Published by

British Journal of Contemporary Research

BEXFORD PUBLISHING

Provision of Feedback from Formative Assessments and Learners' Academic Performance in History and Government Subject in Makueni County Public Secondary Schools - Kenya

Original Research Article | Volume 1 | Issue 6 | 2026 | Article Number: 043

Accepted: 25 October 2026 | Published: 10 November 2026 | ISSN: 2979-8582 (Online)

Crossref : **https://doi.org/10.67693/BJCR-54YCT7XC**

Mutwota Paul Ngei[1], Dr Charity Limboro[1], Dr Ephantus Kaugi[1]

[1]Kenyatta University School of Education, Kenya

Correspondence: Mutwota Paul Ngei, pmutwota@gmail.com

Abstract

This study purposed to assess the influence of the provision of feedback from Formative assessment on learners' academic performance in History and Government (HAG) subject in public secondary schools in Makueni County. The study adopted a descriptive research design and mixed-methods approach. The target population comprised 393 principals and 892 History and Government teachers, totalling 4409 respondents, from which a sample of 366 was calculated using Yamane's Formula. Stratified sampling was used to create 9 strata based on the number of sub-counties in Makueni County. From each sub-county, 5 principals were purposively sampled. However, from each sub-county, 19 HAG teachers at least HAG teachers per sampled school) Moreover, 17 HAG students (6 per school) were selected using simple random sampling to eliminate feelings of bias among the respondents. This sampling procedure enabled the researcher to obtain a sample size of 39 principals, 171 HAG teachers, and 156 HAG students. Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data from HAG teachers, interviews with principals, and focus group discussions with HAG students. Document analysis guided the researcher on critical records reference. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages and composite means) and inferential statistics (linear and multiple linear regression analysis) in Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS 25) and presented in tables. Qualitative data were analysed thematically. Qualitative findings from the research shows that, when HAG teachers provide timely and constructive feedback, students tend to achieve higher KCSE outcomes than in schools where feedback is infrequent or absent. Further, inferential statistics Assessment Feedback model shows that, the coefficient for learners' academic performance in HAG in KCSE (r) with respect to the provision of formative assessment feedback is 0.799 (positive). This suggests that for every one-unit raise in teachers' composite mean scores regarding provision of formative assessment feedback, the average HAG results in KCSE are bound to raise by an element of 0.799. This study concludes that, feedback is frequently delayed or limited

© 2026 The Authors. Published by Bexford Publishing Ltd

to scores, offering little guidance on how students can improve in the study area. The study recommends that, on provision of formative assessment feedback and learners' academic performance in History and Government, History and Government teachers should always provide immediate feedback to students after every assessment exercise to help them devise approaches to improve areas where they face challenges.

Keywords: Feedback, Formative Assessments, Learners' Academic Performance, History and Government Subject, Public Secondary Schools

1.1 Background of the Study

Quality education can be attained through addressing learning outcomes or students' academic performance (Muskin, 2017; UNESCO, 2015). According to Williams (2023), academic performance refers to learners' attainment in school based and nationwide assessments. Conceptually, Omar (2023) posits that students' academic performance in HAG is not limited to examination results alone, but also encompasses cognitive development, problem-solving abilities, critical thinking, and mastery of curriculum standards.

Robertson (2022) avers that this subject requires critical thinking, interpretation of sources, construction of arguments, and understanding of complex social and political concepts. Roberston (2022) further notes that, through formative techniques such as debates, document analysis, reflective writing, and oral presentations, teachers can monitor students' historical reasoning and civic understanding. Feedback helps learners refine their arguments, correct misconceptions, and deepen conceptual understanding, while teachers adapt lessons to learners' needs. This further indicates that FA and attendant practices strengthen pedagogy in HAG and contribute to improved learning outcomes and sustained academic success. This corroborates the resolutions of the Dakar Conference (2000), which emphasised a minimum set of cognitive and noncognitive skills by the time one left school (UNESCO, 2000). The theme was further emphasised in Incheon, South Korea, when delegates urged a global effort to strengthen assessment strategies by training teachers to use FA effectively in instruction to improve educational performance (Muskin, 2017; UNESCO, 2015). As a result of the above conventions, the USA, UK, Canada, and Australia have used varied formative assessment strategies in teaching, a method that has proven reliable in enhancing learners' performance (Morris, Perry & Wardle, 2021).

According to Sharma (2024), in schools where such practices are frequent, students' academic performance improves by an average 11.9% for a duration of five years. Such postulations affirm the notion that, when learners receive timely, constructive feedback, they become more conscious of their strengths and pinpoint areas where they could require support. This clarity builds confidence and encourages self-regulated learning. In other words, students are more likely participate dynamically in the educational progress as well as taking responsibility for their progress, which leads to improved test scores and overall achievement.

In several Sub-Saharan African countries, the Global Monitoring Report (2016) indicates that the learners' academic performances have been on a declining trajectory. It's further reported that secondary school graduates are not conversant with the required cognitive and life skills. For instance, in Nigeria, a survey undertaken by Adebayo and Bamidele (2025) shows that students' scores were consistently low, below 41.8%, in the 2021–2023 Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE). Adebayo and Bamidele (2025) further indicate that mean scores in multiple-choice objective tests ranged around the high-20s out of a possible 60 marks, with many learners clustered at low score bands and few achieving high marks over

© 2026 The Authors. Published by Bexford Publishing Ltd

these three years, indicating pervasive underperformance in this government/civics subject. In South Africa, analyses done by the Republic of South Africa (2025) on performance in History and Civics show an overall decrease in the basic education system, with the National Senior Certificate (NSC) pass rate declining to 57.9% in 2025 from a historic performance of 88.1 % in 2020. In Tanzania, the state exams body (NECTA) administers the Certificate of Secondary Education Examination (CSEE), including core subjects such as History and Civics. According to NECTA's 2023 performance reports, 518,703 candidates sat for the CSEE History paper, and only 343, 382 (66.2%). However, only 33.20 % passed History and Civics, revealing a decline in achievement in this humanities subject. In Uganda, the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB, 2025) reports that it consistently publishes pass rates for national exams. For instance, recent UACE results (2024) showed that only around 2–6 % achieved top (A) grades, with a larger share earning low grades in History and Civics. In Kenya, the scenario is the same with the KCSE (national examination) showing persistent low academic performance among students.

