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Emotional Regulation Guidance and Students' Persistence in Learning Tasks Completion in Public Secondary Schools in Ubungo Municipality, Tanzania

Bitisho Ikomba[1]*, Frank Mwamakula[2], Raymond Ndomba[3]

[1] School Quality Assurer, Ubungo, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
[2,3] Department of Education Foundations, St. Augustine University of Tanzania

Correspondence e-mail * : bitisho.ikomba@moe.go.tz

Abstract : This study examined the influence of emotional regulation guidance on students' persistence in completing tasks in public secondary schools in Ubungo Municipality, Tanzania. The study employed a mixed-methods approach guided by a pragmatic paradigm and an explanatory sequential research design. A total of 89 participants, comprising 80 students, six teachers/counsellors, and three heads of schools, participated in the study. Quantitative data were collected through questionnaires, while qualitative data were obtained through interviews and focus group discussions. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive and inferential techniques, whereas qualitative data were analysed thematically. The findings revealed that emotional regulation and related guidance strategies positively influenced students' persistence in completing academic tasks. Most students reported that the guidance helped them develop clear and achievable goals, increased their commitment to completing school tasks, and motivated them to take greater responsibility for their learning. Specifically, 91.3% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the guidance helped them establish clear and achievable goals, while 97.5% agreed or strongly agreed that the guidance increased their confidence and commitment to completing school tasks. Qualitative findings further indicated improvements in time management, consistent effort, help-seeking behaviour, focus on academic goals, and completion of homework and other challenging tasks. Teachers also reported improvements in students' motivation, participation, persistence, and willingness to attempt difficult academic activities. The study concludes that emotional regulation guidance can contribute positively to students' persistence by helping them manage academic challenges, maintain motivation, and sustain effort toward task completion. The study recommends strengthening structured emotional regulation guidance programmes and improving teachers' capacity to provide effective psychosocial support in public secondary schools.

Keywords: Emotional, Guidance, Persistence, Completion, Regulation, Tasks..

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INTRODUCTION

Students' ability to persist when confronted with challenging academic tasks is an important determinant of their educational engagement and achievement. However, persistence is not determined solely by intellectual ability or the availability of learning resources. Students' emotional experiences, including frustration, anxiety, discouragement, and fear of failure, may influence whether they continue working on difficult tasks or give up prematurely (Pekrun, 2006). Emotional regulation guidance

can therefore play an important role in helping students understand and manage their emotional responses while maintaining effort toward academic goals (Gross, 1998). School-based cognitive-behavioural interventions have increasingly been recognised as useful approaches for supporting adolescents' psychological and educational development (Hofmann et al., 2012). Such interventions are designed to help individuals identify unhelpful thoughts, develop adaptive coping strategies, and regulate behavioural and emotional responses to challenging situations. Research has shown that cognitive-behavioural approaches can improve students' coping abilities and psychological well-being by providing practical strategies for responding to difficult experiences (Hamdan, 2023; Muhamad et al., 2025).

One important component of cognitive-behavioural guidance is the development of strategies that enable students to manage negative emotional reactions. When students encounter difficult academic tasks, they may experience frustration, anxiety, disappointment, or discouragement. Without appropriate strategies for managing such emotions, they may avoid difficult tasks or discontinue their efforts. Guidance that promotes emotional awareness, adaptive coping, self-management, and positive responses to setbacks may therefore strengthen students' ability to remain engaged with academic responsibilities. Previous research has demonstrated the potential of school-based cognitive-behavioural interventions to improve students' resilience and capacity to cope with challenges. Cognitive-behavioural approaches have been associated with improvements in emotional regulation, self-efficacy, resilience, and students' responses to academic difficulties (Franiolin et al., 2023; Tse et al., 2023). These outcomes are particularly important for students' persistence because emotionally resilient students may be more willing to continue working despite experiencing setbacks.

