

School Grouping and Students' Goal Achievement in Universities in Kwara State, Nigeria

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Abstract

School group dynamics are critical factors influencing students' educational experiences and outcomes. This study investigated the relationship between school group dynamics and students' goal achievement in Universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study was guided by two research questions and five research hypotheses. The descriptive survey of the correlational type was adopted for the study. The population of this study comprised 77,984 undergraduates. A sample of 385 undergraduates was selected using purposive and simple random sampling techniques. A researcher-designed instrument titled School Group Dynamic and Students' Goal Achievement Questionnaire (SGDSGAQ) was utilised for data collection. A reliability test was conducted, yielding coefficient values of 0.89. Mean ratings were used to answer the research questions, while Pearson product-moment correlation statistic was employed to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 significance level. The findings of this study showed that school groups in Kwara State Universities are highly available, including social groups, academic groups, political groups, and cultural groups. Similarly, the study showed that students' achievement goals in universities at Kwara State are high. The study also revealed a significant relationship between school group dynamics and students' goal achievement in Universities in Kwara State. It was recommended that universities enhance the organisation and visibility of these groups by establishing a formal framework for group registration, participation, and leadership. Universities should encourage multidisciplinary collaborations across different types of groups (social, educational, political, and cultural).

Keywords: *School Group Dynamic, Students' Goal Achievement, School Groups, Goal Achievement*

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria's education system is structured into various tiers, with universities having the highest tertiary education levels. The system has undergone significant transformations since its colonial era, profoundly impacting its educational landscape. Initially established by the British colonial government to serve the interests of the colonial administration and the elite, Nigerian universities have evolved over the decades to accommodate a growing population and changing societal needs (Nwanneka, 2022). The history of Nigerian universities dates back to the colonial period when institutions such as the University of Ibadan, founded in 1948, were established (Livsey, 2016). Nigeria's socio-cultural diversity is reflected in its universities, where students from different ethnic, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds converge (Babarinde, 2022). This diversity enriches the educational experience but also presents challenges in fostering cohesion and unity within the student body. Socio-cultural factors such as language barriers, ethnic tensions, and socio-economic disparities can influence school group dynamics, shaping student interactions and their ability to collaborate effectively towards common goals (Emenike, 2025). Education systems worldwide continually evolve, driven by the need to enhance student learning outcomes and meet the diverse needs of learners. In education, student grouping has been a subject of perennial interest and debate (Bleazby, 2015). The practice involves organising students into smaller groups based on specific criteria, such as academic ability, learning style or other relevant factors (Michaelson et al., 2023). The purpose of student grouping is to enhance learning outcomes, foster collaboration, and cater to the diverse needs of students (Gillies, 2019).

The concept of grouping students for educational purposes has deep historical roots. Traditional classrooms often followed a one-size-fits-all approach, where students of varying abilities were taught the same material in the same way (Frantzen, 2014). Over time, educators and researchers recognised the limitations of this uniform approach and began exploring alternative methods that could better address the diverse needs of students (Mouta et al., 2024). The advent of educational psychology and understanding individual differences played a crucial role in shaping the discourse around student grouping. Within this broader context, the dynamics of school groups emerge as a critical factor influencing students' educational experiences and outcomes (Trach et al., 2018). School groups encompass various social and academic interactions among students within the university setting, including study groups, project teams, extracurricular clubs, and peer networks. These groups serve as important avenues for collaboration, support, and socialisation, shaping students' sense of belonging, identity, and academic engagement (Museus et al., 2017).

However, the dynamics within school groups can be complex and multifaceted, influenced by individual differences, interpersonal relationships, group cohesion, leadership dynamics, and group norms (Xie et al., 2019). The rationale behind grouping students is to provide an optimal learning environment catering to their needs and abilities (Hattie & Anderman, 2019). Grouping strategies can take various forms, such as homogeneous grouping, heterogeneous grouping, ability grouping, and mixed-ability grouping (Muchiri & Njenga, 2020). The choice of grouping strategy depends on the educational program's specific goals and the student population's characteristics. Homogeneous grouping involves organising students with similar academic abilities into the same groups (Steenbergen-Hu et al., 2016). This strategy aims to create learning environments where students can progress similarly, allowing for more targeted instruction and focused curriculum delivery.