Nationally, the Ministry of Education (2025) reported that only about 27.4 % of candidates who sat for HAG attained a grade of C+ or higher, indicating that HAG traditionally performs below expectations compared to other arts subjects. The report further indicates that, in some schools, no candidate scored an A plain in HAG over multiple years, and the subject often ranks lower in mean scores compared to alternatives like Geography or CRE. In Makueni County, an evaluative brief done by the MOE (2025) indicates that KCSE data from 2020 to 2024 show persistently low overall performance, with mean scores in HAG hovering around 3.34–3.40, with only about 13–14.5 % of candidates scoring C+ and above, and over 50 % scoring D and below each year. These results indicate that the performance of students in HAG has been low. To mitigate this, teachers have adopted formative assessment. According to Mwanzia (2023), HAG instructors have resulted to reliance on formative assessment to enhance both teaching and learning outcomes. Mwanzia (2023) further posits that rather than depending solely on traditional end-of-term exams, teachers currently use ongoing assessment practices that provide regular insights into student understanding. These include questioning techniques, short quizzes, classroom discussions, peer assessments, and reflective journals.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite the well-documented theoretical and pedagogical benefits of formative assessment in enhancing student achievement, learners in History and Government (HAG) within public secondary schools in Makueni County continue to experience inconsistent academic performance (Ngei, Limboro and Kaugi, 2026). According to the Kenya National Examination Council (2023), the performance of learners in HAG subject has not been impressive for example, in the year 2018, it was 40.15%, in 2019, it was 41%, 51.1% in 2020, 43.9% in 2021, and 49.2% in 2022 nationally. Similarly, at the county level, the subject's mean grade during the same period was below C. While teachers frequently administer continuous tests, quizzes, and class assignments, the feedback loop suffers from critical practical breakdowns including delayed and generic Feedback, ambiguous success criteria and lack of remedial action (Muvango, 2026). Consequently, students struggle to diagnose their cognitive misconceptions in History and Government, leading to persistent underachievement in internal evaluations and national examinations (KCSE). This study therefore investigates the extent to which the systematic provision and quality of formative assessment feedback influence learners' academic performance in History and Government across Makueni County public secondary schools.

1.3 Study Objective

This study was guided by the following objective. To determine the influence of the provision of feedback from FA on learners' academic performance in HAG in public secondary schools in Makueni County.

