

*Approaches to Classroom Reinforcement of  
Students at Lang'ata High School,  
Nairobi*

By

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this research to my father, Clement Adindu and Mother, Victoria Adindu. For providing me with basic education and for encouraging me to be value motivating and reinforcing others especially the less privileged ones in the society. Their encouragement bestowed upon me human dignity and strength to carry on when circumstances appear very difficult.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This Research focused on Approaches to Classroom Reinforcement of Students at Lang'ata High School. The sample groups were the head teacher, teachers and students of Lang'ata High School. The instruments used to elicit data were questionnaires, interview guide and observation guide.

The following questions guided the study:

1. How do teachers create or use verbal reinforcement in the classroom?
2. How do teachers use Non-verbal reinforcement in the classroom?
3. How do teachers use token reinforcement approach to reinforce students in the classroom?
4. What are the effects of verbal, non-verbal and token reinforcement on students in the classroom?

The result of the research show that verbal reinforcement is key to learning at Lang'ata High School. Also, the research shows that teachers use non-verbal and token approaches of reinforcement on their students, to help them learn and perform well in examination.

In order to improve or reinforce learning, teachers must make a very conscious effort at reinforcing students using verbal, non-verbal and token reinforcers or rewards. Teachers must take personal interest in their students and learn to listen to them, encourage them and praise them for giving correct answer, response or doing something impressive.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

*Reinforcement and motivation are closely related and are primary key to learning in any institution. Comments like, Okay! Excellent! Keep it up! Can do better! help learners a lot to build up confidence and good self esteem (Moore 1989, p. 152)*

### 1.0. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Educational success is a common reason for evaluating students. Research and human experiences confirm that individuals think differently. Schools therefore, must not use a single style of reinforcement to fit all students. Schools need multiple approaches to classroom reinforcement of students to enable learning to take place effectively and efficiently. Teachers need to know that students need reinforcement in whatever they do in the learning process. The teacher has to ask him or herself: *why is it that students are less motivated? What attitudes do students have towards school subjects?* Reinforcement and motivation are closely related and are primary keys to learning in any institution. The researcher is of the view that if all students are given adequate reinforcement, they can attain higher achievement in classroom learning and performance (Madeleine Hunter, (1987 p. 7).

It is against this background that made the researcher to take up the study on Approaches to Classroom Reinforcement of Students at Lang'ata High School. A lot of creativity is required in offering reinforcement to get the desired behaviour out of students. Comments like, *Okay, Excellent, Keep it up, or Can do better* help learners to build up confidence and self-esteem. Such comments, and words that build up confidence are referred to as reinforcers. Reinforcers are very important and effective in the classroom when teachers use them to support students to study and have strong

interest in class tasks. Reinforcement in a classroom is necessary and fruitful. It motivates the whole person (Ofodile, 1999). Naturally, actions reinforced or rewarded are often repeated. Reinforcement is an essential response that can help students to like teachers and the subjects they teach. The immediate effect of reinforcement is an increase in desired behaviour, which students at times lack in the classroom.

Many secondary schools do their best to embrace various approaches of building conducive atmosphere for learning. Tsuma (1998) affirms that part of the failure of schools to establish a stronger bond of relationship with students is due to the neglect of the affective domain in teaching and learning. As a result, some students stay aloof from their teachers because they are afraid of them. Such fears hinder an atmosphere where students will feel free with their teachers, talk about their issues and ask questions about problems they may have. Perhaps, lack of adequate reinforcements in secondary schools explain the reason for many failures and dissatisfactions expressed by students, parents and teachers.

Also, inadequate reinforcement may be the reason for truancy and disinterest in school tasks by many teenage students who seem to be interested in other things besides school. Brophy (1976) stressed that many students find school boring and monotonous due to lack of reinforcement and motivation by teachers at school.

Ofodile (1999) advised that teachers must pay keen attention to how their students are mentally prepared and reinforced to be in the classroom to learn. Some teachers hardly pay attention to the fact that the mental reinforcement of their students greatly influences their ability to learn.

Fortune (1996) further suggests that reinforcement should be at the 'core of education' (p.42, 57-62). Understanding the interactions between the *Approaches to classroom Reinforcement of students* is a boost to students because teachers will be able to deal with situations that may interfere with students' learning and students will be able to enjoy a good atmosphere in the classroom.

Adopting various approaches to reinforcing students will help teachers break away from simply feeding students with just information and begin to encourage students to like the subjects and take personal initiative towards acquisition of new knowledge. Students show high enthusiasm for learning in a class that is reinforced and where the relationship between teachers and the students is good or cordial.

### **1.1. LANG'ATA HIGH SCHOOL**

Lang'ata High School is a public day school. It is located at Southlands, Nairobi. It is a mixed day secondary school. The school was initially located in the present Wilson Airport in Lang'ata in the late 60's serving as a district school, before it was moved to its present site in 1983. Honourable President Kibaki who was then the Vice President of Kenya under the leadership of President Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi opened it.

Currently, there are more than 600 students, both boys and girls attending Lang'ata High School. The school is well equipped, having assorted chemistry, physics and biology equipments to enable practical education to take place. It has three streams housing 600 students out of which 400 are boys and 200 are girls. Students hail from around Lang'ata, Kibera, Buruburu, Kiserian and Ong'ata Rongai. The school is a mixture of both the rich and the poor. The school has an average of 50 students in each class.

The mission of the school is to offer quality and human education to students and to help them excel, grow and integrate in society. The school motto is *to Strive, to Thrive, and to Serve*.

The school supports sport such as hockey, football, volleyball and athletics. Different teams in the school from time to time go out to compete with other schools and they do well. Lang'ata High School is popularly known for its musical band. They have won many competitions, which boost the morale of the students.

The School has a Staff room and toilets, a Storeroom, Computer room, Laboratory for Physics, Chemistry and Biology. The school has two buses, which are used to run school errands.

The following are the subjects taught in the school: English, Kiswahili, French, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Geography, History, Christian Religious Education, Mathematics, Agricultural Science, Home Science, Computer, Commerce, and Accounts

The school day starts at 7.30 am daily, when the students begin with personal study that ends at 8.00 am. Assembly follows personal study. Nine lessons are allocated to each class in the timetable with duration of forty minutes each. Classes begins at 8.30 am after assembly.

There are 29 teaching-staff and 15 support staff in Lang'ata High School who help in the smooth running of the school. Other responsibilities given to teachers include: purchasing of food, games masters and patrons of different students' organizations.

The staff strives and thrives to serve the needs of their students especially in achieving the national goals of education; one of which is to excel in National Examination (KCSE). Several students of Lang'ata High School have performed excellently in the KCSE and have gained admission into local universities in the country. The school encourages students' participation in clubs such as: First Aid Youth Group, Peer

Counselling Group, Christian Youth Association, Islamic Movement, and Protestant Get-together.

The school once in a while invites guest speakers from outside the school to give talks to the students on varied contemporary issues like drug, alcoholism and so on. During holidays, the school provides extra lessons to form three and four students, paying special attention to some students who need more help in certain subjects like English, Chemistry, Mathematics and Biology

## **1.2. THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

There is much concern from the society and the government of Kenya on the falling standard of education. Part of the reason, according to Miller (1997) is lack of reinforcement to students and teachers. For this reason, the researcher found it crucial to investigate Approaches To Classroom Reinforcement of Students at Lang'ata High School, Nairobi. The persistence poor performance of students in secondary public schools attributed to inadequate classroom reinforcement necessitated the background of this research.

Human experience through history has shown that human beings are continually discovering themselves and are consistently finding new approaches and things about their existence as they continue to advance as rational beings. Education too is under reform and educationists are looking for new ways of restructuring learning around students.

The new approaches of classroom reinforcement proposed by Clark called reinforcement a booster to the intellectual development and instructional style to aid learning. Clark (1988) in his book *Middle and Secondary Schools, Planning For Competence* noted that in any educational reform or restructuring, the reinforcement

between teaching and learning processes must be enhanced. He noted that, “*effective reinforcement mirrors effective learning*” (p.20).

Yet he sadly discovered that “*teachers have not mounted a serious effort to organizing teaching around classroom reinforcement techniques*” (p. 20).

Clark, (1988, p. 1-2) laments that:

... Instead, we have viewed reinforcement as pampering a student or an approach to make students lazy. We have neglected rewarding, praising and positive recommendation of students and built instructional systems that are biased towards continual reinforcement.

Clark (1988) has echoed precisely what the researcher thinks is wrong with public secondary schools, especially in Kenya. Today in Africa, majority of our schools are teaching students to be able to recall what they have crammed and to reproduce them verbatim during a test or exam without much reinforcement. No wonder therefore we end up with many students who drop out of school or hate school and the teachers. They wait around for somebody to tell them what to do. There is no initiative on their own to make learning more exiting and appealing.

Approaches to classroom reinforcement of students are alternative framework to the traditional method of teaching and learning, which if adopted and implemented, will help school administrators and teachers to restructure their school performance. Ooko (1999) has this to say; *students suffer for lack of adequate classroom reinforcement*. This research investigates the Approaches to classroom reinforcement of students at Lang’ata High School, Nairobi to ascertain the use of reinforcement to enhance students’ learning and performance. This study will also investigate the effects of various types of reinforcements in the classroom setting.

### 1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following are some of the research questions, which will guide the study.

- a) How do teachers use Verbal Reinforcement in the classroom to reinforce students to develop positive attitudes toward learning?
- b) How do teachers use Non-verbal reinforcement in the classroom to reinforce students?
- c) How do teachers use Token Reinforcement in the classroom to reinforce the students?
- d) What are the effects of Verbal, Non-verbal and Token reinforcement strategies on students' learning in the classroom?

#### **1.4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- A) To investigate how Verbal reinforcement is employed in the classroom at Lang'ata High School.
- B) To know the effect of using Non-Verbal reinforcement on students in the classroom
- C) To investigate the effect of using Token reinforcement in the classroom on students' learning
- D) To make recommendations to teachers, administrators and students on the approaches to classroom reinforcement of students in their schools.

#### **1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The primary purpose of this study will be geared toward making teachers value reinforcing students by using various kinds of reinforcers. The study will help learners to know the various methods that teachers use to stimulate learning in the classroom, as the knowledge of these methods of motivating students will enable students to co-

operate with their teachers and not be scandalized when they see their teachers using some gift items, money and other valuable items to reward their good performances.

This study will help the head teacher, the Board of Governors (B.O.G.) and other school authorities to see the need of allocation resources that may be needed for reinforcement of students in their school. This will enable reinforcement to be inspirational and school team venture or issue.

### **1.6. JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY**

The study on reinforcement is a research that concentrates on approaches to classroom reinforcement of students entrusted to teachers. Many research have been done on the causes of students' poor performance at public and private secondary school level asserts Ofofiele (1999), but very little research has been done on approaches to classroom reinforcement of students to enhance the success of students and reduce the boredom of sitting in the classroom. Investigation into reinforcement will reveal how teachers can promote their lessons to the learners in a humane and friendly manner.

Miller (1997) argues that there is need for urgent focus on how to reinforce students for good performance in class work and other extra-curricular activities. This affirms that there is a concern with Reinforcement. The research hopes to bring an awareness of the importance of reinforcement on students' accomplishment. This study will act as a boost to teachers and others in the field of formation to maintain reinforcement in and outside the classroom.

The research intends to assist teachers use techniques of reinforcing learners for academic progress. Reinforcement improves the standard of teaching because it reinforces students. The study intends to help teachers not to cause students to lose hope in the course of classroom lessons due to absence of reinforcement. When students get discouraged in the classroom they end up hating their teachers and develop low self-

esteem. Some students even drop out of school due to inadequate reinforcement that lead them to less perseverance towards doing or completing classroom tasks.