Ability grouping, another common strategy, involves placing students in groups based on their demonstrated academic proficiency (Walker, 2015). This allows for tailored instruction that aligns with the specific needs of each group. While ability grouping can enhance individualised learning experiences, concerns have been raised about potential adverse effects on students in lower-ability groups (McDool, 2020). However, Mixed-ability grouping seeks to balance the advantages of both homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping by creating groups with a mix of academic abilities (Ambreen, 2017). This approach aims to provide opportunities for collaboration and peer learning while addressing the diverse learning needs of students. While student grouping allows for a degree of individualised instruction, it may not cater to the specific needs of every student (Tiernan et al., 2020). Students with unique learning requirements may still require additional attention and support, which can be challenging to provide within the group setting. In recent years, scholars have increasingly recognised the importance of group dynamics in educational settings and its implications for student learning and achievement (Hitt & Tucker, 2016). Group dynamics encompass the interactions, relationships, and processes within groups, including students, teachers, and administrators, and their impact on the learning environment and outcomes (Cole, 2024). Hierarchical structures prevalent in Nigerian society may manifest within student groups, affecting communication patterns, decision-making processes, and the distribution of roles and responsibilities (Akanji et al., 2020). The role of educators and administrators is crucial in shaping group dynamics and fostering a conducive learning environment. Effective leadership, clear communication, and establishing norms and expectations are essential for supporting students' academic success (Ayyaswamy et al., 2025). However, in the Nigerian context, there is a dearth of empirical research examining the specific dynamics within school groups and their implications for students' goal achievement.

Statement of the Problem

The dynamics of school groupings and their impact on students' goal achievement in universities is a critical area of inquiry, especially within the context of Kwara State, Nigeria. Universities are microcosms of broader societal structures, and students often organise themselves into various groups based on social, political, academic, religious, and cultural affiliations. These groupings significantly influence their experiences, behaviours, and, ultimately, their educational and personal success. In Kwara State, as in many other regions, university students are exposed to diverse influences stemming from these groupings. Social groupings, such as peer groups and clubs, significantly shape students' social skills and networks (Dunphy, 2017). Political groupings, including student unions and political clubs, influence students' political awareness and activism. Academic groupings, like study groups and clubs, directly impact students' learning and academic performance. Furthermore, the socio-cultural context of Nigeria adds complexity to the problem of students' goal achievement. Nigeria is a diverse country with various ethnicities, languages, and cultural practices. These cultural dynamics can significantly impact students' experiences within the university environment, including their ability to set and attain academic goals. For instance, cultural factors such as collectivism versus individualism, attitudes towards authority, and communication styles may influence how students interact with their peers and instructors, ultimately affecting their academic performance (Cortina et al., 2017). The dynamics within student groups play a significant role in fostering academic achievement, yet existing research

often overlooks specific mechanisms through which these interactions influence goal attainment in university settings. While studies have established a link between collaborative learning and academic success (Dunbar et al., 2018), gaps remain in understanding the nuances of group cohesion, leadership roles, and conflict resolution in the context of Nigerian universities. Another overlooked area is the impact of virtual learning environments on group dynamics, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly altered traditional collaborative frameworks (Piki, 2022). To fill these gaps, this study aims to investigate the school group dynamic and students' goal achievement in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What are the school student groups available in Kwara State Universities?
2. What is the level of students' goal achievement in universities at Kwara State?

Research Hypotheses

H0: No significant relationship exists between school group dynamics and students' goal achievement in Universities in Kwara State.

Literature Review

Concept of School Grouping

School grouping refers to organising students into specific configurations or clusters within an educational setting based on various criteria (Meeuwen et al., 2020). These criteria may include academic abilities, learning styles, social skills, or other factors educators deem relevant to achieving specific educational goals (El-Sabagh, 2021). The primary objective of student grouping is to enhance the learning experience by tailoring instructional methods to the unique needs of the students within each group (Suryati & Ratih, 2024). Grouping students in educational settings has been a longstanding subject of discourse among educators, policymakers, and researchers. Student grouping establishes an optimal learning environment tailored to individual needs and abilities (Tomlinson & Jarvis, 2023). In Nigerian universities, school group dynamics manifest in various contexts, such as classroom discussions, study groups, extracurricular activities, and student organisations (Ololube, 2017). Students engage with their peers in these settings, forming social networks, collaborating on academic tasks, and navigating interpersonal relationships that shape their educational experience. School groups in Nigerian universities emerge through various mechanisms, including shared interests, academic programs, residential arrangements, and extracurricular activities. These groups range from formal study and project teams to informal friendship circles and social cliques. The formation process often involves self-selection based on similarities in academic goals, cultural background, or personal interests (Chen & Kuo, 2019).