© 2026 The Authors. Published by Bexford Publishing Ltd

1.4 The Conceptual Framework

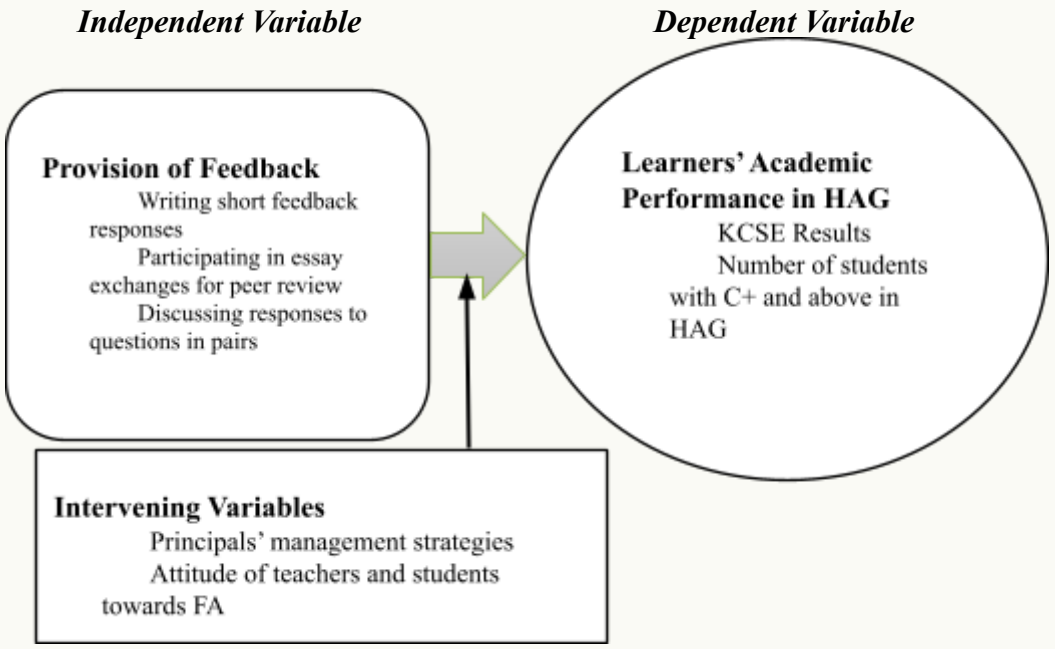


Figure 1: ***The Conceptual Framework***

Source: *Researcher, 2025*

1.5 Literature Review

Provision of Feedback on FA and Learners' Academic Performance in HAG

This section provides empirical literature and relevant research gaps on how provision of formative assessment to learners affect their academic performance. The provision of feedback on FA is vital in helping and improving learners' mastery of concepts. According to Sadler, Nicola, and Kay (2023), feedback refers to information through which a student adds, overwrites, tunes, or restructures their memory in the domains of knowledge, metacognition, knowledge, belief about a task, or a cognitive tactic or strategy. In the words of Sadler et al (2023), through feedback, teachers can make their learners move forward, though this is only if the learners understand the feedback and it creates the necessary urge to keep on striving. These conclusions add weight to the assertions to research done in Italy by Toti (2024), according to this research FA such as quizzes, written reflections, peer reviews, and oral feedback, all act as instruments for both instructors and learners to gauge understanding and track progress. Toti (2024) further indicated that the feedback provided during this process helps learners identify areas where they need improvement, while also reinforcing their strengths. The study further found that studying History and Civics often requires critical thinking and the ability to connect historical events with political theory; FA feedback can significantly impact a student's ability to synthesise information. These findings affirm the fact that teachers' timely feedback provides direction, allowing students to better understand complex concepts, which is vital for excelling in examinations and assessments. This further indicates that FA feedback enhances not just subject knowledge but also the ability to think critically and long-term academic performance.

In the United States, Watkinson (2023) carried out research, which revealed that FA feedback plays a critical function in improving learners' educational outcomes. According to Watkinson (2023), by definition, FAs are tools used by educators track learners' advancement and give ongoing appraisal in the course of the instructional process, instead of only doing it at the culmination of a course.

© 2026 The Authors. Published by Bexford Publishing Ltd

In India, Patel (2024) undertook a study, which revealed that FA feedback focuses on providing students with ongoing feedback during the learning process rather than just evaluating their final performance. Patel (2024) further states that by receiving timely, constructive feedback, students gain insights into their strong and weak areas. These findings further affirm the notion that FA feedback helped bridge gaps in understanding and thus encouraged active engagement with the content, enabling learners to ask questions, correct misconceptions, and deepen their knowledge before formal examinations.

Trailing these postulations, Udoka (2023) undertook research that revealed that, when timely feedback is given, teachers give suggestions, encourage reflection, and clarify complex topics, promoting an in-depth grasp of the subject matter. consequently, academic performance improves, with students demonstrating a better grasp of content and developing essential skills for both exams and real-world application in governance and civic engagement. The same scenario is replicated in South Africa, where research conducted by Malema (2024) established that students who actively engage with formative feedback tend to perform better, as it helps them develop a growing mentality where learning is seen as a path of continuous enhancement. This further indicates that feedback from FA enables teachers to customise learning to personal demands while at the same time encouraging the learner to possess their learning, ultimately resulting to enhanced academic performance.

In Burundi, Kibakwa (2024) posits that the Burundian state department of education has encouraged the regular provision of feedback to students at all times since feedback, given in the course of learning, assists students to know their strengths identify points that require improving, encouraging active engagement and self-regulation. To support this, Matekwa (2025) undertook research, which found that regular provision of FA feedback fosters a deeper understanding by guiding students in their areas of difficulty, helping them refine their writing, analytical skills, and ability to make connections between historical events and contemporary governance issues. Matekwa (2025) further revealed that feedback encourages a growth mindset, motivating students to own their process of acquiring knowledge and pursuit of continuous improvement. These findings affirm the fact that, by focusing on ongoing evaluation rather than just final exams, teachers can foster an atmosphere in which learners feel supported and confident in their academic journey. Ultimately, FA feedback leads to more motivated learners, better academic performance, and a deeper understanding of the concept taught.

In Kenya, Onyango (2024) asserts that HAGs are required to constantly provide feedback to students on FA since such feedback provides students with ongoing feedback during their learning process, rather than just evaluating their outcomes. In line with these postulations, Kananu (2023) research in Embu County, which revealed that, in HAG, formative feedback helps students understand where they stand in terms of knowledge, skills, and areas of improvement. Kananu (2023) further established that when teachers provide timely and constructive feedback, it allows learners to identify their capabilities and constraints. The study also noted that HAG students may struggle with analysing historical events or connecting different historical periods. Thus, FA feedback helps to clarify misconceptions and guide learners toward deeper understanding. These observations confirm the fact that, by fostering a culture of feedback in History and Government, learners in Kenyan schools can achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the subjects, ultimately improving their academic outcomes.

In Makueni County, the provision of FA feedback is regarded as vital in enhancing students' mastery of concepts. Research carried out by Kitheka (2023) revealed that HAG teachers have embraced the learners' academic performance, especially in subjects such as HAG. Kitheka (2023) further found that effective feedback has helped HAG students understand their strengths and weaknesses, enabling them to make targeted improvements. For instance, Kitheka (2023) further noted that, if students fail to grasp the significance of a particular historical event or political concept, feedback can guide them toward the

© 2026 The Authors. Published by Bexford Publishing Ltd

correct understanding, enhancing their learning experience. This indicates that, when feedback is constructive, timely, and specific, it motivates learners to engage more deeply with the content. As a result, learners are better equipped to perform well in both class assessments and final exams, ultimately improving their academic performance in HAG. However, more research still needs to be done as Kitheka (2023), as well as other researches, had not fully explored the level to which the FA feedback itself influences learners' educational attainment in HAG in government sponsored high schools, hence, the research.

1.6 Research Methodology

Research Design and Approach: **Descriptive research design was adopted to collect both qualitative and quantitative data in this study.** The study employed a mixed-methods approach, allowing the incorporation of both quantitative and qualitative techniques.