This research examines how reinforcement has been applied, its outcome and how it can be offered effectively to meet the expectations of students. The researcher is interested in presenting reinforcement as a main tool of academic progress and good performance. The period the teacher spends with the students in the class is a precious and irreversible moment to be exploited properly in building and forming learners into responsible people. Mmaduakonam (1998) noted that research has been done on reinforcement worldwide, and strategies have been proposed on how best to reinforce students to learn, and how best to teach students.

Although researches have been done on reinforcement, which touched on the motivation of students, there is still not enough done basing on Verbal, Non-verbal and Token approaches to classroom reinforcement. Mmaduakonam (*Research Method: an introduction 1998*) affirms that approaches to classroom reinforcement of students as a framework of teaching is developing and is still new in Africa.

The findings in this research will help educators across the continent to acquire insights that will help them use various reinforcement approaches towards building up of students interest in learning. This research will also enhance good performance among students, as those interested in the learning of students will use various tactics to prepare students for getting good grades and working hard. Humans need vital reinforcement in their human activities and environment. In an environment where there is inadequate reinforcement there abound to be poor results and performances. Approaches to classroom reinforcement of students help students study, work hard and get good grades and this research will attempt to investigate the above assertion.

### **1.7. Scope and Limitation**

This study is an investigation and analysis of approaches to students' reinforcement in the classroom at Lang'ata High School. The Form three and the Form four students of Lang'ata High School were the main respondents of this study because they have more experience of the school.

The study was also carried out among teachers, and the head teacher of the school to investigate their approaches to students reinforcement in respect to creating a good attitudes and perception towards learning, which will later generate good grades.

### **1.8 Definition of Operational Terms**

**APPROACHES:** It means strategies, techniques, tactics, and styles to reinforce students.

**ATTITUDES:** A settled opinion or way of thinking that influences how an individual person sees things around him or her. It is also a settled frame of reference through which a person sees his or her reality that determines his or her behaviour

**REINFORCEMENT:** It is a strengthening idea, response or action for betterment of another person especially a student. It is causing a process to continue or increase in intensity. It is a technique for stimulating students to respond in desired ways to a learning task

- REINFORCE:** Implies to strengthen or emphasize a feeling, an idea and a habit. It means to cause a process to continue or increase in intensity.
- REINFORCER:** Implies an event that follows behaviour. It is a proven reward.
- TEACHING:** This is the action of a person imparting skill.
- LEARNING:** It is used in this research to refer to the information processing and advances in comprehension or mastery that occur when a student is acquiring knowledge.
- MOTIVATION:** A drive that energizes and directs people to act as they do.
- PERFORMANCE:** An assessment in which students create an answer that demonstrates their acquisition of knowledge

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0. INTRODUCTION

This chapter is a review on both primary and secondary literature done on reinforcement in the classroom. The review concentrated on the approaches to classroom reinforcement of students using Verbal reinforcement, Non-verbal reinforcement and Token reinforcement styles and the role of teachers in executing what is expected in the day-to-day reinforcement of students. Without classroom reinforcement, the lesson becomes boring and frustrating to students. Melloy (1993) observes that the attentions of students are controlled while the lecture is going on by any teacher that applies reinforcers while teaching.

#### 2.1. Definition of Reinforcement

Relevant literatures referred to assert that reinforcement is the term that can be defined from different perspectives: psychologically, socially and educationally. Several people have defined it from their own understanding and convictions. In all its definitions, whether in reference to school or psychological; reinforcement emphasizes the same thing. That is, *strengthening an idea, or action for advancement of other person.* (Kathuri, 1993)

According to Armstrong (1998), it is causing a process to continue or increase in intensity. In line with, Ofodile (2000), *“reinforcement is strengthening or emphasizing*

*a feeling, an idea or even a habit in one's life either as a child in school or as the teacher."*

According to Weiten (1989):

*Reinforcement occurs when an event following an action or response strengthens the tendency to make that response (p. 204).*

All need reinforcement. Simply put by Weiten, "teachers reinforce to better students' academic performance.

An educationist, Clark, believes that, "*reinforcement is based on the belief that rewards strengthen a tendency to acquiring good conduct.*" (p.143). He emphasized how lack of reward weakens the tendency to act in a disciplined manner.

*"Behaviour is well learned and maintained when it is reinforced"* (Kenneth, p. 236). Reinforcers are positive elements that are used on the other party, for example in classroom situation; to excite a student to keep up the good behaviour or learning effort he or she has began manifesting.

## **2.2 Classification of Reinforcement**

This research is focused on three common reinforcement approaches that some renowned educationalists have suggested for the improvement of students' learning. Kenneth (1987) suggested Verbal, Non-Verbal and Token Reinforcement as the common methods of motivating students in the classroom. Weiten (1989) supports these three classifications of classroom reinforcement as effective by using the following example:

*As a teacher, I offer tokens to weak and hungry students. To the smart ones, I encourage by words of mouth, gestures, and I try to smile even when I am having some personal issues to resolve.*

### **2.2.1 The Use of Verbal Reinforcement method**

Verbal reinforcement is source of inspiration to students. Yet, reports have suggested that learners are not affirmed properly at schools. Obiajulu (1988) asserts that many youths are spending a lot of energy and time in classroom without any praise for the effort and correct responses in class activities. Kathuri (1993) confirms by stating that;

*With so many teaching qualifications, many teachers are unable to reinforce their students appropriately; little attention has been paid to the effective use of various methods of rewarding students.*

Verbal reinforcements are words, statements or comments that are reinforcing. Common Verbal reinforcers are praise, flatters and affirmation. These events satisfy psychological needs that are closely tied to demands such as, warmth and affection expressed to the students in the classroom. Every student needs verbal reinforcer at whatever the cost. Otherwise, the learning process can be interfered with (Kenneth, 1987)

Montague (1987) observed that verbal reinforcement is commonly used by teachers in form of a word or a phrase such as: “good”, “excellent”, “correct”, “that is right”. The teacher should be careful not to over use these reinforcers otherwise they lose their effectiveness and meaning. Usage of student’s ideas in class is also a form of reinforcement. Students need good verbal feedbacks to learn. One of the fundamental reasons for verbal interactions is that among other things, it provides courage to learners, exchange of information, affirmation and genuine assessment in classroom relationship, reinforces learners and enhance learning (Caine & Caine 1997).

Similarly, Munavi (1992) talks of reinforcement in his research on the psychology of learning. He believes that reinforcement is a kind of reward to students to help improve their learning. In addition, Farrant (1992) commented that “*the given of generous praise to students brings about good and productive behaviour among students*” Affirmation

strengthens the desired behaviour in a student, that next time the student will like to be at his or her best because of the reward or affirmations that is to come from the class teacher.

Ginot (1972) makes the following conclusion as a teacher and having taught for long:

*I have come to the frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. I possess a tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or inspiration (P.54).*

The quote above shows the extents to which a teacher's classroom reinforcement and what he or she says or does in class can affect the learner. It is important then for teachers to watch out how they use words or project themselves before students in the classroom. The need for discretion is called for in determining the suitability of a particular reinforcement method to be used. Effective teachers must continue to reinforce attitudes and perceptions using words in the classroom and the task at hand (Marzano 1992).

To illustrate how teachers can help students using verbal reinforcement, here is an excerpt from Ooko's (1999) book, *A Diverse Approach to Classroom teaching*.

*Mr. Odera the English teacher enters the classroom, greets the class and begins to teach. At the middle of his lesson, he asked the following questions to Ahmed Salim. What is a Verb? Give three examples of a verb? Salim answered that a verb is a doing word or action word. He receives verbal reward such as excellent, good; better, good attempt.*

As trivial as the excerpt may appear, it is an ideal example of creating verbal reinforcement where teacher gives confidence to students through use of commending words.

Abagi (1985) observes that a few ethnographic studies on Kenyan classrooms, which have been done so far, indicate that: *teachers enter the classroom carrying with them more than their notes and chalk: they also bring with them socially constructed roles, words and behaviours for students.* The nature of Kenya's and African school system and classroom organisation gives the teachers all the powers to control tightly what happens inside the classroom. Teachers still do a lot of talking, handing over information, classroom management, reprimanding pupils, rewarding and so on. In the process of talking in the classroom, teachers usually send different messages to students that can either discourage or motivate the learner. This indicates that the majority of teachers help in the process of construction of success and failure through three basic reinforcement methods that are part of classroom dynamics. The three methods of reinforcement include the Verbal reinforcers, Non-verbal reinforcers, and Token reinforcers

### **2.2.2. The Use of Non-Verbal Reinforcement**

Horby (1999) observed that non-verbal reinforcers are motivations that have acquired reinforcing qualities by being associated with gestures like smile, eye contacts, good grade and applause. Non-verbal reinforcers are very useful and important for the progress of the pupils' learning. Through the hidden curriculum; that is all those unintended, unplanned informal messages, events or activities, teachers are able to influence the perceptions and attitudes of students towards academic subjects and how they perform in those subjects. During classroom official curriculum, teachers' non-verbal reinforcement and the messages sent to students, both boys and girls should not differ so as to prevent classroom gender discrimination which will put the teacher in a position of employing non-verbal reinforcer with bias. When teaching mathematics and

the sciences, girl or boy student should not be ridiculed and embarrassed; they should not be told that they are poor in mathematics; they are lazy; they are wasting their time in school, etc. Instead, boys and girls should be encouraged to put more effort. There should be no assumption that girls or boys are poor in this or that subject or are just stupid. Students both boys and girls are not to be ignored, dismissed or discriminated against when rewards are given.

Teachers are to apply some of the non-verbal reinforcers whenever they teach.

Ofofiele (1999) observed that actions that bring happiness, pleasure, laughter to students in the classroom should be encouraged: they are Non-verbal reinforcers and motivates students to increase in desired behaviour.

Fortune (1966) in the research conducted at University Of Nsukka Nigeria stated that: *the use of clapping, round of applause and commending gestures in the classroom is a form of non-verbal reinforcement in secondary schools. It is very encouraging to any student who receives applauses for correct answer or good conduct.*

Teachers are to apply some applause technique whenever they teach. At any given time students need round of clapping reinforcer for reinforcement. Students put more effort to learn after observing other students being reinforced by applause during the lesson for certain actions or behaviours.

Human being tends to model their behaviour to resemble the one applauded for success or good behaviour. The same applies to classroom situation where other students tend to copy the behaviour of a student that has received round of applause for giving right response. Applause brings out the hidden talents and initiative of students to the surface. When applauses are used to reinforce, the teacher reveals to the student the importance of the answer or point the student has given in the classroom.

Applause renews students and encourages them to keep up an acceptable act or attempt. For example, in mathematics lesson the student has worked so well and got the correct

answer. The teacher reinforces the student by asking other students to give round of clapping. This helps the shy and less able students to become active in the class and in group discussion.

Non-verbal type of reinforcement is used through physical actions such as: a smile, eye contact, movement towards the student, a relaxed body, or positive gestures, to send a message of approval for some student's action or response. The teacher should not overlook the non-verbal reinforcement in the classroom, for at times it can be more effective than verbal reinforcement.

Marzano (1992) states that to foster acceptance, teachers must: make eye contact with each student in the class, being sure to pay attention to all quadrants of the classrooms, and by deliberately moving toward and staying close to learners. Caine & Caine (1997), in their study of the brain in relation to learning, observed that much learning occurs through social interactions. So a lot of what we learn involves other people in social interactions and interpersonal relations. Teachers therefore will need to structure their classroom teaching taking into consideration the significance of non-verbal interactions in classroom learning.