Dimensions of School Students Grouping in Nigerian Universities

Social Grouping

Social grouping refers to forming informal networks and relationships among students based on shared interests, experiences or social identities (Babalola et al., 2024). In Nigerian universities, social grouping manifests in various forms, including friendship circles, peer networks, and social cliques. These groups serve as important sources of social support, companionship, and belonging for students, contributing to their overall well-being and sense

of community (Strayhorn, 2018). Social groups often emerge organically through everyday interactions in academic and non-academic settings, such as classrooms, dormitories, and extracurricular activities (Acar & Yigit, 2023). However, social grouping can also lead to exclusionary dynamics, where particular groups may marginalise or exclude others based on gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status (Bracic, 2020). Therefore, promoting inclusive social grouping is essential for fostering a supportive and inclusive campus environment that values diversity and promotes positive intergroup relations.

Political Grouping

Political grouping refers to forming student associations, clubs, and organisations centred around political ideologies, interests, or advocacy goals (Murphey et al., 2021). In Nigerian universities, political grouping is a prominent feature of campus life, with students organising themselves into various political parties, student unions, and activist groups. These groups play a significant role in campus politics, advocating for student rights, engaging in campus governance, and mobilising students around social and political issues (Cole & Heinecke, 2020). Political groups often organise rallies, protests, and campaigns to raise awareness and effect change on campus and in the broader society (Bennett, 2012). However, political grouping can also be divisive and contentious, leading to conflicts, rivalries, and power struggles among different groups (Guelke, 2012). Moreover, political activities on campus may sometimes escalate into violence or disruptions that disrupt academic activities and compromise campus safety (Morgan & Davis, 2019). Therefore, fostering constructive political engagement and dialogue among students is essential for promoting a democratic and inclusive campus environment that respects diverse perspectives and promotes civic participation.

Cultural Grouping

Cultural grouping involves forming student groups based on shared cultural backgrounds, traditions or identities (Patton, 2023). In Nigerian universities, cultural grouping reflects the rich diversity of the country's ethnic, linguistic, and religious heritage, with students organising themselves into cultural clubs, associations, and religious groups (Ojebode & Onekutu, 2021). These groups provide platforms for students to celebrate their cultural heritage, share traditions, and promote cultural awareness and understanding. Cultural groups often organise cultural festivals, performances, and educational events that showcase the diversity of Nigerian cultures and foster intercultural dialogue and exchange (Ajayi & Adediran, 2024). However, cultural grouping can perpetuate social divisions and stereotypes, especially when it leads to exclusive or insular groups that exclude or marginalise others based on cultural differences (Pride et al., 2024). Therefore, promoting inclusive cultural grouping is essential for building a campus community that embraces diversity, encourages cultural exchange, and fosters mutual respect and understanding among students from different backgrounds.

Academic Grouping

Academic grouping involves forming study groups, project teams, and academic support networks among students pursuing similar academic interests or goals (Monson, 2019). In Nigerian universities, academic grouping is crucial in supporting students' learning and academic success, particularly in challenging courses or programs. Academic groups allow students to collaborate on assignments, prepare for exams, and share resources and study

materials (Doyle, 2023). They also serve as forums for academic discussion, problem-solving, and knowledge sharing, enabling students to deepen their understanding of course content and develop critical thinking and analytical skills (Zamiri & Esmaeili, 2024). Academic grouping can also contribute to students' socialisation and integration into their academic programs, providing a sense of camaraderie and mutual support among peers (Jabeen et al., 2019). However, academic grouping may sometimes lead to issues such as free-riding, where some group members contribute less to group work or rely excessively on others to carry the workload (Møller et al., 2025). Therefore, promoting effective collaboration and accountability within academic groups is essential for maximising their benefits and ensuring fair and equitable outcomes for all group members.

Students' Goal Achievement

Students' goal achievement in Nigerian universities refers to the process by which students set, pursue, and attain academic, personal, and social objectives during their educational journey (Asaju, 2023). It encompasses completing academic requirements, attaining desired grades or honours, developing relevant skills and competencies, and fulfilling personal aspirations and ambitions (Sanni, 2024). Achieving academic goals is a primary objective for students in Nigerian universities. However, pursuing these goals is influenced by various factors, including individual characteristics, socioeconomic background, institutional support, and peer interactions.

