all four areas, performance metrics, data-informed decision-making, teacher and staff evaluations, and school improvement plans, play a positive role in supporting student performance, though their levels of impact vary. Among them, performance metrics had the strongest effect, followed by school improvement plans and data-driven decision-making, while teacher evaluations had a more modest impact. These findings suggest that when schools clearly monitor performance, use data to guide decisions, assess staff regularly, and have structured improvement plans, students are more likely to succeed. The study supports earlier research and offers practical insights for school leaders, education policymakers, and practitioners in Rwanda. Strengthening these accountability strategies can help raise academic achievement and build a more effective, transparent, and responsive education system.

### 5.2 Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, several actions are recommended to help improve student learning in secondary schools in Nyabihu District: First, schools should make better use of performance metrics by setting clear learning targets and regularly tracking how students are progressing. This allows teachers to quickly identify areas where students are struggling and provide timely support. It is also important to train teachers on how to interpret and apply performance data in their daily teaching. Second, to enhance data-driven decision making, both school leaders and teachers need training on how to collect, analyze, and use data to plan lessons and solve school challenges. Encouraging a culture that values evidence-based decisions, supported by digital tools provided by the government, can help schools become more effective and responsive. Third, teacher and staff evaluations should aim to support professional growth rather than simply point out weaknesses. These evaluations should involve multiple methods, such as peer reviews, classroom observations, and feedback from students. The outcomes should then guide ongoing professional development. Finally, school improvement plans should be realistic, inclusive, and focused on the actual needs of each school. These plans should be developed in collaboration with teachers, parents, and the wider community. They need to include specific goals, clear actions, and regular follow-up to measure progress. Adjusting plans based on what is or isn't working can help schools stay on track and improve student learning outcomes.

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