Farrant (1990) in his book *Principles and Practice of Education* states that a good and productive teacher must possess the quality of friendly humour and the creation of excellent teacher-student academic relations. This form of classroom reinforcement puts the students in good classroom atmosphere from the start of the lesson.

Classroom interactions among students and teachers have important implications on how learners perceive themselves and their participation in school. The kind of tasks and assignments given by teachers and the grouping patterns that emerge in the classroom should not be based on stereotyped notions about gender social roles. Negative evaluation and harassment should be avoided and students helped to construct success not only in academics but also in life.

### 2.2. 3. The Use of Token Reinforcement

Token reinforcer is where the student earns presents by performing the teacher's duty. For example, the teacher gives the class a mathematical equation question and promises to give a reward to the student who will work on it correctly on the blackboard. Tokens may be in form of points, sweets, chips, crisps, or any appropriate item.

The common token reinforcers are money, gifts and other incentives. In any case, these reinforcers determine the good learning environment.

Ooko's (1999) research on classroom reinforcement and its impact on the teaching profession in Kisumu District and his findings are applicable outside Kisumu District. By and large, his conclusion on token reinforcement of students is vital, he stated that: *teachers must always strive to reinforce their class with tokens however difficult they find it. Reward remains with students as reminders and sign of accomplishment.*

Similarly, the material reward given by a teacher can also affect the kind of effort a child will put in learning. Okeke (2000) conducted a research on the *Effects of Reinforcement and Learning in Secondary Schools* in 20 schools at Enugu State Nigeria

The heart of his research was to find out teachers who use token reinforcement or reinforcers in teaching and how students perceive teachers in regard to token rewards. He used the survey design. The sampling consisted of 15 secondary schools in Enugu State, out of the 15 schools, 120 students both boys and girls of different classes and age participated in the research. Also, 30 teachers were randomly sampled from the 15 schools. Statistical procedures were used to analyse the data and simple analysis of variance and the chi-square in testing the null hypothesis of variance was used.

Okeke (2000) concluded in his research that; teachers who use tokens or materials items for reinforcing in the classroom have positive effects on secondary school students' learning. He said that teachers who use tokens perform very well in classroom due to the fact that tokens are mental motivators and inducers

According to Muvani (1992), *many modern teachers have not yet learned to exploit reinforcement to the maximum for the purpose of promoting classroom learning*. Even though many teachers do realize that reinforcement has the effects of strengthening the behaviour it accompanies, few teachers provide reinforcement for the many efforts pupils make to improve class performance (p. 12). Reinforcement is very important in whatever one does. When encouraged, one gains confidence and proceeds to the next activity

Brookover maintains that reward is something that gives more spirit to a student about academic life. Reinforcement occurs when a response is strengthened by the arrival of a pleasant motivation. Motivation is of different types such as: a good grade, good meals, attention, praise, flattery, promotion and respect.

A reinforcement attitude unites the teacher, pupil and the subject. Each party feels encouraged to prosper. To a student reinforcement is a gain that leads him or her to love learning. That is why reinforcement is sometimes considered as a “reward” (Brookover p. 238).

Ofodile (1999) commented that reinforcement occurs when for example teachers motivate students. The reason for reinforcement is to encourage good behaviour. Reinforcement in a student should result in an increase in some desired behaviour if it has to be effective. A reinforcer should not be accidental but intended wisely by the teacher.

Ofodile (1999) further observed that:

The effects of reinforcement are support and encouragement essential in all that students are doing. Reinforcement promotes good relationship between teachers and students. It unites the two parties into one and creates room for a positive attitude to the subjects offered by teachers. This makes the teaching and learning easier.

Reinforcement does good to the learners in public and private secondary school, by reinforcing students, it offers them sense of dignity and recognition. Reinforcement helps students perceive or take daily matters positively. Reinforcement reflects the good will of the teacher, and his or her intention to give the best to the students. In cases of ill feelings, learners are free to approach the teacher and discuss their needs with them.

Obiajulu (1988) has this to say:

Teachers have to take students as their sons and daughters or as their brothers and sisters so that they can encourage them wholeheartedly. It is from there that the students are able to accept and appreciate one another.

Part of the goal of teaching is *to deliver just enough reinforcer for the classroom experience to be effective*. Reinforcement is given fully, and not halfway. Its effect on the student should be long lasting and irreversible. Reinforcement brings about changes in students' life and the particular classroom.

Silvernail comments.

Positive comments encourage future learning and bring about good performance. Reinforcers in the form of written comments are valuable and the nature of the comments on certain students' characteristics may influence their overall effectiveness.

Praising a student for the good deed can instil confidence on the mind of the learner. Telling the student to 'Keep on trying' is a good approach towards encouragement for excellence. Students like to receive encouragement even before receiving praise, since encouragement makes them to feel worthwhile from the beginning. It stimulates the effect and the capacity of the individual.

Silvernail, D. (1987), comments that,

Teachers in the primary school give more praise feed back than their colleagues  
in secondary schools. (p.17).

Teachers should always find something good to say about a student. Every student would love to be praised or encouraged. For educational progress and academic performance, praise is very supportive. Through encouraging students, teachers sell their knowledge to them effectively.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0. INTRODUCTION**

This Chapter presents and describes the design and methodology used in sampling and sampling techniques, research instruments, data collection and analysis. The design chosen shows the sample that was studied, place and the situation in which they were studied.

#### **3.1. Research Design**

The principal research strategy used in this study was the survey technique. Survey research was used because validity of the information gathered depended on the integrity of the respondents. The survey research design was desirable since questionnaire items given to students and teachers would help answer the research questions. The survey technique was used because it met the requirements for making generalization and drawing conclusions from wide population of students, teachers and administration of Lang'ata High School.

#### **3.2. Target Population**

The target population were teachers and students of Lang'ata High School. The school population is about 600 students and of whom 250 are Forms three and four and 29 teachers.

#### **3.3. Description of Sample and Sampling Techniques**

This study was conducted in Lang'ata High School. The sample of the study was drawn from teachers and students of the school. Data was collected from 120 out of 600 students and 19 teachers out of 29. The head teacher of the school was purposively

sampled because of her long experience and position which can provide vital information for this research. The researcher sampled 20 students from each Form owing to the rich experience of the students.

The sampling technique applied in this study was the simple random sampling and purposive sampling procedures. The random sampling was applied so that the choice of individuals for inclusion in the sample was left entirely for chance. The sampling of individuals was in no way influenced at any given stage in the sampling process so that each member of the sampled population had equal chance (Anene, 1998; Ebdon, 2001).

### **3.4. Description of Research Instruments**

In investigating the approaches to classroom reinforcement of students at Lang'ata High School, the researcher used three instruments for the collection of data. The instruments were: Questionnaires, Observation guide and Interview guides.

#### **3.4.1. Questionnaires**

Questionnaires were used to collect data from students and teachers. One questionnaire for students and another one for teachers. The questionnaires contained both closed ended and open-ended questions and rating scale items. Close-ended questions were used for answers on background information. Open-ended questions were used to give respondent freedom to respond to questions asked. Also, the costs of administering the questionnaire were relatively low (Anene, 1998).

Use of questionnaire provided a good technique to obtain opinions and convictions of teachers and students toward classroom reinforcement; the use of questionnaire was to get more satisfactory response rates from the target population. The set of questions for students was administered to elicit responses for the following:

- (a) Background information of the students.

- (b) Whether teachers use classroom reinforcement to enhance teaching and good performance.
- (c) How teachers use classroom reinforcement strategies for teaching
- (d) What further techniques of reinforcement do teachers use to support students' learning and good performance

### **3.4.2 Observation Guide**

This was another survey research tool, which the researcher directly used to collect data for analysis. Unlike self-reports, observation according to Kathuri (1993) minimizes or eliminates the bias that may result from people offering information about themselves. This is the reason for using the observation method of data collection. The researcher observed and elicited (a) *how teachers use various approaches to reinforce students in the classroom.* (b) *Close attention was paid on what teachers actually reinforced in the classroom and how students responded to teacher's style of reinforcement.*

### **3.4.3 Interview Guide**

This survey tool of data collection was used by the researcher to respondents in an oral form. The method of data collection was used because as Gall et al (1996) said that the interview is a tool that is highly adaptable to different situations. Gall et al (1996) further state that besides the adaptability of interviews, it builds trust and rapport with respondents. Thus, making it possible to obtain information that respondents probably would not reveal by any other data collection method. The interview was also used to further probe teachers and students on the questionnaires administered to elicit the same goals as stated under the questionnaires and the observation guide.

### **3.5. DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES**

Data was collected using varieties of methods including visits to Lang'ata High School, presenting questionnaire to respondents and conducting oral interviews among teachers and students. The experience of the researcher after teaching in the same school was also helpful in collecting the data.

The questionnaires were presented in person by the researcher. They were completely filled the same day on which they were given out. The interviews were conducted on different days at face-to-face interactions. The researcher undertook field research with no pre-mediated answers. The researcher was able to collect information, which had not been explored before or mixed up with previous information. What researcher recorded was what the interviewee gave.

### **3.6. DATA ANALYSES**

Both qualitative and quantitative analyses of data were used. Data collected were analysed and interpreted in order to provide explanations of the experiment under investigation. Data was further analysed using descriptive statistics mainly the frequency tables, percentages, and mean were also used.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **4.0. INTRODUCTION**

The data analysis in this chapter is presented and interpreted according to the response rate of respondents through the use of qualitative and quantitative forms in averages, percentages and frequency tables. The data was collected through questionnaires, interview guides and observations guide. The questionnaires were in two parts: (1) questionnaires for students (2) questionnaire for teachers. The interview guide was for the head teacher. The interpretation of the data collected was analysed according to the following themes: Background information, Verbal reinforcement, Non-verbal reinforcement and Token reinforcement.

#### **4.1. RESPONDENTS' INFORMATION**

This section presents demographic information of the sampled teachers and students, and the administration. The background information of the students included: age, gender and the number of students in class. The background information for teachers consists of the subjects they teach, forms they teach and their qualification.

##### **4.1.1 Students Respondents Information**

Student respondents' information is presented in the following sub-headings: Distribution of students by age, and distribution of students by gender.

#### 4.1.2. Distribution of Students According to Age

Table 1, shows different age group of respondents sampled in this study. One hundred and twenty students participated in the study.

**Table 1**      **Distribution of student respondents by age**

Age	n	%
15-19	115	95.5%
20-25	5	4.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 1 shows that 95.5% of the respondents were aged between 15-19 and 4.2% between the ages of 20-25. Most of the respondents were adolescents who are trying to establish themselves and have focus in life. Verbal Reinforcement deals with helping students have positive attitudes and perception about classroom learning. Non-verbal reinforcement deals with actions such as smiles, eye contact and other positive gestures that will motivate learner towards good performance. The adolescent stage is known by psychologists as a period where students need a guide, direction and an adult presence to help them develop themselves positively, and to form themselves with confidence.

This crucial stage in students' learning demands for the necessity of teachers to make serious efforts at establishing and creating an environment of verbal reinforcement through affirmations, honest praises and gentle oral correction of students. Positive comments in form of words are critical for adolescents' reinforcement, growth and academic improvement.

### 4.1.3. Students respondent by gender

This table shows different gender of respondents sampled in this study

**Table 2**     **Distribution of students respondents by gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Male	72	60
Female	48	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

In Lang'ata High School, there are more boys than girls. As shown in the table above, it is clear that 60% of respondents were boys and 40% were girls. There is a wide margin between the boys and the girls and there is no particular explanation as to why there is such significant difference in the distribution of the respondents. Important in the approaches to classroom reinforcement is the need to reinforce the girls and boys using the various reinforcing methods without showing preference, in spite of the number difference. Lang'ata High School teachers try to strike a balance to this number difference by providing reinforcing activities and associations in the classroom involving more girls to enhance their learning.