Globally, cognitive-behavioural interventions have increasingly been adapted for school settings as part of broader efforts to support students' social, emotional, and psychological development. In countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia, school-based programmes have incorporated cognitive-behavioural principles to strengthen students' coping skills, emotional well-being, and resilience. Evidence from these settings suggests that structured school-based interventions can help students develop more adaptive responses to academic and personal challenges (Durlak et al., 2011). In African countries, cognitive-behavioural and psychosocial guidance approaches have also gained increasing attention. Studies conducted in Nigeria and other contexts have demonstrated the usefulness of psychological and counselling interventions in addressing students' behavioural and emotional challenges (Dungurawa & Ibrahim, 2021; Ekwelundu et al., 2022). However, the application of structured guidance approaches within many African school systems remains limited by shortages of trained counsellors, inadequate facilities, and limited institutional support.

In Tanzania, guidance and counselling have gradually been incorporated into the education system as important mechanisms for supporting students' personal, social, and academic development. Policy developments have encouraged the establishment of counselling services in schools. Nevertheless, the implementation of structured guidance and counselling programmes remains inconsistent in many public secondary schools due to inadequate resources, limited professional training, and competing responsibilities among teacher counsellors (Ndumbaro & Pembe, 2025; Sima, 2018; Mosenda, 2025). Public secondary school students in Ubungo Municipality operate within an urban environment characterised by diverse academic, social, and economic challenges. Academic pressure, limited psychosocial support, and other personal difficulties may negatively affect students' emotional well-being and their ability to persist when completing school-related tasks. Although guidance and counselling services exist in many schools, there is limited empirical evidence regarding the specific influence of emotional regulation guidance on students' persistence in completing tasks.

Previous studies in Tanzania have indicated that psychosocial guidance and counselling can improve students' academic engagement by addressing emotional and psychological barriers to learning (Lubawa et al., 2021). However, limited evidence exists regarding how emotional regulation guidance specifically influences students' persistence in completing academic and school-related tasks in public secondary schools in Ubungo Municipality. This study was therefore conducted to address this knowledge gap.

Literature Review

Emotional regulation refers to the ability of individuals to recognise, manage, and respond appropriately to emotional experiences (Gross, 1998). Within an educational setting, students frequently encounter situations that generate frustration, stress, disappointment, and anxiety (Pekrun, 2006). Their ability to manage these emotional experiences may influence their willingness to continue working on challenging tasks. Emotional regulation guidance can therefore provide students with strategies for coping with difficulties and maintaining effort toward desired goals. In Australia, Johnson et al. (2022) conducted a study on a school-based cognitive-behavioural intervention designed to enhance student persistence. Using a cluster randomised controlled trial involving secondary school students, the study found that students who participated in the intervention demonstrated higher levels of academic buoyancy and persistence than those in the control group. Teachers also observed greater willingness among intervention participants to attempt difficult tasks and recover from poor academic performance. The findings demonstrate the potential contribution of structured cognitive-behavioural strategies to students' ability to persist through academic challenges. However, the study was conducted in a well-

resourced Western educational context, making it important to investigate similar approaches within the Tanzanian context.

Evidence from other settings also suggests that cognitive-behavioural approaches can strengthen psychological characteristics associated with persistence. Sari et al. (2022), for example, found that a mindfulness-based cognitive-behavioural intervention improved students' psychological well-being. Such improvements may support persistence because students who develop stronger coping mechanisms may be better prepared to manage setbacks and remain engaged with challenging tasks (Bandura, 1997). Similarly, Bani (2023) found that cognitive-behavioural group counselling contributed to improved psychological well-being among adolescents. Although the study did not directly focus on task persistence, its findings suggest that interventions which address negative emotional and psychological experiences may help students overcome feelings of helplessness and maintain greater engagement in challenging activities.

In Nigeria, Egbegi et al. (2021) demonstrated the feasibility of school-based cognitive-behavioural interventions in addressing psychological challenges among adolescents. The findings provided further evidence that structured psychological interventions can positively influence factors associated with students' daily functioning, including concentration, motivation, and engagement. These factors are relevant to persistence in completing academic tasks. Guidance and counselling services have also been associated with improved academic engagement in African educational settings. Uwizeyimana and Mukamana (2021), in Rwanda, found that students who participated in guidance and counselling programmes demonstrated improved self-discipline, commitment to schoolwork, and persistence in completing academic responsibilities. The study suggested that counselling can promote self-control, positive thinking, and goal-oriented behaviour. However, the study focused broadly on guidance and counselling rather than specifically examining emotional regulation guidance.