Location of Study: The investigation took place in government sponsored secondary schools in Makueni County - Kenya. The county has a population of 987, 653 people and an area of 8,008.9 km^2 which amounts to a population density of 124 persons per square kilometre (KNBS, 2019). The performance of learners in HAG subject has not been impressive for example, in the year 2018, it was 40.15%, in 2019, it was 41%, 51.1% in 2020, 43.9% in 2021, and 49.2% in 2022 nationally. Similarly, at the county level, the subject's mean grade during the same period was below C.

Target Population*:* As per the MOE (2026), Makueni County is home to 393 government sponsored high schools. Hence, the targeted population had 393 principals, 892 HAG teachers, totalling 4409 respondents, as indicated below in Table 1.

Table 1: Target Population of the Study

Respondents	Target Population
Principals	393
HAG Teachers	892
HAG Students	3124
Total	**4409**

Source: *Makueni County Education Office (2026)*

Sampling Techniques and Sample Size**:** The researcher used Yamane's formula to determine the sample size for the study.

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

Where n = desired sample size at 95% confidence interval; N= Target Population; e = Margin of error at 5% (decimal equivalent is 0.05). Thus, the desired sample was:

$$n = \frac{4409}{1 + 4409(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = 366 \text{ respondents}$$

Stratified sampling was utilised to come up with nine (9) different strata relying on the number of the sub-counties (Mukaa, Kilungu, Makueni, Kathonzweni, Nzaui, Mbooni East, Mbooni West, Makindu, and Kibwezi) in Makueni County. The sampling method guaranteed that the samples got were representative of

© 2026 The Authors. Published by Bexford Publishing Ltd

the entire Makueni County. Each sub-county gave five (5) principals were purposively sampled. In this research, the researcher relied on purposive sampling to pick government sponsored high schools that had been recording very low HAG results in KCSE over the last five years (2021–2025). However, from each sub-county, 19 HAG teachers at least (1HAG teachers per sampled school) Moreover, 17 HAG students (6 per school) were identified using simple random sampling to get rid of the possibility of bias among the study participants. To ensure gender representation in simple random sampling, the population was first stratified by gender. A sampling frame that includes all genders was then prepared. Random selection was then conducted fairly from each category, proportionate to its size, ensuring balanced participation and reducing the risk of gender bias. This sampling procedure made it possible for the study proponent to get a sample size of 39 principals, 171 HAG teachers, and 156 HAG learners, as indicated in Table 2.

Table 2: Sampling Grid

Respondents	Target Population	Sample Size	Sampling Techniques
Principals	393	39	Purposive sampling
HAG Teachers	892	171	Simple random sampling
HAG Students	3124	156	Purposive sampling
Total	**4409**	**366**	

Source: *Researcher (2026)*

Research Instruments: In this research, questionnaires (teachers), interviews (with principals), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) guide (for HAG students), and a document analysis guide (documents such as lesson plans and KCSE records) were used.

Data Analysis Procedures: Quantitative data were analysed through descriptive statistics, that included frequencies, percentages, and composite means, and inferential statistics (linear and multiple regression) utilising SPSS Version 25. Analysis of the qualitative data was done in themes and presented in a narrative format, incorporating verbatim quotes. This combination of statistical and thematic analysis provided comprehensive views.

1.7 Study Findings and Discussion

Response Rate

In this research, 171 questionnaires were given to HAG instructors, and 168 were filled and given back to the researcher. Similarly, the researcher did interviews on 31 principals and conducted 26 focus group discussions with 117 HAG Students. This gave completion rates as shown in Table 3;

Table 3: Response Rates

Respondents	Sampled Respondents	Those Who Participated	Achieved Return Rate (%)
Principals	39	31	79.5
Teachers of HAG	171	168	98.2
HAG Students	156	117	75.0
Total	**366**	**316**	**86.3**

Source: *Field Data, 2026*

Table 3 shows that principals recorded a return rate of 79.5%, HAG teachers registered 98.2%, whereas HAG students registered 75.0% return rate. This gave an average completion rate of 86.3%, consistent with Creswell's (2018) proposal that a completion rate above 75.0% is enough. This data was crucial as it

© 2026 The Authors. Published by Bexford Publishing Ltd

made it possible for the investigator to generalise the research's results on the targeted population.

Gender of the Respondents

Data about the dispersal of the subjects by sex was gathered, and the results were as shown in Table 4:

Table 4: Distribution of the Respondents by Gender

Gender	Principals		HAG Teachers		HAG Students	
	F	%	f	%	f	%
Male	18	58.1	92	54.8	71	60.7
Female	13	41.9	76	45.2	46	39.3
Total	**31**	**100.0**	**168**	**100.0**	**117**	**100.0**

Source: *Field Data, 2026*

Table 4 indicates that a bit more than half, 18(58.1%), of the school heads were men, and 13(41.9%) were ladies. similarly, the majority, just more than half, 92(54.8%), of the HAG teachers were male, while their female-principal comprised 76(45.2%). Similarly, most HAG students, 71(60.7%), were male, with their female counterparts constituting 46(39.3%). This information reveals that there was a good gender balance at all levels of the study and that the level to which FA influences the academic performance in HAG in public government sponsored-high schools is a pressing issue to men and women. The above information shows that gender is a key demographic variable that can shape learning experiences, classroom interaction, and academic outcomes. This corroborates Watson's (2024) assertion that, by disaggregating data by gender, a researcher can determine whether formative assessment strategies benefit male and female learners equally or whether differences exist in how each group responds to feedback, peer assessment, or continuous evaluation. According to Watson (2024), gender-related factors such as socialisation, confidence levels, participation patterns, and teacher expectations may influence how learners engage with FA practices. This indicates that, without gender data, important variations in performance may be overlooked, leading to generalised conclusions that do not accurately represent all learners. It provides evidence that can inform gender-responsive teaching strategies, curriculum design, and assessment practices in HAG.