### 4.1.4. Teachers Respondents Information

This section contains information about teacher respondents. It is presented in the following subtitles: distribution of teachers in the subjects they teach, distribution of teachers by the forms they teach and distribution of teachers by their qualifications.

#### 4.1.5. Distribution of teachers by the subjects they teach

This section presents the subjects taught by teachers. The selection of teachers by their subjects was left to chance. Therefore, the subject representation of teachers was not influenced in anyway. Nineteen questionnaires were distributed to nineteen teachers to gather information on approaches to classroom reinforcement of students at Lang'ata High School and all responded.

**Table 3. Distribution of teachers by the subjects they teach**

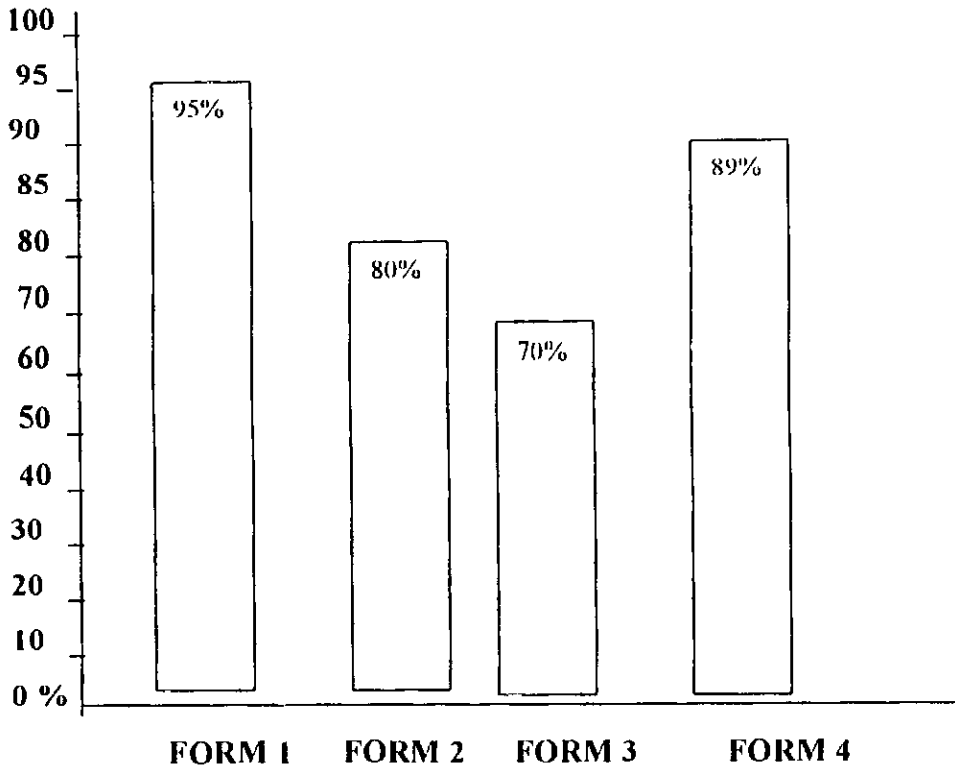
<b>Subjects</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Subjects</b>	<b>n</b>
Agriculture	2	History	1
Business Education	2	Kiswahili	1
Chemistry	1	Literature	3
Commerce	1	Mathematics	3
CRE	3	Physics	2
English	5	Music	1
Geography	4		

As seen in Table 3, it shows the distribution of teachers according to the subjects that they teach. This is important to approaches to classroom reinforcement of students at Lang'ata High School, because different subjects will require different methodologies and styles of helping students acquire and integrate knowledge. Table 3, shows that Chemistry, Commerce, Music, History and Kiswahili has one teacher each for the different classes. Agriculture, Business Education and Physics have two teachers while Literature, Mathematics and CRE have three teachers respectively. Geography has four teachers and English has five teachers.

#### 4.1.6. Distribution of teachers by the forms they teach

This section presents information on the forms taught by various teachers. From Figure 1, 95% of the teachers teach in Form I. Form II and form IV have 89% of the teachers teaching them while 79% of teachers in Lang'ata High School teach in form III.

**Figure 1** Distribution of teachers by the forms they teach

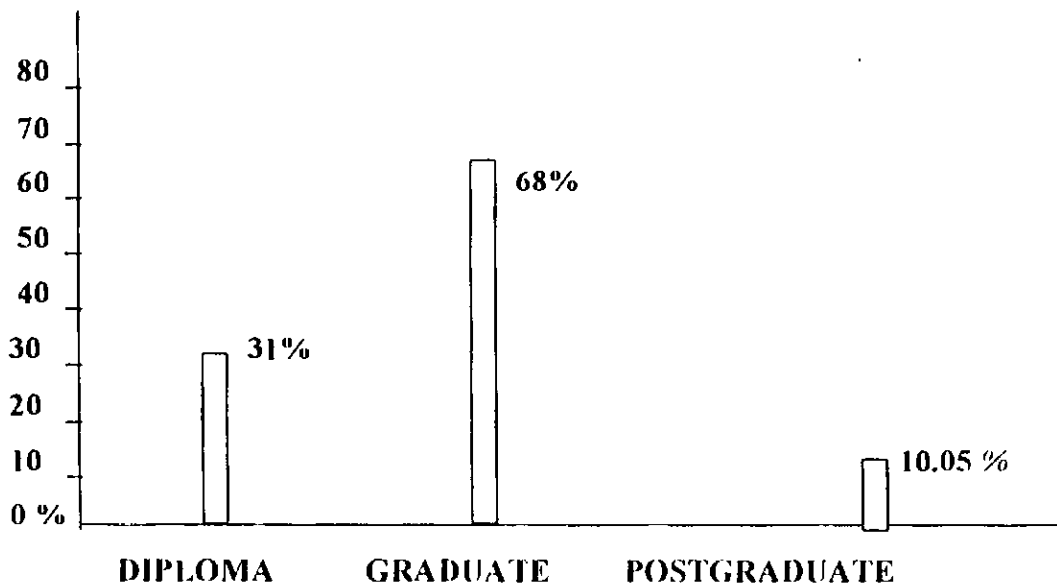


The variety of experiences by the same teachers in different class is good because then teachers have a reasonable amount of experience of other classes to be able to respond well and with confidence to the questionnaires administered to them to elicit responses on approaches to classroom reinforcement of students.

#### 4.1.7. Distribution of teachers by their qualifications

This section gives the qualifications of teachers. From Figure 2, one can deduce that the teachers are qualified to teach in Lang'ata High School, going by the standard requirement of the education act of Kenya.

**Figure 2** Distribution of teachers by their qualifications



The majority of teachers in Lang'ata High School are graduate teachers with 68%, followed by those with diploma 31% and postgraduate teachers with 10.05%. The variety in teachers' qualification will add on the quality of responses that will be elicited.

## 4.2. Investigations on the Respondents responses to Verbal reinforcement

This section presents findings on teachers and students respondents responses on use of verbal reinforcement approach in the classroom. The first research question was basically on finding out how teachers use verbal reinforcement method and its effects on the students.

### 4.2.1 Students Responses toward verbal reinforcement approach

Verbal reinforcement is a crucial element in students' learning. Table 4 gives the representation of the responses elicited by one hundred and twenty students.

**Table 4** Students Responses on our teachers praise us when we behave well

		SA	A	UD	D	SD
	fx	%	%	%	%	%
Our teachers praise	50	39%	-	-	-	-
Us when we behave well	30	-	38 %	-	-	-
	23	-	-	12%	-	-
	13	-	-	-	8%	-
	4	-	-	-	-	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>					<b>100%</b>

From Table 4, 39% and 38% of students strongly agreed and agreed that teachers praise them when they behave well and answer questions correctly. Strongly agreed and agreed combined totals 77% of students accepting that teachers praise or affirm them in class.

One student wrote:

Praises and positive comments are used by teachers; word like good, well done, well answered, try again and excellent are often used to affirm students in the classroom.

Naturally when people are praised or affirmed, they feel uplifted and tend to keep up with the desired behaviour.

Another student wrote:

Nice praises and comments from our English teacher in my form three made me persevere to study and learn ways of correct pronunciation.

Positive and pleasant praises are key elements of helping students to learn and store knowledge. Thus, making them own it. Some of the students stated that they feel at ease and ready to learn when their teachers address them using positive and respectable comments.

One student confirmed this assertion by writing:

By being given little positive comments and praises about the contribution I made in the class. I get more courage to participate in classroom discussion  
As you would expect, individuals get morale boost and motivation from being praised

Table 4 shows that 23% of respondents were either not sure, strongly disagreed or disagreed that teachers do not praise them when they behave well or give correct answers in the class. This percentage, although it is not very big, points to the need for teachers to praise all students as much as possible.

**Table 5 Students Responses on I feel good when praised by my teacher**

		SA	A	UD	D	SD
	fx	%	%	%	%	%
<b>I feel good when praised by my teacher</b>	70	55%	-	-	-	-
	28	-	31%	-	-	-
	5	-	-	8%	-	-
	15	-	-	-	12%	-
	2	-	-	-	-	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>					<b>100%</b>

In Table 5, 55% and 31% of students wrote that they feel good when praised. In total, 86% are in agreement of feeling good when praised by teachers. Teachers' praises show that there is good level of relationship and recognition of students' contribution in the class. Confidence is created in a student when he or she keeps on getting rewarding affirmations and praises from teachers. Students' learning will be highly motivated. Praises are like enthusiasm giver. One gets more impetus to forge ahead a task when praised verbally.

A student wrote,

When I am praised, it generates sense of belonging and boosts my morale.

Another student supported this fact by writing,

I feel at home when praised either in classroom or outside the classroom. I get excited when praised especially during the morning parade while all the students are almost present.

Students feel safe and learn more in a classroom where teachers praise them for correct responses and behaviour.

A student in Form Four wrote:

Receiving praises from teachers make students have more positive attitudes about classroom tasks and the teachers. Teachers should help students establish positive attitudes and perceptions about learning through words of praise.

The students are of the opinion that daily positive verbal feedbacks from teachers put them in good mood to learn.

Another student wrote:

Verbal reinforcers are like receiving good rewards after a day's job.

Oral reinforcers are like evaluation and friendly assessment, although, it can have negative content, but students are helped to know their position in the classroom.

Further more, a Form Three student wrote,

*I get sense of comfort when praised and I feel motivated to think for more good contributions I can make in the class.*

The conclusion to draw from the students' responses is: comments that are encouraging reinforce students for effectively learning and exhibition of desired behaviour in and outside the classroom

8% of students are not sure if they feel good when praised in the class and 12% of students disagreed that they do not receive praises from teachers, while only 3% strongly disagreed that they feel good when praised. Those who are undecided and those who disagreed and strongly disagreed were in minority. All the same, it is still a challenge to educators to praise students and make them feel good in the class in order to enhance their learning.

Some respondents wrote that nothing at all is been done by their teachers to praise them or make them feel good in the class.

**Table 6. Students Responses on Our teachers know and call us by our names**

		SA	A	UD	D	SD
	fx	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Our teachers know and call us by our names</b>	50	39%	-	-	-	-
	60	-	40%	-	-	-
	10	-	-	21%	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>					<b>100</b>

Table 6, also shows 39% and 40% of the students strongly agreed and agreed that teachers know their names and call them by their names in and outside the classroom. In an environment where there exists familiarity of students' names there is trust and closer bond and such condition or situation aid learning and acquirement of skills or knowledge easily.