In Tanzania, Lubawa et al. (2021) examined the influence of psychosocial guidance and counselling services on secondary school students' academic performance in Tanga City. The findings indicated that guidance and counselling helped address emotional, psychological, and social barriers to learning. Although the study did not specifically examine emotional regulation guidance and task persistence, its findings suggest that addressing students' emotional challenges may improve their ability to remain engaged with academic responsibilities. The reviewed literature therefore indicates that psychological and guidance interventions can improve students' coping abilities, motivation, resilience, and engagement. Nevertheless, there remains limited evidence concerning the specific influence of emotional regulation guidance on students' persistence in completing tasks within

Tanzanian public secondary schools. This study therefore addressed this gap by focusing on students in Ubungo Municipality.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a mixed-methods approach guided by the pragmatic paradigm to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the influence of emotional regulation guidance on students' persistence in completing tasks. An explanatory sequential mixed-methods design was adopted; whereby quantitative data were collected and analysed first to establish students' perceptions of the influence of guidance on task persistence. Qualitative data were subsequently collected through interviews and focus group discussions to provide further explanations and examples of students' experiences and observed behavioural changes. The study was conducted in public secondary schools in Ubungo Municipality, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The area was considered appropriate because students in public secondary schools' experience diverse academic and psychosocial challenges that may affect their emotional well-being and ability to persist in completing school-related tasks. A total of 89 participants were involved in the study, comprising 80 students, six teachers or counsellors, and three heads of schools. Students provided information regarding their experiences of guidance and its influence on their persistence in completing tasks, while teachers, counsellors, and heads of schools provided additional perspectives based on their observations and experiences within the school environment.

Students were selected using appropriate probability-based sampling procedures to obtain representative quantitative data, whereas teachers, counsellors, and heads of schools were selected purposively because of their direct involvement in student guidance, counselling, and school management. Multiple data collection methods were employed to enhance the comprehensiveness of the findings. Questionnaires were administered to students to collect quantitative data regarding their experiences and perceptions of the influence of emotional regulation guidance on persistence in completing school tasks. Interviews were conducted with teachers, counsellors, and heads of schools to obtain detailed explanations concerning students' behavioural changes and experiences related to task persistence. Focus group discussions were also conducted to enable students to share their experiences, coping strategies, and approaches to completing challenging academic tasks. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, with frequencies and percentages used to summarise students' responses and identify major response patterns. Qualitative data obtained through interviews and focus group discussions were analysed thematically. The responses were organised into themes based on recurring experiences and explanations related to emotional management, persistence, motivation, help-seeking behaviour, and task completion.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The study sought to examine the influence of emotional regulation guidance on students' persistence in completing academic tasks. To achieve this the researcher had three main aspects, namely: sstudents' preceptions of emotional regulation guidance and task persistence, teachers' perceptions of emotional regulation guidance and task persistence, and teachers' observation on how emotional regulation guidance contribute to students' ability to remain committed in academic tasks.

Students' Perceptions of Emotional Regulation Guidance and Task Persistence

This is the first aspect of the first objective which explored teachers' perception of emotional regulation guidance and task persistence. Sstudents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with three statements related to the role of goal-setting guidance in helping them establish achievable goals, build confidence in completing school tasks, and take greater responsibility for their learning. The findings presented in Table 1 reveal that the majority of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with all three statements, suggesting that emotional regulation guidance, through goal-setting practices, positively enhanced students' persistence, confidence, and commitment toward accomplishing their academic responsibilities.

Table 1. Students' Perceptions of Emotional Regulation Guidance and Task Persistence

Statement	SA		A		N		D		SD	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1. The goal-setting sessions helped me understand how to set clear and achievable personal goals.	45	56.3	28	35	5	6.3	2	2.5	0	0
2. Setting academic and personal goals increased my confidence in completing school tasks.	54	67.5	24	30	2	2.5	0	0	0	0
3. The guidance on goal setting motivated me to take more responsibility for my learning.	49	61.3	24	30	5	6.3	2	2.5	0	0

Source: Field Research, 2026.

