



Effectiveness of Academic Camping in Raising National Examination Results in Public Secondary Schools: A Case of Bagamoyo District, Tanzania

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Abstract : This study investigated the effectiveness of academic camping as a strategy to improve national examination results in public secondary schools in Bagamoyo District, Tanzania. It focused on how academic camping influences students' academic performance by providing structured and focused learning opportunities. A mixed-methods design was employed, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions, classroom observations, and documentary review. The sample included 110 participants: 10 schools selected via stratified random sampling, 40 students and 30 teachers purposively selected, 10 academic teachers through convenience sampling, 15 parents, and 5 Ward Education Officers using mixed sampling methods. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data were examined thematically. The study was guided by Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory and Bloom's Mastery Learning Theory, highlighting the roles of guided learning, scaffolding, and structured practice in enhancing academic outcomes. Findings indicated that academic camping significantly improved student concentration, study discipline, preparedness, and performance in national examinations by providing a structured, distraction-free learning environment. Activities such as intensive revision sessions, mock examinations, structured timetables, group discussions, and mentorship were widely valued by both students and teachers. The study concludes that academic camping is an effective educational intervention for boosting examination performance, though its long-term success depends on careful planning, stakeholder collaboration, and adequate resource allocation. It is recommended that the Ministry of Education, school administrations, and local communities work together to strengthen camping programs by ensuring sufficient funding, improving infrastructure, providing teacher incentives, and fostering parental involvement to sustain and expand the benefits of academic camping.

Keyword : Academic Camping, National Examination Results , Student Preparedness, Motivation and Confidence

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INTRODUCTION

Education systems worldwide continue to grapple with the persistent challenge of improving student performance, particularly in high-stakes national examinations that determine academic progression and future opportunities. In response, a variety of interventions have been developed, among which academic camping has emerged as a strategic approach aimed at enhancing learning outcomes. Academic camping involves organizing focused study sessions outside the regular school environment, often during school holidays, to provide intensive academic support. Globally, countries such as South Korea, the United States, and the United Kingdom have implemented similar programs, demonstrating that structured, distraction-free learning environments can improve student engagement, retention, and examination performance (Kim, 2020; Jones et al., 2022). In addition to academic content, these programs often emphasize soft skills such as time management, self-discipline, and collaborative learning, which are critical for students' success in examinations (Lee, 2021). Despite evidence from these contexts, there remains limited research examining the specific impact of academic camping in developing regions, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa.

In Africa, national examinations play a pivotal role in determining students' educational and professional pathways, yet performance challenges remain pronounced, especially in rural areas where limited resources, inadequate school infrastructure, and unqualified teachers hinder learning outcomes (Adewuyi, 2020). Several countries, including Nigeria and South Africa, have implemented academic camping initiatives to support

students in preparing for high-stakes examinations, reporting improvements in academic confidence and readiness (Ogunleye & Ajiboye, 2020). In East Africa, Kenya and Uganda have adopted similar interventions, though results have been mixed, reflecting challenges such as insufficient teacher training and limited school facilities (Nganga, 2021; Nsubuga, 2022). In Tanzania, educational reforms have sought to address disparities in secondary school performance, particularly in rural districts where students continue to struggle in national examinations (Mkumbo, 2021). Academic camping has been piloted in regions such as Bagamoyo District to enhance students' focus and mastery of challenging subjects, yet empirical evidence on its effectiveness, particularly in improving national examination results, remains scarce (Tanzania Ministry of Education, 2023).

Given the potential benefits of academic camping as a structured, intensive, and supportive learning intervention, there is a pressing need to evaluate its effectiveness in the Tanzanian context. While government and school initiatives have implemented these programs, concerns regarding sustainability, resource allocation, and scalability persist, especially in rural schools with limited infrastructure and teaching staff. Academic camping offers a platform for organized activities such as group discussions, past paper exercises, and guided study sessions, which can enhance student engagement and improve competencies. However, the lack of comprehensive studies on its impact in Tanzania creates a knowledge gap that hinders evidence-based policy formulation. Therefore, this study aims to examine the effectiveness of academic