Status of Students' Academic Performance in HAG in Public Secondary Schools

The research was geared to investigation students' educational outcomes in HAG in government-owned high schools in Makueni County. This was gauged by analysing students' performance in HAG in KCSE for the last half decade (2020-2024). The findings are as indicated in Table 5.

Table 5: Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in KCSE in Makueni County (2020-2024)

Exam year	KCSE Results for HAG (Mean scores)
2020	7.997
2021	7.841
2022	4.623
2023	4.535
2024	4.444

Source: *Field Data, 2026*

Table 5 shows that the academic performance of students in HAG in KCSE has been on a decline over the

© 2026 The Authors. Published by Bexford Publishing Ltd

last five years. These assertions rhyme with a report by the KNEC (2024) that the performance of learners in HAG in Makueni County in KCSE has been on a continuous decline. Consequently, a sizeable number of HAG students continue to score weak grades, an indication of the inherent problems within the educational facilities and the larger society. The study examined how defining criteria for success in FA influences learners' educational outcomes in HAG in government-sponsored secondary schools.

Provision of FA Feedback and Learners' Academic Performance in HAG in Public Secondary Schools

This research assessed the influence of FA feedback on students' academic performance in History and Government in public secondary schools. Responses from teachers using a Likert scale on rating their levels of agreeableness on the influence of provision of formative assessment on learners' academic performance are presented in table 6 below.

Table 6: Teachers' Views on the Influence of Provision of FA Feedback on Learners' Academic Performance in HAG in Public Secondary Schools

Test Items	Ratings				
	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
In public secondary schools, HAG students are always required to write short responses about different topics	49.6	5.0	4.3	33.8	7.2
In public secondary schools, HAG students often exchange essays or short answers and assess each other using a marking guide	52.5	12.2	2.9	26.6	5.8
During formative assessments, HAG students are sometimes required to think about a question, pair when discussing the ideas, and eventually share responses with the class	44.6	15.8	4.3	28.8	6.5
After every lesson in HAG, students are often asked to draw diagrams linking key ideas learned	59.7	7.9	5.8	21.6	5.0
In public secondary schools, frequent provision of feedback after formative assessments has helped improve the performance of students in HAG	64.2	9.4	4.7	17.9	3.8

Source: *Field Data, 2026*

Table 6 presents that, 83 (49.6%) of the teachers were in strong agreement that HAG learners are frequently required to write short responses on different topics, whereas 12 (7.2%) strongly disagreed. During the interviews, most of the school heads also backed the view given by a fair proportion of the teachers that, after every HAG lesson, students are often asked to write short responses on different sub-topics learned. One principal observed;

> *In our facility, I have repeatedly observed occasions where, after every lesson, HAG teachers ask students to undertake tasks that include writing short responses to lesson topics. This has enabled teachers to assess the extent to which learners*

© 2026 The Authors. Published by Bexford Publishing Ltd

> *have mastered different concepts taught* (Principal, P18, School S).

However, some principals noted that this has not been the case. One principal stated;

> *In my experience, some teachers prioritize extended projects over short written responses, so the practice is not always consistently applied* (Principal, P19, School T). Concurring opinions were given by the HAG students, stating that at the end of every HAG lesson, their teachers always administer short tests requiring short written responses. The discussants affirmed; *At our school, the HAG teachers always ask us to write short responses on different subtopics we have learned. This has enabled us to show our mastery of the concepts taught.*

These findings affirm that this assessment method is crucial for shaping students' understanding of key concepts and for their ability to articulate their knowledge succinctly. This lends credence to Onyango's (2024) assertion that short-answer tasks encourage learners to engage more adequately with the materials. According to Onyango (2024), requiring students to provide concise explanations fosters critical thinking, as they must identify the most important points and communicate them effectively. This indicates that short-response tasks push students to focus on the core aspects of an issue, thereby promoting clarity and precision in their thinking. In other words, short-response questions compel them to express these ideas in a structured, organized manner, thereby improving their ability to present coherent arguments and support their claims with evidence. A slight majority, 88(52.5%), of the instructors concurred avidly that, in government owned secondary schools, HAG students often exchange essays or short answers and assess each other using a marking guide, whereas 10(5.8%) strongly disagreed. The majority of the principals echoed these views during the interviews. The interviewees stated that HAG is an essay-oriented subject and that, on many occasions, students are required to write essays or short answers and exchange them with one another. The principals stated that such a practice has enabled HAG students to adopt different perspectives of responding to essay questions during examinations. On their part, the HAG students also noted that exchanging essays among themselves is common. During the FGD, the HAG students noted that this has enhanced their ability to understand different approaches to writing essays.

These findings affirm that this practice, commonly referred to as peer assessment, has attracted attention for its impact on learning outcomes, critical thinking, and student engagement. This supports Watkinson's (2023) assertions that when students use a clearly defined marking scheme, often aligned with national examination criteria, they develop a deeper understanding of content expectations. This indicates that, by evaluating a peer's response on issues such as argument development, factual accuracy, interpretation of historical events, and clarity of expression, students internalize assessment standards. These findings further add weight to the study done in Mexico by Gonzalez (2024), which revealed that peer assessment strengthens analytical skills, particularly in subjects such as History and Government, where interpretation, evidence-based reasoning, and structured argumentation are central. Gonzalez (2024) further established that peer marking promotes active learning, as students engage directly with assessment criteria rather than passively receiving teacher feedback. The study further revealed that retention of historical facts and civic concepts improves when learners compare different perspectives in essays discussing governance systems, constitutional development, or significant historical events. In other words, the act of identifying merits and weaknesses in a peer's work often leads learners to reflect critically on their own writing. These findings indicate that structured peer assessment in public secondary school HAG classes enhances academic performance, fosters collaborative learning, and cultivates evaluative judgment skills. When implemented with clear guidelines and oversight, this approach significantly improves writing quality and deepens conceptual understanding.