Dimensions of Students' Goal Achievement

Achieving academic goals in university settings involves multiple dimensions. The key dimensions include self-regulation, planning and time management, social support, perseverance, and resilience. Each plays a significant role in influencing students' ability to achieve their academic goals.

Self-Regulation

Self-regulation is how students control their thoughts, emotions, and behaviours to achieve their academic objectives (Duckworth et al., 2019). This dimension is critical in higher education, where students are expected to take greater responsibility for their learning (Zimmerman, 2023). Self-regulation encompasses several components: goal setting, self-monitoring, self-evaluation, and self-reflection. Effective self-regulation starts with setting specific, achievable goals. Research shows that students who set clear academic goals use strategies that lead to successful outcomes (Seli, 2019). This involves planning the steps required to meet these goals, which is a proactive approach to managing academic tasks. Monitoring one's progress towards goals is another essential aspect of self-regulation. It involves regularly assessing one's performance and making adjustments as necessary. Student can monitor their study hours and schedule to maintain focus. At the same time, self-regulated learners evaluate their performance after completing tasks or reaching milestones, reflecting on what worked and what did not (Stewart, 2025). This critical evaluation helps them refine their strategies for future tasks. The importance of self-regulation is underscored by the increasing autonomy and self-direction required in university education. Students who effectively self-regulate are better equipped to handle the complexities of academic life and are more likely to achieve their goals (Yadav et al., 2023).

Planning and Time Management

Planning and time management are crucial dimensions of academic success. They involve organising tasks, setting priorities, and allocating time effectively to achieve academic goals (Wolters & Brady, 2021). In a university setting, where students juggle multiple courses, assignments, and extracurricular activities, mastering these skills is essential. Effective planning starts with organising tasks in a logical sequence. This might involve breaking down large projects into smaller, manageable parts and creating a timeline for completing each part. Research suggests that students who plan their work in detail are likelier to complete their tasks on time and to a higher standard (Wolters & Brady, 2021). Prioritising tasks is another key aspect of planning. It requires students to identify which tasks are most important and need immediate attention versus those that can be deferred. Allocating time effectively involves creating a schedule that balances study time with other commitments. Time management strategies such as creating to-do lists, using planners, and setting deadlines can help students stay organised and reduce procrastination (Lund & Wiese, 2021). Effective planning and time management enable these students to optimise their available time and resources, increasing their chances of academic success.

Social Support

Social support is a vital dimension of students' goal achievement, encompassing the emotional, informational, and practical assistance students receive from their peers, family, and academic institutions (Roksa & Kinsley, 2019). In the context of student groups in universities, social support can significantly enhance academic performance and well-being. Emotional support involves expressing empathy, care, and concern, which helps students cope with stress and maintain a positive outlook. Research indicates that students who receive emotional support from their peers and family are more resilient and better equipped to handle academic challenges (Putri, 2024). For example, in group projects, students often rely on each other to understand complex topics and refine their work through constructive feedback (To & Panadero, 2019). Practical support refers to tangible assistance, such as helping with tasks or providing resources (Drageset, 2021). Practical support is significant for students balancing multiple responsibilities and needing help managing their workload (Shemeir et al., 2024). They provide a safety net that helps students navigate the pressures of university life and achieve their academic goals.

Impact of School Grouping on Students' Goal Achievement

School group dynamics influence students' goal achievement through various mechanisms such as academic support, social integration, motivation, and self-efficacy. Positive group dynamics can enhance students' academic performance, goal setting, and persistence, while negative group dynamics may impede their progress and hinder goal attainment (Thornton et al., 2020). School group dynamics significantly impact students' goal achievement in various areas, such as self-regulation, planning, time management, social support, perseverance, and resilience. Self-regulation is the ability to monitor, control, and regulate one's thoughts, emotions, and behaviours to pursue academic goals (Zimmerman, 2023). School group dynamics are crucial in shaping students' self-regulatory processes and behaviours. Moreover, school groups can provide opportunities for students to engage in goal-

setting, planning, and self-monitoring activities collectively. By working together towards common objectives, students can reinforce each other's commitment, motivation, and self-efficacy beliefs, which are essential components of self-regulated learning (McDaniel & Einstein, 2020).