A student who strongly agreed that teachers know and call his name wrote:

By knowing and calling my name I feel important and appreciated in the classroom

A Form two student who also agreed that teachers know their names and call them by names has this contribution to make, she writes:

My name is precious to me; if one claims to love me he or she must first know my identity, which is my name. When teachers call students by their names. On hearing their names, students pay attention. Calling a student by name is a positives way of saying to that student,

*'please pay attention'*

Names have personal meanings to the bearer and identify him or her. No wonder the Lang'ata students value their teachers to know and call them by their names.

When students walk into classroom their first concerns are about the feel of the class and what the teacher expects of them. A teacher must deal with these students' concern through using verbal calling of names to make the students feel at home and welcome in the classroom. This approach or technique of knowing and calling students by their names in the classroom enhances classroom climate and friendly atmosphere.

Also, in Table 6, 7 % of students were undecided and 11% and 3% were in disagreement and strong disagreement that their teachers do not know and call them by names. This further throws the challenge to teachers to find all ways possible to know and address students by their names in and outside the classroom in order to develop attitude of trust and comfort so that they can relate with their students freely.

From what the students wrote down in the questionnaires. It is obvious that verbal reinforcement from teachers towards their students is very relevant for learning to take place. There is therefore the need for continuous use of words of praise, pleasant feedbacks, comments, knowing and calling students' names in the class in order to reinforce their learning

### 4.3. Teachers Responses on Verbal Reinforcement

Teachers were given open-ended and closed ended items about the approaches to classroom reinforcement of students. Interesting responses were elicited from teachers on how they use verbal reinforcement to help students learn.

Table 7, shows the percentage % of teacher's responses on verbal reinforcement approach.

**Table 7 Teachers Responses on praising students when they behave or perform well**

	fx	SA %	A %	UD %	D %	SD %
Teachers praise students when	11	80%	-	-	-	-
they behave or	3	-	15%	-	-	-
perform well	3	-	-	15 %	-	-
	1	-	-	-	5%	-
	1	-	-	-	-	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>					<b>100</b>

As seen in Table 7, teachers do their best to praise students when they behave well or perform well in academic work. 80% of teachers admitted that it is important to affirm students when they behave well or scored a good mark in continuous assessment tests.

The English teacher has this to say,

I make sure I affirm a good work done by my student, especially in essay writing. I call in the student in the staff room and speak to him or her using some of these words; your work is excellent, keep it up.

In addition, a Geography teacher commented that,

I do my praising of students in the classroom, so that other students can sit up and emulate their peers.

15% of teachers are undecided on the item of praising students when they behave or perform an impressive act. Unfortunately, another 15% and 5% disagreed and strongly disagreed that praising a student is worthwhile. The Christian Religious teacher wrote down that praising a student for exhibiting a desired behaviour leads to pride. Pride is not a good virtue. She suggested that, if praises are to be given, let it be moderate and sincere, and be given to both the male and female achievers. Although, the teachers who opposed the use of praises and good comments to boost students' morale towards education are minimal; they should be listened to, as they have good point of observing that teachers can fall into the temptation of praising only a particular boy or girl and neglecting other students.

One teacher said that,

By commending, appreciating, affirming and respecting students and their views in class, this fosters positive attitudes towards learning in the mind of students.

Another teacher observed that,

Students feel good when praised and by feeling good students are motivated to keep up the good behaviour or performance. To make students feel good, teachers need to be able to recognize more of the positive side of students than the negative side. I believe this is a good practice that promotes positive attitude and perception in students.

**Table 8 Teachers Responses on students feel good when praised**

		SA	A	UD	D	SD
	No. of teachers	%	%	%	%	%
Students feel	15	90%	-	-	-	-
Good when praised	2	-	-	-	-	5%
	2	-	-	5%	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>					

In Table 8, 90 % of teachers strongly agreed that their students feel good when praised. One teacher commented that: I have realized that when I criticize a particular student, he or she feels sad and avoids coming to interact with me or bring some work for correction, but when I render words of encouragement like; *you can do better or try again*, the student feels good and lively.

Also, in Table 8, 5% of teachers strongly disagreed and disagreed on the item that students feel good when praised. Some of the teachers gave reasons for their refusal. One teacher has this in his respondent questionnaire; *some girls when affirmed by male teacher take it that the male teacher is after her or wants to befriend her; hence those good comments and affirmations are not taken in good faith, but are seen as something to be rejected.*

**Table 9. Teachers Responses on knowing and calling students by their names**

		SA	A	UD	D	SD
	No. of teachers	%	%	%	%	%
Teachers know	16	85%	-	-	-	-
and call students	2	-	10%	-	-	-
by their names	1	-	-	5%	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>					

In Table 9, 85 % of teachers believe that knowing and calling students by their names create a good rapport between teachers and students. Calling someone by his or her name is sign of friendship and closeness. A name is personal identity of someone and teachers need to know and call students by name to have an environment that is welcoming and relaxing for students' learning.

A student who strongly agreed that knowing and calling students by their names wrote; ones name is greater than wealth.

Another student wrote:

Losing ones name or not valuing it is losing everything and I am happy when I am called by my name, especially when I put forward a desired or impressive behaviour or performance.

From the distribution, majority of the students strongly affirmed that knowing and calling them by their names is vital to reinforcing them in the classroom and carrying out classroom tasks

**Table 10. Teachers Responses on teachers use question technique to reinforce students**

		SA	A	UD	D	SD
	No. of teachers	%	%	%	%	%
Teachers use questions	15	90	%	-	-	-
Technique to	2	-	5%	-	-	-
Reinforce students	2	-	-	-	5%	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>					<b>100</b>

As seen in Table 10, 90% of teachers strongly agreed and 5% agreed that using questioning technique enhances and reinforces students to learn. Through questioning, teachers can reinforce their students.

One teacher wrote,

A teaching style where questioning is applied increases learning through probing and encouraging the student to elaborate upon his or her response.

Teachers encourage the use of questions to promote learning and understanding. By asking questions and allowing students to ask questions in a variety of classroom situations help to extend and refine knowledge. The use of question no doubt provokes thoughts and stimulates students to think beyond just what they learn in class.

5% of teachers disagreed that they do not use adequate questioning techniques for reinforcement of students to internalise learning.

One teacher wrote that,

Due to the short duration of classroom lesson I do not entertain more than one question during the 40 minutes allocated for my class. Another supported the non-use of questioning technique to reinforce students by writing. I need to

cover the syllabus on time, so I do not spend much time in framing questions or allowing students to interfere with the class by asking questions.

#### **4.4. Administrator responses to verbal reinforcement method**

A focused interview was carried out with the head teacher of Lang'ata High School on the approaches to classroom reinforcement of students at Lang'ata High School. Interesting responses were elicited, below are the responses.

When the researcher interviewed the head teacher on approaches to classroom reinforcement of students used by teachers in her school, the researcher gathered that the head teacher has been in Lang'ata High School for 10 years and she is in charge of all students' affair.

The head teacher has this to say,

Teachers thank students whenever they do something impressive to satisfy the verbal approach of reinforcement.

She continued to state that;

Affirmation is done in the classroom and during morning parade

The head teacher further commented that;

Teachers are encouraged to use comments like; excellent, good work, try again, keep it up, and can do better to reinforce students especially the weak ones.

Such comments boost the morale and self esteem of the students. They are effective in motivating other students to emulate the desired action from one another. To thank someone for job well done or for exhibiting good conduct, prompts one to repeat such act in the future and that continuity generates habitual good behaviour that enhances learning and good performance inside or outside the classroom.

#### 4.5. Confirmation of Respondents responses on non –verbal reinforcement

This section presents findings on teachers and students respondents responses on use of non-verbal reinforcement approach in the classroom. The information is presented in table format.

##### 4. 5.1. Students Responses on Non-Verbal Reinforcement Method

The responses of students on Non-verbal Reinforcement were presented in Table 11. Reinforcing students by Non-verbal approach of reinforcement is very vital in learning. Table 11, is the result of the responses elicited from students on Non-verbal reinforcement. Non- verbal reinforcement is the use of physical actions, gestures in the classroom to reinforce students to learn and achieve a desired result.

**Table 11. Response of students on our teachers smile and use positive gestures in class**

		SA	A	UD	D	SD
	No of student s	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Our teachers smile</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>54%</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>and use positive</b>	<b>40</b>	-	<b>36%</b>	-	-	-
<b>gestures in class</b>	<b>20</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>10%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>					

Table 11 indicates that respondents generally strongly agreed or agreed that teachers use non-verbal reinforcement. For example, 54% of respondents strongly agreed that teachers use smiles and positive gestures in the class and 36% agreed on the same. Altogether, 90% of respondents agreed that smiles and gestures by their teachers are important. One cannot overlook the relevance of friendly smiles and gestures.

However, 10% of students are opposed to the idea of teachers smiling and using positive gestures to reinforce students.

One student wrote that,

Continuous use of gestures like smiles by teachers will make students take teachers for granted and this will be bad for maintaining classroom discipline.

*Another student stated that:*

By smiling, a teacher puts him or herself to danger of not being listened to and this will hinder students from performing well in the class assignments.

The view of the researcher in this situation is for teachers to moderate their various styles of non-verbal reinforcers, so that they will not be obstacles to students' learning.

From Table 11, it is clear that the majority of students who strongly agreed and agreed that teachers' smile, eye contacts, positive gestures while teaching in the classroom totals 90% and are rated high in Lang'ata High School. Students affirm that eye contacts and smiles they get from teachers help them to pay attention and learn from them.

One student wrote:

Smiles from teachers help me to feel comfortable while the lesson is going on

Smiles are signs of happiness and well being or good state of mind. A teacher who is always serious with frown face scares students.

**Table 12. Response of students on our teachers write thanksgiving note to students for good conduct and performance**

		SA	A	UD	D	SD
	No of students	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Our teachers</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>71 %</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>write thanksgiving</b>	<b>40</b>	-	<b>22%</b>	-	-	-
<b>notes to students</b>	<b>9</b>	-	-	<b>3%</b>	-	-
<b>for good</b>	<b>9</b>	-	-	-	<b>3%</b>	-
<b>conduct and</b>	<b>2</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>0.8%</b>
<b>performance</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>					<b>100</b>

In Table 12, 71% and 22% of students were in strong agreement that their teachers encourage them by writing thanksgiving letter or note for reinforcing good conduct and performance. The students who accepted that teachers write thanksgiving note to students for good conduct and performance totals 93%. The 93% of students who supported the use of motivating remarks on students' assessment report forms, came up strongly claiming that remarks written down is durable for the students than the immediate oral remarks. The respondents were in agreement that encouraging students by issuing certificate of recognition motivates the desire to achieve more and repeat the desired good.

One student wrote:

When I see written recommendation that portrays my good effort I feel strengthened. I cherish written reinforcers than verbal reinforcer.

Good recommendation written down on the students' exercise books during and after lessons reinforces the recipient student and challenges other students to try and emulate the rewarded student.

3% of the respondents are not sure whether their teachers write thanksgiving messages to students who exhibited a desired behaviour or performed well and another 3% and 0.8% disagreed and strongly disagreed that teachers do not write thanks giving note or message to students when they show desired conduct. Although, these respondents are minimal, it is a challenge to teachers to address the situation where students are not given written affirmation to reward them for showing good behaviour or performing excellently in various school subjects.

**Table 13. Response of students on: teachers write motivating remarks o students' report assessment forms**

	fx	SA %	A %	UD %	D %	SD %
<b>Teachers write motivating remarks on students' report assessment forms</b>	100	95 %	-	-	-	-
	20	-	-	-	-	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>					<b>100 %</b>

In Table 13, 95% of students strongly agreed that teachers write motivating remarks on their report assessment forms. Only 5% of students strongly disagreed that their teachers' written remarks on their report cards are reinforcing.