© 2026 The Authors. Published by Bexford Publishing Ltd

The research showed that 75(44.6%) of the instructors were in a consensus that, during FA, HAG students are sometimes required to think about a question, pair up to brainstorm ideas, and share their responses with classmates, while 11(6.5%) strongly disagreed. Principals also observed that the key principle of learning HAG is through discussions and sharing of responses. One principal affirmed; *In my understanding, to master concepts in HAG, students are often required to choose a topic or question for discussion groups and share responses. This approach makes it easy for students to master concepts taught* (Principal, P20, School U). At the same time, another school head observed; *In our facility, think–pair–share is used, but not regularly during formative assessment, especially for high-ability learners* (Principal, P21, School V). Another one added; *In my experience, teachers tend to rely more on questioning than structured peer interaction when assessing understanding* (Principal, P22, School W).

During the FGs, HAG students also indicated that in HAG classes, they are always asked to choose discussion topics, form groups, and share their responses to the chosen questions. On further probing, the discussants noted; *In class, we often pick different topics for discussions, pair up to discuss them, and share responses with the rest of the class. This has improved our ability to cover the course outline on time enhance performance in exams.*

These findings underscore the effectiveness of the think-pair-share approach in History and Government education, as formative assessment strategies consistently highlight its ability to promote deeper learning and student engagement. This strategy requires learners to first reflect individually on an issue, before discussing their ideas with a partner, and eventually presenting their responses with the wider class. In other words, this structured progression supports cognitive development by allowing learners time to process historical concepts and political ideas before articulating them publicly. The above results rhyme with Kitheka's (2023) study, which revealed that think-pair-share enhances historical reasoning and civic understanding. Kitheka (2023) further established that, when students reflect individually, they engage in critical thinking by recalling evidence, analysing causes and consequences, and forming preliminary interpretations. The study further revealed that pair discussions then allowed learners to compare perspectives, clarify misconceptions, and refine arguments. In another research conducted in Machakos County by Muthusi (2023) it was concluded that think-pair-share increases participation and inclusivity during formative assessment.

Muthusi (2023) further established that learners who may be unwilling to speak in whole-class discussions often feel more confident sharing ideas after discussing them with a peer. This leads to a broader range of responses during class sharing and provides teachers with richer formative data on student understanding. Teachers can then adjust instruction based on observed strengths and gaps. These findings confirm that requiring HAG learners to think, pair, and share during FAs not only enhances academic understanding but also improves collaboration, self-composure, and critical citizenship skills essential for social studies education.

Minimally, barely half of the number, 100(59.7%), of the instructors avidly concurred that, after every lesson in HAG, students are often asked to draw diagrams linking key ideas learned, whereas 8(5.0%) strongly disagreed. The same views were also found support among most of the school heads and HAG students. These findings lend credence to Collymore's (2024) assertion that asking students to draw diagrams linking key ideas after history and government lessons significantly enhances learning outcomes. This indicates that, rather than passively reviewing notes, students who construct diagrams engage in a deeper processing of information, which supports long-term retention and conceptual understanding. This also supports Mwangi's (2023) findings in Nairobi County, which revealed that diagramming promotes meaningful learning. Mwangi (2023) found that, when students visually connect causes, events, concepts, and consequences, such as linking political ideologies to historical outcomes, they are required to analyse

© 2026 The Authors. Published by Bexford Publishing Ltd

relationships rather than memorize isolated facts. This aligns with constructivist research, which emphasizes that learners build knowledge by actively organizing new information with prior understanding. Mwangi (2023) further noted that, in history and government, where topics often involve complex systems (for example, governance structures, revolutions, or constitutional principles), diagrams help students identify patterns, hierarchies, and contrasts. In other words, flow charts, mind maps, and concept webs encourage learners to evaluate significance and sequence, fostering analytical reasoning. These findings indicate that asking students to draw diagrams after history and government lessons is vital for improving mastery of concepts. This further indicates that diagramming is not merely a revision activity but a powerful learning strategy that deepens understanding, strengthens critical thinking, and supports inclusive education.

The majority, 108(64.2%), of the instructors firmly concurred that, in public secondary schools, frequent presentation of feedback after formative assessments has helped improve students' performance in HAG, whereas a paltry 6(3.8%) strongly differed. Correspondingly, the school heads stated that regular provision of feedback has been crucial in ensuring that formative assessments improve the performance of HAG students in final examinations. On being probed further, one school head observed; In *our school, students' performance in HAG has improved since teachers provide regular feedback after each formative assessment. This has made it easy to assess what has been covered and what gaps need to be improved to enhance HAG pedagogy* (Principal, P23, School X).

During the FGDs, HAG students also stated that feedback is always provided after each formative assessment. They stated that such feedback has enabled them to improve on their areas of weakness and thus, perform better in examinations. These results affirm the fact that formative assessment not only gauges understanding but also provides timely feedback that informs learners about their progress and guides further improvement. This rhymes with the results of a study done in Italy by Toti (2024), which found that when feedback is consistently provided after FAs, students are better able to identify their merits and demerits, adjusting their study methods, and building deeper conceptual understanding. Toti (2024) established that HAG demand not only factual recall but also critical analysis and interpretation of events, and responsive feedback helps students move beyond rote memorization to more meaningful engagement with content. The study further found that students who receive detailed comments on their formative tasks are more likely to correct misconceptions early, thereby mitigating the risk of repeated errors and building confidence in tackling complex examination questions.