The findings presented in Table 4.1 indicates that the majority of students expressed positive perceptions regarding the influence of goal-setting guidance on their persistence in completing learning tasks. Regarding the statement that the goal-setting sessions helped me understand how to set clear and achievable personal goals, 45 (56.3%) students strongly agreed and 28 (35.0%) agreed, making a combined 91.3%

of respondents with positive responses. Only 5 (6.3%) were neutral, while 2 (2.5%) disagreed and none strongly disagreed. These findings suggest that most students believed the guidance sessions enabled them to formulate realistic and attainable goals, which is an essential aspect of sustaining persistence in academic activities (Locke & Latham, 2002).

Similarly, students reported that setting academic and personal goals increased their confidence in completing school tasks. More than two-thirds of the respondents, 54 (67.5%), strongly agreed with this statement, while 24 (30.0%) agreed. Only 2 (2.5%) respondents remained neutral, and none disagreed or strongly disagreed. The overwhelmingly positive responses indicate that goal-setting guidance contributed significantly to enhancing students' confidence when undertaking academic responsibilities. Increased confidence is likely to encourage students to persevere when faced with challenging learning tasks rather than giving up easily (Bandura, 1997).

Furthermore, the findings revealed that the guidance on goal setting motivated students to take more responsibility for their learning. Specifically, 49 (61.3%) respondents strongly agreed and 24 (30.0%) agreed, representing a combined positive response rate of 91.3%. Meanwhile, 5 (6.3%) respondents were neutral, 2 (2.5%) disagreed, and none strongly disagreed. These findings imply that goal-setting guidance encouraged students to become more responsible for their own academic progress by planning, monitoring, and completing learning tasks with greater commitment (Zimmerman, 2002).

Generally, the findings demonstrate that goal-setting guidance positively influenced students' persistence in completing academic tasks. These findings are consistent with Johnson et al. (2022) in Australia, who found that students who participated in a school-based cognitive-behavioral intervention demonstrated significantly higher academic persistence, greater willingness to attempt difficult tasks, and improved self-regulation compared to those in the control group. Similarly, the majority of students in the present study reported that goal-setting guidance helped them establish clear goals, increased their confidence in completing school tasks, and motivated them to take greater responsibility for their learning. The agreement between the two studies suggests that cognitive-behavioral guidance interventions effectively promote persistence across different educational contexts despite differences in school environments.

Moreover, the quantitative findings presented in Table 4.1 demonstrated that the majority of students perceived emotional regulation guidance, particularly goal-setting guidance, as instrumental in enhancing their persistence in completing academic tasks. To complement these findings and gain a deeper understanding of students lived experiences, the questionnaire included open-ended question. This question provided respondents with an opportunity to explain, in their own words,

how goal-setting guidance had influenced their persistence when facing difficult academic tasks and to describe practical situations in which they had applied goal-setting strategies to accomplish challenging school assignments or projects. The qualitative responses were analyzed thematically to identify common patterns and to enrich the quantitative findings.

Regarding the open-ended question, students described several specific ways in which goal-setting guidance enabled them to persist when academic tasks became difficult. The most frequently reported experiences included studying hard, effective time management, seeking help from teachers, praying for strength and encouragement, building self-confidence, focusing on achieving personal ambitions, maintaining consistency in working hard, utilizing time effectively, learning from others, having a clear direction, completing homework on time, and completing difficult tasks. These responses indicate that students viewed goal-setting guidance not merely as a technique for setting objectives but also as a strategy that strengthened their determination, resilience, and commitment to achieving academic success despite obstacles.

The findings are consistent with the principles of Cognitive-Behavioral Guidance, which emphasize that establishing realistic goals promotes self-regulation, positive thinking, and sustained effort in learning (Hofmann et al., 2012; Zimmerman, 2002). When students identify clear objectives and monitor their progress, they become better able to regulate their emotions, remain motivated, and persist despite academic difficulties. The findings also support previous studies that have shown goal-setting interventions improve learners' motivation, self-confidence, academic engagement, and persistence by encouraging purposeful learning behaviours and greater personal responsibility (Locke & Latham, 2002; Durlak et al., 2011). Therefore, the integration of both quantitative and qualitative findings provides strong evidence that emotional regulation guidance through goal-setting strategies plays a significant role in enhancing students' persistence in completing academic tasks.