Effective planning and time management skills are critical for students to achieve their academic goals and fulfil their responsibilities within the university context (Wolters & Brady, 2021). School group dynamics can influence students' planning and time management behaviours through various mechanisms. By engaging in these collective planning activities, students can develop a shared understanding of the task requirements, identify potential obstacles, and devise strategies to overcome them (Zamiri & Esmaeili, 2024). Additionally, the collective nature of group activities may create a sense of urgency and responsibility among students, prompting them to adhere to agreed-upon deadlines and meet their commitments to the group (Johnson & Hinchliffe, 2023). However, planning and time management challenges may arise within school groups, mainly when members lack coordination, communication or accountability. Therefore, promoting effective communication, collaboration, and goal-setting within school groups is essential for enhancing students' planning and time management skills and facilitating their academic success in Nigerian universities. Social support encompasses the aid, encouragement, and resources expended by peers, family members, and other social connections to assist individuals in navigating challenges and reaching their objectives (Bavik et al., 2020). This assistance bolsters resilience, enhances well-being, and facilitates goal achievement across various contexts. School group dynamics play a vital role in shaping the social support networks available to students within the university context. Students can receive emotional, instrumental, and informational support from their group members through interactions, such as empathy, encouragement, practical assistance, and feedback (Ngai et al., 2021). Students often develop strong bonds and friendships within school groups based on shared experiences, interests, and goals (Juvonen et al., 2019). These social connections provide a sense of belonging, camaraderie, and solidarity, which can buffer against stress, anxiety, and academic pressure (Tahir & Jan, 2023). Moreover, supportive group environments foster trust, cooperation, and mutual respect, where students feel comfortable seeking help, expressing their concerns, and sharing their accomplishments (Dörnyei & Muir, 2019).

Perseverance and resilience are essential psychological attributes that enable individuals to overcome obstacles, setbacks, and failures in pursuing their goals (Datu, 2021). School group dynamics significantly shape students' perseverance and resilience by providing opportunities for adversity, feedback, and growth (Skinner et al., 2020). Within group settings, students may encounter challenges such as disagreements, conflicts or failures, which require them to persist, adapt, and learn from their experiences (Hussein, 2021). For example, group projects, presentations or collaborative assignments often involve multiple stages, iterations, and revisions, where students must navigate uncertainties, setbacks, and unexpected obstacles (Vogler et al., 2018). Moreover, school groups can serve as sources of encouragement, motivation, and accountability, which foster a sense of collective responsibility and commitment among members (Zainuri & Huda, 2023). For instance, group members may provide emotional support, constructive feedback, or motivational prompts to help each other stay focused, motivated, and optimistic in the face of difficulties (Reeve, 2024). Additionally, the sense of camaraderie and solidarity within school groups creates a shared identity and

purpose that strengthens students' resolve and determination to overcome challenges (Fitriyah, 2023).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a descriptive survey research design of the correlation type, which involves studying a subset of a larger population to conclude the entire population. The research design ensures a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. This study focuses on undergraduate students in eight Kwara State, Nigeria universities. The universities include the University of Ilorin (UNILORIN), Kwara State University (KWASU), Al-Hikmah University, Landmark University, Summit University, Ojaja University, Ahman Patigi University, and Thomas Adewumi University. The sample size for this study was calculated using the Krejcie and Morgan table. Three universities were purposively selected: the University of Ilorin (43,600), Kwara State University Malete (28,184), and Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin (6,200). The targeted population was 77,984, and the total sample size was 384. The proportion sampling technique selected 215 students from the University of Ilorin, 139 from Kwara State University, Malete, and 31 from Al-Hikmah University. The total sample size for this study is 385 undergraduates. The study aims to make inferential statistics, deductions, and generalisations using the Krejcie and Morgan table. A self-designed Questionnaire was used as an instrument for this study. The "School Group Dynamic and Students' Goal Achievement in Universities in Kwara State, Nigeria (SGDSGA)" questionnaire was categorically designed. The questionnaire has three sections (Sections A, B and C). Section A deals with the available school groups in the universities, Section B deals with the level of school groups in the universities, and Section C deals with the level of goal achievement in Universities in Kwara State. This study validated a questionnaire by distributing it to a supervisor and lecturers at Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin. The specialists thoroughly examined the questionnaire to determine its suitability. A pilot study evaluated the instrument's reliability, administering 50 questionnaires to students from Landmark University in Omu-Aran, Kwara State. The Cronbach's Alpha technique assessed the instrument's internal consistency, with a coefficient alpha of 0.89, indicating its reliability. The study highlights the importance of assessing questionnaires' validity and suitability for various purposes. A 0.89 coefficient alpha value confirmed the instrument's reliability. The researcher obtained permission from the respondents to administer questionnaires for the study, administering School Group Dynamic and Students' Goal Achievement in Universities in Kwara State, Nigeria (SGDSGA) to students via Google survey. The instruments were then retrieved for data analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer research questions. Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics (PPMC) were used to test hypotheses, with all hypotheses tested at an alpha level of 0.05.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question One: What are the school student groups available in Kwara State Universities