In the words of Kananu (2023), frequent feedback serves as a motivational tool, and students who understand where they have erred and how to improve are more willing to participate in class discussions, engage in peer learning, and take responsibility for their academic growth. Teachers who integrate feedback with formative assessment frequently report that learners demonstrate greater persistence when faced with challenging topics in History and Government. These findings indicate that feedback from formative assessment of students undertaking HAG contributes to improved teacher practice. By analysing common errors identified through formative assessments, educators can adjust their instructional strategies, revisit misunderstood concepts, and design targeted interventions. Besides, this underscores the fact that the feedback loop, involving assessment, feedback, reflection, and instruction, leads to enhanced educational outcomes in HAG in government-owned schools. This in addition implied that frequent provision of feedback after formative assessments deepens content understanding, enhances motivation, and supports proper teaching, all of which contribute to better learning outcomes.

Inferential Analysis

To confirm the influence of the provision of FA feedback on learners' academic performance in HAG in

© 2026 The Authors. Published by Bexford Publishing Ltd

public secondary schools, data was gathered on the composite means of teachers' views on their provision of formative assessment feedback and average KCSE results for the last five years (2020-2024) from the 31 public secondary schools. The findings are indicated in Table 7.

Table 7: Composite Means of Teachers' Views on Provision of FA Feedback and Learners' Academic Performance in HAG in Public Secondary Schools

Composite Means of Teachers' Views on Provision of FA Feedback	Average KCSE Results in HAG (Mean scores)
3.88	5.99
3.65	6.41
3.72	5.15
4.19	6.35
3.5	6.73
4.27	8.41
4.52	7.95
3.98	6.77
3.3	4.59
3.5	5.84
3.43	4.22
4.11	6.25
4.06	6.7
4.05	5.79
3.88	5.84
3.13	4.79
4.17	6.74
3.01	4.52
3.74	5.11
3.77	5.95
3.9	6.45
3.69	6.23
3.59	4.4
3.65	5.69
4.32	7.82
3.77	6.21
3.77	5.49

© 2026 The Authors. Published by Bexford Publishing Ltd

3.64	5.25
3.88	5.9
4.12	6.56
3.67	5.03

Source: *Field Data, 2026*

Table 7 shows that, in government owned secondary schools where HAG teachers believe in providing feedback after formative assessments, HAG students' KCSE performance tends to be higher than in schools where feedback after formative assessments is infrequent. This indicates that when HAG teachers provide timely and constructive feedback, students tend to achieve higher KCSE outcomes than in schools where feedback is infrequent or absent. This further affirms that formative assessment feedback fulfils a critical part in guiding learning by helping students understand their strengths, identify gaps, and adjust their learning strategies accordingly. For HAG students, who often process content rapidly and seek intellectual challenge, regular feedback deepens conceptual understanding and promotes higher-order thinking. When teachers consistently review assignments, quizzes, and classroom tasks and provide specific feedback, students are better equipped to refine their academic skills before summative examinations such as the KCSE. Frequent feedback also fosters metacognitive development among HAG learners.

These findings further indicate that prioritizing frequent feedback following formative assessments creates conditions that support superior KCSE performance among HAG students. Systematic feedback not only enhances academic mastery but also nurtures self-directed learning and motivation, giving these students a competitive advantage over peers in environments where formative feedback is rarely provided. Data in Table 4.9 were in addition run through Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Test Analysis. Findings were as indicated in Table 8.

Table 8: Relationship between Provision of FA Feedback and Learners' Academic Performance in HAG in Public Secondary Schools

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-3.071	1.269		-2.421	.022
	Provision of Formative Assessment Feedback	2.379	.332	**.799**	7.157	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Learners' Academic Performance in HAG

Table 8 presents the linear regression analysis, which yielded a linear model of the form: **Learners' Academic Performance in HAG = -3.071 + 0.799*Provision of Formative Assessment Feedback.** From the model, the coefficient for learners' academic performance in HAG in KCSE (r) with respect to the provision of formative assessment feedback is 0.799 (positive). This suggests that for every one-unit raise in teachers' composite mean scores regarding provision of formative assessment feedback, the average HAG results in KCSE are bound to raise by an element of 0.799.

This has yielded a coefficient of determination (**R^2 = 0.638**), which further indicates that formative assessment feedback accounts for a considerable proportion of the variation in learners' academic

© 2026 The Authors. Published by Bexford Publishing Ltd

performance. The other 36.2% of variation may be attributed to other factors such as teacher qualifications, student motivation, learning resources, school environment, and socioeconomic influences. The regression coefficient for formative assessment feedback is 2.379, suggesting that a one-unit increase in teachers' composite mean score regarding formative assessment feedback is associated with an estimated 2.379-unit increase in average KCSE HAG mean scores.

This positive coefficient demonstrates that improved teacher practices in providing timely, constructive, and informative feedback are associated with enhanced student academic achievement. The relationship is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), indicating that the observed association is unlikely to be due to chance. The model's constant (intercept) is -3.071. The constant represents the predicted HAG mean score when the composite mean of teachers' formative assessment feedback views is zero. In practical terms, this implies that if teachers reported no implementation of formative assessment feedback practices, the predicted KCSE mean score would theoretically be -3.071. These findings indicate that schools emphasizing continuous feedback create more effective learning environments that promote academic growth. This indicates that formative assessment serves a critical role in the instructional process, especially when it is accompanied by frequent and meaningful feedback. This further implies that feedback serves as a bridge between assessment and improvement, enabling learners to understand their strengths, identify knowledge gaps, and take corrective action. That is, frequent feedback helps learners clarify historical concepts, political ideas, and analytical skills that are central to History and Government.