One student has this statement in her questionnaire;

I hate to open my assessment form; it is full of discouraging comments; especially from my mathematics teacher. Imagine! I hate him and his subject.

Another male student confirmed by writing that:

I hide my report forms from my friends, because there are many written remarks such as; lazy student, poor result, and below average. Such remarks pull my mind down.

Teachers should not put down direct discouraging remarks in learners' report assessment forms. Remarks such as; *you can do better, try again, and you have the potential*; should be used for an obvious weak student in preference to remarks such as; poor performance, lazy student and below average.

A student who strongly agreed that teachers write motivating remarks on students' report assessment forms wrote,

My report form's motivating remarks make me feel proud of my performance. They also challenge me on areas of my weaknesses.

Encouraging reports written in assessment forms uplifts students. Parents also use teachers' remarks to reinforce, encourage their children to put more effort in a particular subject or punish their children, if such written comments are too negative. Therefore, teachers should be considerate when writing negative remarks on their students' report assessment forms.

**Table 14. Responses of students on teachers good models reinforces behaviour of students**

	fx	SA %	A %	UD %	D %	SD %
<b>Teachers good models</b>	60	50%	-	-	-	-
<b>Reinforces behaviour</b>	40	-	36%	-	-	-
<b>of students</b>	20	-	-	-	-	14 %
<b>Total</b>	120					100%

50% and 36% of students strongly agreed and agreed that teachers who exhibit positive behaviour are models to students and are source of support to enhancing students to learn and maintain the desired responses or attitudes. Good models bring clarity in life and help in casting off any doubt that students may have about what is being taught. Teachers who are good models emanate manners and good examples that reinforce students in the classroom.

One student wrote,

I am proud to listen to respectable teachers who parade around good manners and caring comportment.

Showing students good examples motivate students to learn and internalise what they have been taught. Students like to consult model teachers for guidance, and clarification to class assignments. Some students wrote that concentration on what their teachers do in class help them to follow the steps that these teachers took them through. Teachers' example and good conduct is a vital reinforcer.

It is quite clear from Table 14, that teachers who are role models motivate students' learning. 14% of students are not sure on the item on teachers' good behaviour reinforcing students' learning.

One of such student wrote,

I do not care about my teachers' behaviour, my work is to learn from him or her and that is all. I am not interested in his or her shortcomings and good modelling.

From the findings, most of the students agreed that teachers need to show good example and be good models, in order to attract the interest of students to learn from them.

#### 4.6. Teachers Responses on the use of Non-Verbal Reinforcement

The responses of teachers on items of Non-verbal Reinforcement were presented in Table 15, 16, and 17. Interesting responses were elicited from the teachers on the use of Non-verbal reinforcers to enhance students learning. For teachers to help students learn or acquire knowledge there are certain specific strategies that must be devised in class. Table 15, 16, and 17 give lists of items, which show ways to reinforce students using non-verbal approach.

**Table 15. Teachers responses on students need for attention from teachers**

	fx	SA %	A %	UD %	D %	SD %
Students need	15	90 %	-	-	-	-
Attention from	2	-	5%	-	-	-
Teachers	2	-	-	-	5%	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>					<b>100%</b>

90% of teachers agreed that students need attention of their teachers. Paying attention over and over again especially to students academic worries and problem enabled teachers to share the problems with the students and at the end students are encouraged to put in their best in academic work.

From Table 15, 90% of students strongly agreed and agreed that attention is the bedrock of learning. The 5% of students disagreed that students need attention of their teachers to reinforce them are the minority. Therefore, the finding attests that students need the attention of their teachers in order to be rewarded, reinforced and get better results.

**Table 16. Teachers responses on: smiles, eye contact or other positive gestures reinforces students**

	n	SA %	A %	UD %	D %	SD %
<b>Smiles, eye contacts and other positive gestures reinforces students offering</b>	<b>13 2 2 2</b>	<b>85% - - -</b>	<b>- 5% - -</b>	<b>- - 5% -</b>	<b>- - - 5%</b>	<b>- - - -</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>					<b>100%</b>

85% and 5% of teachers strongly agreed and agreed that teacher' smiles, positives gestures and eye contacts with the class help reinforce students to learn. Students' sense of comfort in the classroom improves when teachers use good gestures to reinforce students and get them involved in classroom learning and tasks.

The study findings show that 90% of teachers are in total agreement that smiles and eye contacts are effective reinforcers

**Table 17. Teachers responses on students' need for safe and orderly classroom to be reinforced and learn**

	fx	SA %	A %	UD %	D %	SD %
Students need safe and orderly classroom as part of reinforcement	15	90%	-	-	-	-
	2	-	5%	-	-	-
	2	-	-	5%	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>					<b>100 %</b>

90% and 5% of teachers strongly agreed and agreed that students need to be reinforced to learn by provision of a safe and orderly classroom. Only 5% of teachers remained undecided. 95% of teachers are in total support concerning the need for safe classroom as one method of reinforcing students' learning.

From the study findings majority of teachers are in agreement that students can be reinforced by provision of safe and sound classroom.

**Table 18. Teachers responses on teachers' positive behaviour reinforce students**

	n	SA %	A %	UD %	D %	SD %
Teachers' positive behaviour reinforce students	11	80%	-	-	-	-
	4	-	10%	-	-	-
	4	-	-	10%	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>					<b>100 %</b>

80% and 10% of teachers strongly agreed and agreed that teachers' positive behaviour reinforces students. Only 10% of teachers remained undecided. 90% of teachers are in total support concerning teachers' positive behaviour as one means of reinforcing students to get better academic result and good behaviour.

From the study findings majority of teachers are in agreement that teachers' positive behaviour reinforce students' learning

#### **4.7. The Administrator's Responses towards Non-verbal Reinforcement**

This section gives the interesting information gathered from the head teacher on use of non-verbal method of reinforcement.

##### **a) Head teacher's Response on teachers smile and use positive gestures in class**

The head teacher has this to say concerning the use of smiles, friendly gestures as non-verbal reinforcement by teachers at Lang'ata High School,

'Teachers are patient with students and are friendly to almost all of them and know their background. The use of physical actions, gestures like smiles and eye contacts are used to reinforce students.'

##### **b) Head teacher's Responses on teachers write thanksgiving note to students for good conduct and performance**

The head teacher further stated that

The school provides for teachers cards to write a thanksgiving message to be posted on the notice board within the classroom for all students to see.

Adolescents want to be recognized and appreciated for the contribution they have made, so is the same with a student when he or she is thanked publicly through thanksgiving letter posted on the billboard. This form of non-verbal reinforcement

helps students develop positive attitudes and perceptions about classroom learning. Students feel accepted, experience a sense of comfort and order, they perceive tasks as valuable and interesting when reinforced non-verbally using thanksgiving note or letter.

**c) Head teacher's Responses on teachers praise students when they behave well**

The head teacher also said:

**My students are reinforced through the positive and encouraging comments on their report assessment forms, even when a student is not performing well I encourage the teachers to write 'You can do better next time to that student'.**

This strategy is another example on non-verbal reinforcement through writing, where the educator wants to make his or her student feel accepted, feel energized and work hard next time. When we do not feel accepted, we are often uncomfortable, distracted or depressed. Students who are reinforced through positive comments on their report forms feel better about themselves and school, work harder and learn better.

**d) Head teacher's Responses on teachers write motivating remarks on students' report assessment forms**

'The school provides certificates especially on games, sports, music and drama performed at a provincial level', said the head teacher.

This is token kind of reinforcement where a valuable material is presented to a student or students for good performance. Certificates are good reinforcers. They are durable reinforcing materials that enable one to revisit and enjoy the psychological happiness that good behaviour or response brought about. The teacher providing certificates for a good performance or behaviour end up helping students develop their abilities and resources.

**e) Head teacher's Responses on teachers know and call students by their names**

Another way the teachers of Lang'ata High School reinforces students in their classroom according to the head teacher is;

Teachers know and call students by name to help reinforce them and help them pay attention.

The quote above is very striking in that the head teacher is able to realize the importance of knowing and using students' names to make them pay attention and at the end acquire knowledge while in the classroom. The above statement implies that teachers are able to make students feel free with them and are able to talk with their teachers freely thereby creating a safe environment for learning. It is good that teachers are encouraged to personally interact and know his students' background and family. When students have confidence in their teachers a rapport is created and students will easily be co-operative in class and learning will then take place.

**4.8. Responses of Respondents on use of Token Reinforcement**

This section contains information on the use of Token Reinforcement and its effects on students in the classroom. For students to learn, token reinforcement is important. This strategy reinforces students quickly than verbal and non-verbal reinforcement approaches.

**Table 19. Response of students towards giving stationery is one way of motivating students**

		SA	A	UD	D	SD
	n	%	%	%	%	%
Giving stationery is one way of motivating students	10	20%	-	-	-	-
	70	-	53%	-	-	-
	40	-	-	27%	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>					<b>100%</b>

As seen in Table 19, 20% and 53% strongly agreed and agreed that giving stationery is one way of reinforcing students. Gifts are sign of cordial relationship and friendship. They can stand as sign of recognition and appreciation. When students are given gift items they tend to put more effort to achieve more.

In Table 19, 27 % of the students were undecided towards the use of stationery or any other items to reinforce students, but their number is minimal to make a significant impact to the study.

**Table 20. Response of students towards class weekly and end term parties are organised to reward good performance**

		SA	A	UD	D	SD
	fx	%	%	%	%	%
Class weekly and end term parties are organised to reward good performance	80	74%	-	-	-	-
	40	-	-	26%	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>					<b>100 %</b>

From Table 20, 74% and of students strongly agreed and that class end term party be organised for students to reinforce them to produce better results and maintain desired behaviour in the classroom and outside the classroom. 26% are not sure or undecided.

One student wrote:

After participating at the end of the term party organized for the well-behaved student and all the best academically performed students in each class. I felt great and encouraged to put in more effort to excel

In general, majority of the students are in agreement that class weekly and end term party is a source of token reinforcement that motivates students.

**4.9. Teachers Responses Towards use of Token Reinforcement**

Token reinforcement helps students get energized towards acquiring and maintaining desired behaviour. The responses of teachers on items on use of Token Reinforcement were presented on Tables 21, 22 and 23.

**Table 21. Teachers’ responses to giving stationery is one way of motivating students**

	fx	SA %	A %	UD %	D %	SD %
Giving stationery is	12	70 %	-	-	-	-
one way of	3	-	12%	-	-	-
motivating	2	-	-	9%	-	-
students	2	-	-	-	9%	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>					<b>100%</b>

Table 21, shows teachers' response to token approach of reinforcement. From the Table, it is obvious that use of tokens or gifts as form of reinforcement is unquestionable.

70% and 12% of teachers strongly agreed and agreed that giving stationery like pens, books, files, and diaries and so on to students who have done well on various class activities reinforce students to keep the desired behaviour or performance. Also 9% and another 9% were undecided and were in disagreement that tokens in any form need not be given to students who have performed well in class work or any vital class activities. It is worthwhile to look critically at the reasons given by teachers who disagreed on use of token as reinforcer towards students' learning

One teacher wrote;

It puts class teachers into financial stress and mental planning on the best gift items to give to students who have exhibited excellent performance and behaviour.

Though, this reason considers the pocket of teachers and the planning that goes into deciding which student should have what, it is worth offering tokens that one can easily afford to students in order to reinforce them.