The study findings also concur with Uwizeyimana and Mukamana (2021) in Rwanda, who reported that students who participated in guidance and counselling programmes demonstrated greater persistence in completing assignments, improved time management, and stronger commitment to schoolwork than students who did not receive counselling services. Likewise, students in the current study explained that goal-setting guidance helped them manage time effectively, remain focused on their academic ambitions, seek assistance from teachers, and continue working on difficult tasks until completion. Although the Rwandan study focused on general guidance and counselling rather than cognitive-behavioral guidance, both studies demonstrate that structured guidance interventions promote persistence through improved self-regulation and goal-oriented behaviours.

While the students' responses provided valuable insights into their personal experiences regarding the influence of emotional regulation guidance on persistence in completing academic tasks, it was equally important to obtain teachers' perspectives to corroborate these findings.

Teachers Perceptions of Emotional Regulation Guidance and Students Persistence in Completing Academic Tasks

The second aspect of objective one was to find out teachers' perception of emotional regulation guidance and students' persistence in completing academic tasks. Teachers as facilitators of guidance activities and observers of students' learning behaviours, offer professional judgments based on their interactions with students before and after the implementation of goal-setting guidance. They were asked to provide their perceptions of emotional regulation guidance and students' persistence in completing academic tasks. Their responses therefore provide an additional perspective on whether emotional regulation guidance contributed to improvements in students' goal clarity, confidence, motivation, and persistence in completing academic tasks. The teachers' findings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Teachers' Perceptions of Emotional Regulation Guidance and Students' Persistence in Completing Academic Tasks

Statement	SA		A		N		D		SD	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1. The goal-setting guidance helped students develop clearer academic and personal goals.	5	55.6	4	44.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
2. Students demonstrated increased confidence when working toward their goals after the sessions.	4	44.4	5	55.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
3. Goal-setting guidance improved students' motivation and participation in classroom tasks.	5	55.6	4	44.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Source: Field Research, 2026.

The findings in Table 4.2 found that teachers unanimously perceived goal-setting guidance as having a positive influence on students' persistence in completing academic tasks. Regarding the statement that goal-setting guidance helped students develop clearer academic and personal goals, 5 (55.6%) teachers strongly agreed while 4 (44.4%) agreed. None of the teachers expressed neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree responses, indicating complete consensus that goal-setting guidance enabled students to establish clear and realistic goals.

Similarly, teachers affirmed that students demonstrated increased confidence when working toward their goals after the guidance sessions. Specifically, 4 (44.4%)

teachers strongly agreed and 5 (55.6%) agreed with the statement, while no respondent selected neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree. These findings suggest that teachers consistently observed improvements in students' confidence when undertaking academic tasks after participating in goal-setting guidance activities.

Furthermore, all teachers agreed that goal-setting guidance improved students' motivation and participation in classroom tasks. Of the respondents, 5 (55.6%) strongly agreed and 4 (44.4%) agreed, with no negative or neutral responses recorded. This finding indicates that teachers perceived goal-setting guidance as an effective strategy for enhancing students' motivation to engage actively in classroom learning and persist in completing assigned tasks. Then the teachers' responses support the students' findings by demonstrating unanimous agreement that goal-setting guidance contributed to clearer academic goals, increased confidence, and improved motivation among students.

However, the absence of neutral or negative responses further strengthens the evidence that emotional regulation guidance through goal-setting plays a significant role in fostering students' persistence in completing academic tasks. These findings complement the students' quantitative and qualitative responses, which similarly showed that goal-setting guidance enhanced confidence, responsibility, effective time management, and perseverance when facing challenging learning activities. Together, the evidence from both respondent groups provides strong support that goal-setting guidance is an important component of emotional regulation guidance for improving students' persistence in public secondary schools.