1.8 Conclusion

After carrying out this study in the study area, it was concluded that, feedback is frequently delayed or limited to scores, offering little guidance on how students can improve. Additionally, students are rarely motivated to contemplate on their own learning through self-assessment, which undermines the development of critical thinking and responsibility for learning. Consequently, the intended benefits of FA have not been fully realised. This inconsistency has contributed to recurring poor performance in history and government in national examinations. This indicates that, without sustained and effective use of formative assessment practices, learners are denied the continuous support needed to identify gaps, correct misconceptions, and improve overall achievement.

1.9 Recommendation

This study recommends that, on provision of formative assessment feedback and learners' academic performance in History and Government, History and Government teachers should always provide immediate feedback to students after every assessment exercise to help them devise approaches to improve areas where they face challenges.

References

Adebayo, A. D. & Bamidele, O. M. (2025). *Analysis of Students' Academic Performance in 2021-2023 Nigerian Senior School Certificate Examination Multiple-Choice Objective Tests in Government*. DOI:10.37745/ijeld.2013/vol13n5110

Collymore, J. A. (2024). Visual learning strategies and conceptual understanding in history and government education. *Journal of Social Studies Education Research*, 15(1), 45–62.

Creswell, J. W. (2018). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approach.* Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Global Monitoring Report (2016). *Global Monitoring Report: Education for People and Planet*.

© 2026 The Authors. Published by Bexford Publishing Ltd

UNESCO, Washington, DC. (Online). Available at: en.unesco.org/gem-report/...pdf. Retrieved on 20.08.2019.

Kananu, E. W. (2023). Feedback practices and student motivation in secondary school social studies. *African Journal of Educational Practice*, 8(3), 133–148.

Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2019). *2019 Kenya population and housing census*. Nairobi; Government Printer

Kenya National Examinations Council (2023). *KCSE examination performance report*. KNEC.

Kibakwa, P. (2024). The Ministry of Education's encouragement of formative feedback in Burundi's schools. *Journal of Education Policy in Africa*, 11(1), 67-79.

Kitheka, M. N. (2023). Think-pair-share as a formative assessment strategy in history and government instruction. *Journal of Pedagogy and Civic Education*, 6(2), 57–71.

Malema, P. T. (2024). Impact of formative feedback on student performance in South Africa: A case study. *South African Journal of Educational Research*, 34(2), 210–225.

Mark W. Muvango (2026) Effects of Formative Assessment Practices on Learning of English in Public Senior secondary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. GSJ: Volume 14, Issue 3, March 2026, Online: ISSN 2320-9186. www.globalscientificjournal.com

Matekwa, R. (2025). The importance of formative feedback in developing analytical skills and historical understanding in Burundi. *Journal of Educational Research*, 7(4), 100-113.

Ministry of Education (2025). *Secondary school examination performance report*—Government of Kenya.

Morris, R., Perry, T. & Wardle, L. (2021). Formative assessment for learning in higher Education: A systematic review. *Review of education*, 9(3)

Muskin, J.A. (2017). Including local priorities to assess school quality: The case of Save the Children's Community Schools in Mali. *Comparative Education Review*, 43(1), 36–63.

Muthusi, P. K. (2023). Learner participation and inclusivity through formative assessment strategies in Machakos County secondary schools. *East African Journal of Education Studies*, 5(4), 101–116.

Mutwota Paul Ngei, Charity Limboro & Ephantus Kaugi (2026) Defining Success Criteria in Formative Assessment and Learners' Academic Performance in History and Government: Evidence from Public Secondary Schools in Kenya. International Journal of Research and Scientific Innovation. ISSN No. 2321-2705 Vol. XIII Issue VIII. P5605-5614. DOI: https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2026.1308000364

Mwanzia, M. M. (2023). *Influence of formative assessment practices on students' academic achievement in History and Government in Kenyan secondary schools* (Unpublished master's thesis)—University of Nairobi.

Omar, L. (2023). Rethinking academic performance in History and Government: Cognitive and socio-emotional factors. *Journal of Curriculum and Instruction*, 18(2), 22-35.

Onyango, D. O. (2024). Short response tasks and critical thinking development among secondary school learners. *Journal of Educational Measurement and Evaluation*, 11(1), 64–79.

© 2026 The Authors. Published by Bexford Publishing Ltd

Robertson, S. (2022). *Teaching History and Government: A Critical Thinking Approach*. History Press.

Sadler, I., Nicola, R. & Kay, S. (2023). Feed Forward practices: A systematic review of Literature. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 48(3), 305-320.

Sharma, R. (2024). Innovative assessment practices in India: Document-based questions, peer assessments, and project work in the classroom. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 56(2), 67–80.

Toti, L. (2024). The role of formative feedback in enhancing learning outcomes in humanities subjects. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 13(2), 201–218.

Uganda National Examinations Board (2025). *UACE and UCE national examination performance report*. UNEB.

UNESCO (2000). *EFA Newsletter*, UNESCO Nairobi office.

UNESCO (2015). *Education 2030: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all. Declaration of the World Education Forum in Incheon, Korea*. UNESCO Publishing.

Watkinson, P. L. (2023). Peer assessment and engagement in essay-based subjects: Implications for secondary education. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 30(1), 58–74.

Watson, L. E. (2024). Clarifying learning intentions: The role of formative assessment in improving student performance. *Journal of Learning and Instruction*, 82, 10(1), 36–54.

Watson, L. M. (2024). Gender differences in formative assessment engagement and academic performance. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability*, 36(1), 27–44.



© 2026 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the **Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) licence** (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)