Table 1.

School Grouping in Kwara State Universities

ITEMS	YES	NO	X	Std. D	Remark
Social Groups	360	25	1.94	0.247	High
Academic Groups	336	49	1.87	0.334	High
Political Groups	288	97	1.75	0.435	High
Cultural Groups	299	86	1.78	0.417	High

Table 1 above shows the available School Groups in Kwara State Universities. Table 1 shows that the mean score of all the school group dynamics is more significant than 1.5. Therefore, it was interpreted that most respondents agreed that social groups, academic groups, political groups, and cultural groups are available at Kwara State University. Thus, the study showed that school groups in Kwara State Universities (83.3%) are highly available, including social, academic, political, and cultural groups.

Research Question Two: What is the Level of Students' Goal Achievement in Universities in Kwara State?

Table 2.**Level of Students' Goal Achievement in Universities in Kwara State**

items	Always	Sometimes	Never	X	SD	Remark
Frequently monitor my academic progress and adjust my study strategies to achieve my academic goals.	279	68	38	2.63	0.658	High
Stay disciplined and avoid distractions when working towards my academic goals.	217	163	5	2.55	0.524	High
Frequently review my academic performance and make changes to improve it.	275	105	5	2.70	0.486	High
can manage my emotions effectively to stay motivated in my studies	161	184	40	2.31	0.651	Low
Regularly set personal academic standards and strive to meet or exceed them.	290	86	9	2.73	0.495	High
Regularly set specific academic goals and follow a well-structured study plan to complete them on time.	158	223	4	2.40	0.511	Low
Break down my academic tasks into manageable parts and allocate time for each.	214	137	34	2.47	0.653	Low
Meet deadlines for assignments and projects without feeling overwhelmed.	198	176	11	2.50	0.555	Moderate

Plan my study time effectively to balance both academic and non-academic activities.	248	134	3	2.64	0.498	High
Use time management tools (e.g., to-do lists and calendars) to stay organised and on track with my studies.	154	188	43	2.29	0.656	Low
Receive adequate support from my peers and lecturers helps me stay focused on achieving my academic goals.	250	128	7	2.63	0.519	High
Seek advice from my peers or lecturers when I encounter academic challenges.	153	228	4	2.39	0.509	Low
Family and friends encourage me to stay focused on my academic goals.	258	92	35	2.58	0.653	High
Actively participate in group discussions or study groups to enhance my learning.	191	192	2	2.50	0.511	Moderate
Feel comfortable seeking feedback from my lecturers and peers to improve my academic work.	230	147	8	2.58	0.535	High
Bounce back from academic setbacks and persist until I reach my educational objectives.	187	162	36	2.39	0.653	Low
Stay committed to my academic goals even when facing significant difficulties.	286	95	4	2.73	0.466	High
Maintain a positive attitude towards my studies.	191	193	1	2.50	0.506	Moderate
Seek out new strategies to improve my performance after academic failures.	246	106	33	2.55	0.648	High
Approach academic challenges with a growth mindset, believing that I can overcome them through effort.	219	160	6	2.55	0.528	High

Table 2 above shows students' goal achievement in Universities in Kwara State. From Table 2, it was observed that the mean score of the 11 questionnaire items was more significant than 2.5 and is therefore interpreted to be high; the mean score of Six (6) questionnaire items was less than 2.5 and is therefore interpreted to be low, while the mean score of three (3) questionnaire items was equal to 2.5 and are therefore interpreted to be moderate. Thus, the study showed that students' achievement goals in universities at Kwara State are high.