**Table 22. Teachers' responses to class weekly get-together or parties are organised to reward good performance by teachers**

	n	SA %	A %	UD %	D %	SD %
<b>Class weekly</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>73%</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Get –together or parties are organized to reward good performance by teachers</b>	<b>5</b>	-	<b>26 %</b>	-	-	-
	<b>2</b>	-	-	<b>1%</b>	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>					<b>100%</b>

From Table 22, 73% and 26% of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed that end term parties should be used to reward and reinforce students. One teacher interestingly wrote; *weekly get-together or parties for students are a strong reinforcer and an approach to strengthening teachers- students relationship.*

**Table 23. Teachers’ responses to teachers give certificate of recognition to certify positive response or achievement**

	fx	SA %	A %	UD %	D %	SD %
Teachers give certificate of recognition to certify positive response or achievement	12	53%	-	-	-	-
	5	-	42%	-	-	-
	2	-	-	5%	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>					<b>100%</b>

Also, most of teachers strongly agreed and agreed that certificated of good conduct need to be given to students, especially the bright ones to reinforce them to do more better in class work. Learning is hardly relevant if students are not able to receive any tangible item to justify their efforts at school

#### **4.10. Administrator's Responses towards use of Token Reinforcement**

The responses of the head teacher were gathered through structured interview.

##### **a) Head teacher's Responses on: weekly and end term get-together reinforces students**

According to the head teacher of Lang'ata High School,

The school prepares get-together every week for groups or classes for performing well or exhibiting better discipline .

Using this form of token reinforcer is very effective to motivating students who are bright and challenges the weak students to learn from the bright students. Organizing weekly get together for the smart students is a means of helping these students believe in their ability to complete a given task and get good grades needed for their future career. Although, if not handle well it can lead to segregation and class conflict between the bright and the weak students.

##### **b) Head teacher's Responses on gifts, tips and tokens reinforce students to learn**

The head teacher said,

These students need gifts, tips or tokens to keep them competing in a healthy manner and learn what has been taught in the class. In Lang'ata we have price giving on weekly basis for those students who have done the well in various subjects and other extra-curricula activities.

Furthermore, she said:

We teachers make collective decisions on students' welfare and we have policy of giving gifts to students, but at times funds are not available but the administration manages to provide something as token to reinforce students.

From the interview with the administrator, the research findings demonstrated the following assertion on Classroom reinforcement;

- 1). Reinforcement motivates students to work effectively.
- 2). Reinforcement enables students to be involved and participate actively in school activities.
- 3). Reinforcement gives more strength to students who are less motivated
- 4). Reinforcement instils in students confidence and a sense of self-worth.
- 5). Through the use of reinforcement learning and relationships with the teachers and the subjects they teach become stronger everyday.
- 6) Frequent reinforcement gives room for perseverance.

Teachers need to win over students' attention by offering variety of reinforcers. Several findings portrayed that reinforcing students was every teachers' responsibility. The findings from the interviews showed that teachers try their level best to reinforce students in the classroom. Students revealed that the frequent encouragement from their teachers have helped them in learning

At one point during the interview the head teacher said;

*'I am grateful to my teachers for encouraging weak students to continue with their education, which some really wanted to abandon long time ago. It is through their various approaches to classroom reinforcement that most of these students have not pulled out of school.'*

The researcher's appeal to teachers is to reinforce more their students since "reinforcement offered to student solves lots of problems, which teachers may not be aware of. The nature of reinforcement must be critical if it is to be successful. Reinforcement can be a verbal comment, non-verbal action and a token experience. All students, whether bright or weak, need reinforcement from their teachers.

#### 4.11. Information from Class Observation

While in Lang'ata High School, the researcher carried out observations of the school in general both in the classroom and outside the classroom. The researcher was privileged to take an active part in the learning of students for the purpose of collecting data for the study. Basically, there is generally a conducive atmosphere for learning in Lang'ata High School. Teachers tend to be free with their students and students tend to respond positively too.

The researcher used the following observation method to ascertain the number of times and frequency teachers employed various styles of reinforcing students; FRQ--Frequently, FRG= Fairly frequently, OCC= Occasionally, RA = Rarely, and NR = Never

##### Researchers Class Observation on verbal reinforcement

The researcher sat in a few classes and made the following observation on; verbal reinforcement.

**Table 24      Researchers Class Observation on verbal reinforcement**

	FRQ	FRG	OCC	RA	NR
	%	%	%	%	%
<b>VERBAL REINFORCEMENT</b>					
1. Teachers give praise, affirm students for right answer	100%	-	-	-	-
2. Questions are asked by teachers in the class	80%	9%	-	-	-
3. Teachers call students by their name	25 %	75%	-	-	-

The researcher observed that the two Agriculture teachers give praise for right answers. The two Business Education teachers were very much into calling students by their names. Also, the Chemistry teacher, Commerce and Christian Religious Education teachers were fond of giving praises for correct answers. Furthermore, the English teachers, who are five in number, asked questions to students in order to keep them alert and reinforced.

100% of the researcher's observation show that there is frequently giving of praises and affirmations to students for giving right answers and comporting themselves well in the classroom. The nineteen teachers observed made use of affirmations to motivate students.

80% and 9% of the researcher's observation shows that there is a frequently and fairly frequently use of questions by teachers to reinforce students' learning. There is also the rating of 25% and 75% frequently and fairly frequently calling of students by their names.

**4.1.2 Researchers Class Observation on use of Token reinforcement**

The researcher sat in a few classes and made the following observation on; token reinforcement. The researcher used the following observation method; FRQ=Frequently, FRG= Fairly frequently, OCC =Occasionally, RA = Rarely, and NR = Never

**Table 25 Researchers Class Observation on use of Token reinforcement**

	FRQ	FRG	OCC	RA	NR
	%	%	%	%	%
<b>TOKEN REINFORCEMENT</b>					
1 Teachers using exercise books as rewards	85%	15%	-	-	-
2. Teachers using ball pens as gifts	100%	-	-	-	-

The researcher has witnessed teachers use extrinsic rewards like gift of exercise books, ball pens, calendar and dairies to reward students for good responses or achievements. On one occasion, the Mathematics teacher for solving a difficult mathematical equation promised Three Form Four students free lunch for one week.

The researcher observed that the two Agriculture teachers gave seedlings for planting to Agriculture students. The two Business Education teachers provided exercise books for her students. The Board of Governors of Lang'ata High School has paid for these free

books. Also, the Chemistry teacher, Commerce and Christian Religious Education teachers were fond of giving ball pens during quiz times for correct answers and in order to keep students motivated alert and reinforced.

85% and 15% of the researcher's observation show that there is frequently giving of books, and ball pens to students for giving right answers and comporting themselves well in the classroom.

### Researcher's Class Observation on Non-Verbal Reinforcement

The researcher sat in a few classes and made the following observation on; non-verbal reinforcement. The researcher used the following observation method; FRQ= Frequently, FRG= Fairly frequently, OCC =Occasionally, RA = Rarely, and NR = Never

**Table 26. Researcher's Class observation on Non-Verbal reinforcement**

	FRQ	FRG	OCC	RA	NR
	%	%	%	%	%
<b>NON-VERBAL</b>					
1 Teacher use physical gesture, smile, eye contact	20%	80	-	-	-
2. Teachers help students to feel a sense of comfort	20%	70%	-	-	-
3. Teacher help students to have sense of acceptance	100%	-	-	-	-
4. Group work is given to students to reinforce them	3%	67%	10%	20%	

The researcher observed some teachers who were too serious; they do not greet students or smile Eye contacts are poor and there is no physical action or gesture that reinforces learners to acquire knowledge in a conducive environment. Out of curiosity the researcher asked one student why some teachers do not smile and he said that this

particular teacher does not like students to joke with them or to approach them. Students too fear this teacher and keep their distance.

The researcher also asked some teachers why some of them do not use positive gestures or at least smile while teaching in the classroom and their response was,

Some of us feel that there must be a difference between the students and the teacher. Teacher need not joke with students for fear of disrespect.

The researcher observed that the two Mathematic teachers use physical gestures, smile and eye contact to reinforce students. The two Physics teaches teachers were very much into using group work and assignments to motivate the weak students. Also, the Literature teachers who are three in number, and Music teacher, and Christian Religious Education teachers were fond of showing sense of acceptance, and students always rush to them for various academic assistance. Furthermore, the English teachers, who are five in number, put students into group essay competition in order to motivate them to write good essays.

20% and 80% of the researcher's observation showed that there is frequently using of smiles gestures and eye contacts motivate and reinforce students in the classroom. From the nineteen teachers observed only 10 teacher made good and conscious eye contacts and smiles to motivate students.

20% and 70% of the researcher's observation shows that there is a frequently and fairly frequently use of activities and jokes to help students feel comfortable by teachers and be reinforced to get better results. There is also the rating of 3%, and 67%, frequently and fairly frequently on group work given to students to reinforce them. The only disadvantage observed during group work is that the forty minutes class period was not enough to allow students work and use their own initiative

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0. Introduction

This study has investigated the approaches to classroom reinforcement of students at Lang'ata High School. This chapter presents a summary, conclusion and recommendations based on the findings of the study.

#### 5.1. Summary

The following questions guided the research;

1. How do teachers create verbal reinforcement in the classroom?
2. How do teachers use non-verbal reinforcement approach in the classroom?
3. How do teachers use token reinforcement to reinforce students in the class?
4. What are the effects of verbal, non-verbal and token reinforcement on? students in the classroom?

The study used the survey research design in which a selected sample of students and teachers were used to describe characteristics of teacher-students' population. The research study was conducted in Lang'ata High School, drawing sample from nineteen teachers, one hundred and twenty students and the head teacher of the school. Form three and Form four students were largely used for the research because of their rich and longer experiences in the school. Also, a few Form two and one students were included in the research for the purpose of variety and the authenticity of the research. The nineteen teachers that participated taught in Lang'ata High School for over four years. The research used the sample random sampling procedures so as to select respondents by giving them equal chances of participation and the purposive sampling to select respondents that best met the purpose of the research. The researcher use questionnaires for the one hundred and twenty students and for the

nineteen teachers. Interview guide was carried out among four teachers and twelve students and the head teacher of the school. Observation guide was also used to gather information for the research study

## **5.2 Research Findings**

The following points have been identified and recognized as major findings of the study as the approaches to classroom reinforcement of students at Lang'ata High School. The findings are presented here in three topics based on the research objectives:

### **1. Investigation on how Verbal reinforcement approach is used in Lang'ata High School**

The researcher set out to find how teachers create or use verbal reinforcement approach to reinforce their student in the classroom in order to enable students to learn. Teachers and students are in agreement that verbal reinforcement aids learning and transforms education for the youth. Regular verbal reinforcing of students' desirable acts and correct responses by teachers has many advantages to the students' well-being and academic performance.

### **2. Investigation on how Non-Verbal reinforcement approach is used in Lang'ata High School**

The findings focused on strategies of using non-verbal reinforcement to reinforce student to learn. Teachers and students were in agreement that non-verbal reinforcement aids learning. Constant use of smiles and gestures are employed in Lang'ata High School by most of the teachers.

### **3. Investigation on how Token reinforcement approach is used in Lang'ata High School**

The findings showed that token reinforcement stimulates the students more than any other reinforcer. Students enjoy the style of using gift items by their teachers to motivate them to learn and keep up being good students.