These findings are in agreement with Lubawa et al. (2021) in Tanzania, who found that, psychosocial guidance and counselling services improved students' academic performance by addressing emotional and psychological barriers to learning. Although Lubawa et al. primarily examined academic performance rather than persistence, they argued that counselling enabled students to overcome emotional challenges that previously hindered sustained engagement in academic tasks. Similarly, teachers in the present study unanimously agreed that goal-setting guidance enhanced students' confidence, motivation, and participation in classroom activities, all of which are important indicators of persistence in learning.

Teachers' Observation on Emotional Regulation Guidance and Students' Persistence in Completing Tasks

Teachers provided important insights into the influence of emotional regulation guidance on students' persistence in completing academic tasks. Their observations revealed four major themes: increased confidence and classroom participation, improved persistence and motivation, improved completion of academic tasks, and enhanced confidence in academic performance. The teachers' experiences provided qualitative evidence of changes in students' attitudes,

behaviours, and approaches towards challenging academic activities following emotional regulation guidance.

Increased Confidence and Classroom Participation

Teachers observed that emotional regulation guidance contributed to increased students' confidence and active participation in classroom activities. They noted that students who had previously been reluctant to speak, answer questions, or participate in discussions became more willing to engage in different learning activities. "*After receiving the guidance, many students became more confident in the classroom. Those who were previously afraid to speak started answering questions and expressing their opinions during discussions.*" (Interviewee A, July 2026)

These observations suggest that emotional regulation guidance helped students manage feelings of fear, anxiety, and hesitation that could otherwise limit their classroom participation (Gross, 1998). As students became more capable of regulating negative emotional responses, they appeared more willing to express themselves and engage with challenging academic activities. This increased participation may contribute to persistence because students who actively engage in learning activities are more likely to continue working through academic challenges rather than withdrawing from them. The finding is consistent with Johnson et al. (2022), who found that students participating in a school-based cognitive-behavioural intervention demonstrated greater willingness to attempt difficult tasks and recover from academic setbacks. Similarly, Sari et al. (2022) found that cognitive-behavioural interventions improved students' psychological well-being and their capacity to cope with challenging situations. The findings collectively demonstrate the importance of psychological and emotional support in encouraging students to participate actively and persist in academic activities (Durlak et al., 2011).

Improved Persistence and Motivation

Teachers further reported that emotional regulation guidance improved students' motivation and willingness to persist when completing academic tasks. Students were observed to become more focused on their goals and more determined to continue working even when they encountered difficult learning situations. "*The students became more motivated to achieve their goals and worked harder on their academic tasks. Even when the work was difficult, many of them did not give up easily.*" (Interviewee C, July 2026). The next teacher said that, "*I noticed that the guidance encouraged students to remain focused on their goals. They became more willing to continue learning and complete their work despite the challenges they faced.*" (Interviewee D, July 2026)

These observations indicate that emotional regulation guidance contributed to students' ability to manage discouragement and maintain motivation when confronted with academic difficulties (Pekrun, 2006). Instead of allowing frustration or fear of failure to cause them to abandon their tasks, students appeared to develop

a stronger determination to continue working towards their goals. This finding concurs with Johnson et al. (2022), whose study found that school-based cognitive-behavioural interventions improved students' academic buoyancy and persistence. Similarly, Uwizeyimana and Mukamana (2021) found that students who participated in guidance and counselling programmes demonstrated greater commitment to schoolwork and persistence in completing academic responsibilities. The present findings therefore provide further evidence that emotional regulation guidance can support students' persistence within public secondary schools.