H0: No significant relationship exists between school grouping and students' goal achievement in Universities in Kwara State.

Table 3.

Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation between school group dynamic and students' goal achievement

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	r-cal	Sig.	Remark
School Grouping	385	49.75	5.710				
				383	0.602	0.001	Reject
Students' Goal Achievement	385	50.59	5.514				

The result in Table 3 showed that the r-cal is 0.602, and the p-value of 0.001 is lesser than the 0.05 significance level. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which stated that “there is no significant relationship between school group dynamic and students' goal achievement in Universities in Kwara State”, is hereby rejected. This implies a significant relationship between school grouping and students' goal achievement in Universities in Kwara State.

Discussion of Findings

The study showed that school groups in Kwara State Universities are highly available (83.3%), including social, academic, political, and cultural groups. These findings align with broader research on the role of student associations in Nigerian universities. Zamiri and Esmaeili (2024) highlight that participation in student groups enhances skills such as leadership, teamwork, and communication, which are critical for personal development and academic success. Similarly, Ghosh and Galczynski (2014) argue that these groups create platforms for students to engage in intellectual debates, political discourse, and cultural expression, fostering an inclusive academic environment. In contrast, studies in other regions, such as Kenya, emphasise academic-focused groups more than social or political ones. This difference may stem from variations in institutional priorities and student interests. Ochola (2020) emphasises that academic clubs provide mentorship and resources that enhance academic performance. The study showed that students' achievement goals in universities at Kwara State are high. The findings of this study are consistent with findings from cooperative learning research. Scager et al. (2016) demonstrated that students involved in cooperative groups achieved higher academic goals due to the interdependence and shared responsibility fostered by group dynamics. Moreover, collaborative learning techniques, such as group discussions and peer evaluations, have enhanced critical thinking and problem-solving skills, directly contributing to goal attainment (Graesser et al., 2018). However, not all studies report uniformly positive outcomes. For instance, Moges (2019) suggests that while cooperative learning boosts achievement for most students, it may also lead to unequal participation within groups, where certain members carry a heavier workload. This highlights the importance of structured group management to ensure fairness and accountability. The study revealed a significant relationship between school group dynamics and students' goal achievement in Universities in Kwara State. This result aligns with broader research emphasising the role of group interactions, leadership styles, and collaborative learning environments in academic success. Li et al. (2025) highlighted that positive group dynamics, characterised by effective communication, teamwork, and mutual support, significantly enhance students' motivation and performance. Research indicates that

achievement emotions and self-efficacy are crucial in influencing students' goal orientations and academic performance, suggesting that fostering these emotions in group settings can enhance outcomes (Yu et al., 2022). Contrasting findings reveal that where group dynamics are negative, marked by poor communication and lack of support, students may experience lower academic success. Such adverse environments can hinder motivation and collaboration, leading to diminished goal achievement (Radkowsch et al., 2020). Therefore, fostering positive group dynamics is essential for academic institutions aiming to enhance student outcomes.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between school grouping and students' goal achievement in Kwara State, Nigeria universities. The findings revealed that school grouping, including social, academic, political, and cultural groupings, significantly enhance students' goal achievement. It was discovered that students actively involved in these groupings tend to perform better academically, develop leadership skills, and build strong networks that support their personal and professional growth. The study also highlighted the positive influence of high group dynamics and goal achievement levels in these universities, emphasising that collaborative and inclusive environments contribute significantly to students' success. However, while group dynamics are generally beneficial, potential challenges such as exclusivity or over-involvement in group activities must be managed to prevent adverse effects on academic performance. Healthy group interactions and institutional support for various group activities are critical for enhancing students' experiences and achievements. Universities should encourage balanced participation in group dynamics to maximise their benefits while addressing potential drawbacks. These efforts will ensure that students are equipped to achieve their goals and contribute meaningfully to society. Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Universities should enhance the organisation and visibility of these groups by establishing a formal framework for group registration, participation, and leadership.
2. Institutions should maintain and build upon existing academic support systems, such as mentorship programs and academic advising, to sustain and further improve students' achievements.
3. Universities should encourage multidisciplinary collaborations across different types of groups (social, academic, political, and cultural).
4. Universities should encourage social groups to incorporate more academic support activities, such as peer tutoring and networking events.
5. Institutions should provide resources such as study spaces, learning materials, and financial support for academic groups.

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