#### **5.3 Conclusions**

- From the findings of the research, it is very clear that verbal reinforcement approach is employed in the classroom teaching in Lang'ata High School. It is also clear that verbal reinforcement is critical for learning to take place.
- The findings showed that non-verbal reinforcement approach give students sense of comfort that help them to learn better. It was also evident that rapport between teachers and students play a vital role in students' learning.
- Finally, I believe as this research shows that token reinforcement approach offered by teachers in the classroom is key to helping students learn. Offering some incentives reinforce students, there is more zeal to keep up the desired behaviour or performance

The following effects of reinforcement in the classroom were arrived at as the research was carried out:

1. Reinforcement has helped to maintain good relationship in school between principal and the teachers, teachers and students, students and support staff and among students themselves.
2. Reinforcement has created the continued existence of the school and the educational system

3. Reinforcement has helped in the promotion of education in terms of career development and good performance of the students.
4. Many students see formal education as necessary evil and torture. Reinforcement tries make easier the burden attending school and promoting positive way of looking at schooling. Education is meant for self-growth and community building and not to torture anyone.
5. The government is encouraged to support the Lang'ata High School with stationeries, insurance, pay bursaries for the deserving students, buy land for teacher's quarters and other necessary school equipments.
6. The Board of Governors (B.O.G) and Parents Teachers Association (P.T.A.) is encouraged to organize for extra- teachers apart from those registered with the Teachers Service Commission (T.S.C.)
7. The teachers of Lang'ata High School have developed a sense of responsibility and a personal duty to reinforce students entrusted to them. Reinforcement, to majority of them is natural.
8. Both class teachers and students can make decisions together, through an effective dialogue, if there is freedom of speech. In this case individual views are well understood and respected.
9. Maximum participation in class has become part of the students' life. No matter the situation or any shortcomings. Every student keeps striving for success.
10. Teachers' and students' interaction inside and outside classroom is very profitable. It has contributed to good participation in extra-curricula activities

like games, sports, drama, debate, wild life, and religious movements within the school.

11. Reinforcement has indeed played a very essential role in promoting peaceful atmosphere in the classroom and in the entire school community.
12. There is love, trust and a sense of belonging among the learners due to effective reinforcement in the school community.
13. Strong disapproval, criticism and misplaced reinforcement through unmerited praise are not effective in promoting academic achievement.
14. Students have to follow class rules and guidelines set by their teachers. They should be reprimanded when they fail to follow a rule, and some disciplinary steps measuring up to the nature of the offence be taken.
15. When dealing with infraction over which students may not have any complete control, the teacher needs to have patience.
16. The praise given sincerely normally has a positive effect.

Reinforcement is very important to the students' life. Any teacher who uses good reinforcers to motivate and encourage the students will realize that they are highly appreciated by the students.

## 5.4.Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was noted that verbal, non-verbal and token reinforcement are central to helping students learn and acquire knowledge from their teachers. For students to continue to learn and perform well in the class, the researcher would like to offer the following recommendations.

1). Teachers should take personal interest in their students and learn to listen to them.

Reinforcement is essential for the promotion of effective learning. They should frequently reinforce their students for better performance.

2). Teachers should praise or affirm students by way of using pleasant comments, complimenting them and by being friendly to students. They should be conscious of what they reinforce to avoid accidental misuse of some reinforcers.

3). Teachers should avoid humiliating rude or weak students in front of their colleagues. They may feel unworthy, abused and disrespected. Students deteriorate mentally and in accomplishment when such open humiliation is used to correct them. Teachers should endeavour to create a non-threatening atmosphere in the classroom. Smiles, good gestures and eye contacts are to be used to reinforce students to learn.

4). Teachers should be very careful in their relationships with students. They should avoid intimate relationships that do not help students in any way as far as education is concerned. They should avoid exaggerating their relationships; otherwise, it turns out to be unhealthy.

5). Teachers should always treat their students, as they would wish to be treated if they were in their position. Teachers should be role models for students to emulate and be reinforced. Teachers should be ready to offer small tokens, gifts, prizes and other incentives to reinforce their students

Teachers need to keep in mind the code of ethics dictated to their noble profession, especially in moments of disciplining their students. Students are to be judged and reinforced as individuals, and not collectively. It is necessary that teachers develop understanding of each individual student holistically to make reinforcement achieve its goal.

1). Students should be aware that there are judged collectively not as an individual wherever there is problem. The appeal of the researcher to the students is that they need not to take collective negative statements as personal attack on their dignity. Students should recognize their uniqueness and feel much motivated and strengthened

2). Respect is the best endowment to motivate an individual or a community. For that reason students are encouraged to have respect for each other and their teachers. Respect is an encircling good value.

4). Students should reinforce their teachers also. This is done when students positively respond to what they are told to do, as well as working hard in the classroom to attain a good grade. These good attitudes reinforce head teachers and other teachers in their work of formation of students

5). Weak students should not feel neglected when not reinforced by their teachers. They should rather make an effort to understand their problems. Some may be lazy to study or have genuine family problems that need counselling and guidance.

#### **5. 4. 3. AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH.**

This study focused on approaches to classroom reinforcement of students at Lang'ata High School. The following areas could be considered for further research.

1) The negative impact of use of token reinforcement to aid learning in the classroom

2) The effect of misuse of verbal reinforcement in the classroom.

- 3). Good co-ordination and communication skill is needed for classroom reinforcement.
- 4). The effect of classroom discipline towards promotion of reinforcement
- 5). The impact of the principal's reinforcement to the entire school community
- 6). The effect of reinforcement on academic performance of the students
- 7). Use of encouragement as a reinforcement skill in the classroom teaching.

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## APPENDIX A

### SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, NAIROBI CAMPUS CHRIST THE TEACHER INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION, TANGAZA COLLEGE

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Title of Study: Approaches to Classroom Reinforcement of Students at Lang'ata High School, Nairobi

### Questionnaire for Teachers.

#### Part One

Dear Respondent,

My name is Andrew Adindu Ifeanyi, a Fourth year student at the above college. I am researching on approaches to classroom reinforcement at Lang'ata High School Nairobi. I have chosen the school for the Case Study. I felt your school would provide me with all the information needed for this research study. Enclosed are the Questionnaires of which I request you to provide answers. The research is in partial fulfillment of the requirements of a degree of Bachelor of Science in Education at the Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Nairobi Campus. Your co-operation and any information will be highly appreciate

#### **Instructions**

Please tick ✓ in the appropriate box depending on your response to the items below.  
Key, SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, UD = Undecided, D = Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree

	Items	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	Teachers praise students when they behave well					
2	Students feel good when praised					
3	Teachers sometimes give students gifts for doing well in their subjects.					
4	Teachers know the names the students and call them by their names					
5	Safe and orderly classroom enhances students' learning					
6	Teachers give attention to students					
7	Teachers relate well with their students in class					

8	Teachers use pleasant comments on students					
9	Teachers smile and use positive gestures in the class.					
10	Giving stationery is one way of motivating students					
11	Teachers explain our fault to us before giving us appropriate negative reinforcement					
12	Teachers' attention to students is source of reinforcement					
13	Teachers normally write thanksgiving note or letter to students on the class notice board for all to see					
14	Class end term parties are prepared by class teachers to reward good performances					
15	Teachers engage in equitable and positive behaviour and are good models					
16	Certificate of good conduct is sometimes given by the class mistress or masters for good behaviour and performance					
17	Teachers write motivating remarks on our report assessment forms					
18	Teachers use questioning to reinforce students, since questions encourages students to elaborate on their responses					

Part Two

1. What kind of classroom reinforcement do teachers employ to students?

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2. What is your understanding of verbal reinforcement?

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3. What impacts have classroom reinforcers on the students?

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4. Why do you think that teachers have the major role of reinforcing students in the classroom?

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5. When should students be reinforced?

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6. What difficulty do teachers encounter while offering reinforcement?

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7. What workshop have you attended to enhance your knowledge of reinforcing students?

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## APPENDIX B

### SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, NAIROBI CAMPUS

Andrew Adindu Ifcanyi

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**Title of Study: Approaches to Classroom Reinforcement of Students at Lang'ata High School, Nairobi**

#### Interview Guide for Administrators

#### **Purpose**

This guide is designed as an instrument for a study on approaches to Classroom Reinforcement of students at Lang'ata High School, Nairobi

#### **Introduction**

We are going to go through some questions that will help me elicit information on the above topic. Whatever information you provided will be held in utmost confidence. Your responses will be very helpful for the success of this study. This study is done in partial fulfillment of my course of studies at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Nairobi Campus. Your co-operation will be highly appreciated

#### **Background Information**

##### 1 Post of the Administrator ---

1. For how long have you been in Lang'ata High School?
2. What other responsibilities do you hold besides being an administrator?
3. How long have you been in the teaching profession?
4. What efforts does the administration make to enhance the following approaches to students reinforcement:
  - Verbal Reinforcement
  - Non- verbal reinforcement
  - Token reinforcement

5. What effects have the various forms of reinforcements on the general performance of students?
6. Describe the rapport between teachers and students in your school?
7. Any workshops on reinforcement of students?
8. What are the practical suggestions you would like to have put in place, which can help enhance the quality of teacher-student relationship in Lang'ata High School?

## APPENDIX C

### SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, NAIROBI CAMPUS

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**Title of Study: Approaches to Classroom Reinforcement of students at Lang'ata High School, Nairobi**

### Questionnaire for Students

Dear Respondent;

This questionnaire is designed as an instrument for a study on approaches to classroom reinforcement of students at Lang'ata High School, Nairobi. Please take some time to complete this questionnaire as best as you can. Whatever information you provide will be kept confidential. Your responses will be very helpful for the success of this study. This study is done in partial fulfillment of my course of studies at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Nairobi Campus. Your co-operation will be highly appreciated

#### **Instructions**

Please

- Put a tick ✓ in the box that matches your age and sex
- Give brief information on the space provided.

#### **Section A**

1. You are between the age of

10-14     15-19     20-25

2. What is your sex?  Female  Male

3. What form are you? \_\_\_\_\_

## Section B

### Instructions

Please tick ✓ in the appropriate box depending on your response to the items below.  
Key, SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, UD = Undecided, D = Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree

	Items	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	Our teachers praise us when we behave well					
2	I feel good when I am praised					
3	Teachers sometimes give us gifts for doing well in their subjects.					
4	Our teachers know our names and call us by our names					
5	Safe and orderly classroom enhances students' learning					
6	We are given attention by our teachers					
7	We relate well with our teachers in class					
8	Pleasant comments are commonly used by our teachers					
9	Our teachers smile and use positive gestures in the class.					
10	Our teachers always recall or refer to our previous good responses					
11	Giving stationery is one way of motivating students					
12	Our teachers explain our fault to us before giving us appropriate negative reinforcement					
13	Teachers' attention to students is source of reinforcement					
14	Our teachers normally write thanksgiving note or letter on the class notice board for all to see					
15	Class end term parties are prepared by our class teachers to reward good performances					
16	Our teachers engage in equitable and positive behaviour and are good models					
17	Certificate of good conduct is sometimes given by the class mistress or masters for good behaviour and performance					
18	Our teachers write motivating remarks on our report assessment forms					
19	Our teachers use questioning to reinforce students, since questions encourages students to elaborate on their responses					

## APPENDIX D

SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, NAIROBI CAMPUS  
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**Title of Study: Approaches to Classroom Reinforcement of students at Lang'ata High School, Nairobi**

### Observation Guide

The researcher made observations on certain activities and relationships between students and teachers that enhance learning based on the approaches to students' reinforcement in Lang'ata High School. The following areas were at the heart of the researcher's observation:

Statements	
<b>Verbal Reinforcement</b>	
Teacher gives praise for right answer	
Teachers know the names of the students and call them by their names	
Questions are asked by teachers in the classroom	
<b>Non-verbal Reinforcement</b>	
Intangible type of reinforcement is used by our teachers e.g. free time, good grades	
Teachers use physical actions; such as a smile, eye contact, positive gestures in the class.	
Teachers help students to feel a sense of comfort and acceptance	
Group work is given by teachers and they supervise it	
<b>Token Reinforcement</b>	
Teachers use extrinsic rewards or incentives as reinforcers to students	