Improved Completion of Academic Tasks

Teachers also observed noticeable improvements in students' commitment to completing academic tasks. Changes were particularly evident in students' willingness to complete assignments, answer examination questions, and follow structured plans for their academic work. Through interview one among the visited teacher had the following to say "*I observed a student who previously used to leave assignments unfinished, but after setting weekly academic goals, the student started completing and submitting homework on time.*" (Interviewee E, July 2026). The other teacher has the following to say, "*During internal assessments, some students who used to leave questions unanswered showed improvement because they followed their personal study plans and made greater efforts to complete the tasks.*" (Interviewee F, July 2026)

These observations provide practical evidence that emotional regulation guidance influenced students' everyday academic behaviours. Students who had previously struggled to complete assignments or examination questions appeared to become more committed to finishing their tasks. The development of academic goals and personal study plans may have helped students manage frustration and maintain effort until their tasks were completed (Locke & Latham, 2002; Zimmerman, 2002). This finding is consistent with Uwizeyimana and Mukamana (2021), who reported that participation in guidance and counselling programmes improved students' self-discipline, commitment to schoolwork, and persistence in completing academic responsibilities. It also supports Lubawa et al. (2021), who found that psychosocial guidance and counselling helped students overcome emotional and social barriers affecting academic engagement. The current findings therefore provide specific evidence that emotional regulation guidance may contribute to improved task completion among public secondary school students.

Enhanced Confidence in Academic Performance

Teachers further observed that emotional regulation guidance enhanced students' confidence in their academic abilities and reduced their fear of making mistakes. Students who had previously lacked confidence in completing or presenting academic work became more willing to attempt challenging activities. Through

interview the teacher said that, "*One student who previously lacked confidence in preparing classroom presentations was eventually able to complete the assigned work and present it confidently in front of the class.*" (Interviewee G, July 2026) In addition, the other. teacher said that: "*The guidance helped students believe more in their academic abilities. They became more confident when attempting difficult tasks and were less afraid of making mistakes.*" (Interviewee H, July 2026)

These findings suggest that emotional regulation guidance helped students develop a more positive perception of their academic capabilities. When students become less fearful of making mistakes and more confident in their ability to handle challenges, they are more likely to attempt difficult tasks and persist when immediate success is not achieved (Bandura, 1997). The finding supports Sari et al. (2022), who found that cognitive-behavioural interventions improved students' psychological well-being and strengthened their ability to respond positively to challenges. It also relates to Bani (2023), who demonstrated that cognitive-behavioural group counselling could improve adolescents' psychological well-being and reduce negative emotional experiences associated with helplessness. Furthermore, Egbegi et al. (2021) showed that school-based cognitive-behavioural interventions could positively influence motivation, concentration, and engagement. The present findings therefore suggest that enhanced academic confidence is an important outcome of emotional regulation guidance that can ultimately strengthen students' persistence in completing challenging academic tasks.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that emotional regulation guidance positively influences students' persistence in completing academic and school-related tasks in public secondary schools in Ubungo Municipality. The findings demonstrate that students who receive appropriate guidance are better positioned to develop purposeful approaches to learning, including setting clear goals, managing their time, seeking assistance, maintaining motivation, and continuing their efforts when confronted with challenges. The quantitative findings showed strong positive perceptions among students regarding the contribution of guidance to task completion and responsibility for learning. The qualitative findings further demonstrated that students developed practical strategies that supported persistence, including consistent effort, effective time management, help-seeking behaviour, and greater focus on academic goals. Teachers and counsellors also observed positive behavioural changes, including greater motivation, increased classroom participation, willingness to attempt difficult tasks, and improved commitment to completing academic responsibilities. The study therefore concludes that students' persistence is closely associated with the support they receive in managing academic and emotional challenges. Structured emotional regulation guidance can provide students with important coping and self-management strategies that enable them to remain engaged with tasks even when they experience difficulties or setbacks.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends that public secondary schools should strengthen emotional regulation guidance programmes to help students manage frustration, academic pressure, discouragement, and other emotional challenges that may negatively affect their persistence in completing tasks. Teacher counsellors and other relevant teachers should also receive appropriate training in emotional regulation and practical guidance strategies to enable them to support students in developing persistence, effective coping skills, and positive responses to academic difficulties. Schools should further integrate emotional regulation guidance into regular student-support activities, including guidance and counselling sessions, academic mentoring, classroom practices, and peer-support programmes. Education authorities should provide adequate resources and institutional support for school guidance and counselling services to ensure that students receive consistent and structured psychosocial support (Ndumbaro & Pembe, 2025). Furthermore, future studies should investigate the influence of emotional regulation guidance using broader samples and additional measures of academic engagement and task completion in other educational settings.

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