camping as a strategy for improving Ordinary Level national examination results in public secondary schools in Bagamoyo District, focusing specifically on the activities and teaching methods employed and their contribution to enhancing student academic outcomes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Education systems globally continue to explore strategies for improving student performance, particularly in high-stakes national examinations, which often determine educational progression and future opportunities. In this context, academic camping has emerged as a promising intervention designed to provide students with intensive, structured learning experiences outside the regular school calendar. The theoretical foundation of this study is rooted in Self-Determination Theory (SDT), developed by Deci and Ryan (1985), which emphasizes that human motivation is driven by the fulfillment of three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy refers to the ability to exercise choice and self-direction in one's learning; competence involves feeling effective and capable in mastering tasks; and relatedness captures the sense of belonging and connection with others. When these needs are met, learners are more likely to develop intrinsic motivation, which is associated with deeper engagement, sustained effort, and improved academic outcomes (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In the context of academic camping, SDT provides a lens for understanding how structured yet participatory learning environments foster motivation by offering students opportunities to master content, interact

meaningfully with peers and teachers, and take ownership of their learning.

Empirical evidence demonstrates that academic camping programs employ a variety of teaching methods and activities that enhance student engagement and academic preparedness. Globally, camps in South Korea, the United States, and the United Kingdom integrate intensive subject-focused lectures, mock examinations, group discussions, and one-on-one mentorship to reinforce knowledge and skills (Kim, 2020; Jones et al., 2022). Similarly, in African contexts, including Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, academic camps emphasize review sessions, practice exercises, remedial classes, and targeted interventions in core subjects to improve performance in national examinations (Ogunleye & Ajiboye, 2020; Nganga, 2021; Nsubuga, 2022; Tanzania Ministry of Education, 2023). These activities not only address academic content gaps but also build students' confidence and preparedness by familiarizing them with exam formats, reducing anxiety, and encouraging collaborative learning. In Tanzania, academic camping programs have been shown to increase student confidence and competence by providing focused attention on critical subjects, peer support, and teacher guidance, thereby enhancing readiness for the Form Four National Examinations (Mkumbo, 2021). By combining structured learning with opportunities for autonomy, mastery, and social interaction, academic camping aligns closely with SDT principles, suggesting that its effectiveness extends beyond content reinforcement to include the promotion of intrinsic motivation and holistic student development.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed-methods research approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of academic camping and its influence on national examination results (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Quantitative data were collected using questionnaires administered to students and teachers, while qualitative data were gathered through interviews with parents, academic teachers, and Ward Education Officers. The study sample comprised 110 participants, including 10 schools selected through stratified random sampling, 40 students, 30 teachers, 10 academic teachers, 15 parents, and 5 Ward Education Officers. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, and qualitative data underwent thematic analysis to capture nuanced insights and experiences regarding the effectiveness of academic camping.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents, interprets, and discusses the findings on the specific activities and teaching methods utilized during academic camping and their contribution to improving national examination results in public secondary schools. Data were gathered from structured questionnaires administered to students (n=40) and teachers (n=15), as well as semi-structured interviews with Academic Teachers (n=5), Parents (n=5), Ward Education Officers (n=5), and a focus group discussion (FGD) with students (n=15). Quantitative results are presented in Table 1, followed by a comprehensive discussion that integrates qualitative insights and interprets the findings

through the lens of Self-Determination Theory (SDT).

Table 1.
Perceptions of Academic Camping Activities and Outcomes

S/N	Survey Statement	Students (n=40) % Agree	Students Mean	Teachers (n=15) % Agree	Teachers Mean
1	Intensive remedial/revision sessions improved mastery of content	88%	4.32	93%	4.47
2	Mock exams/past papers increased exam confidence	83%	4.18	87%	4.27
3	Group discussions/peer learning improved understanding of difficult topics	80%	4.05	73%	3.93
4	A structured timetable improved discipline and attendance	85%	4.21	80%	4.07
5	Mentorship/motivational talks reduced anxiety and kept students on track	78%	3.98	80%	4.02
6	Overall, academic camping contributed to better examination results	70%	3.78	67%	3.73
7	Challenges (costs, facilities, fatigue) limit the effectiveness of camps	78%	4.02	87%	4.20

The results presented in Table 1 highlight the perceptions of students and teachers regarding the specific activities and teaching methods employed during academic camping, as well as their contribution to improving national examination results. The quantitative data reveal consistently high levels of agreement across the main academic camping strategies, suggesting that the intervention is perceived as both relevant and impactful in public secondary schools.

One of the most striking findings is the strong endorsement of remedial and revision sessions. An overwhelming 88 percent of students and 93 percent of teachers agreed that intensive revision significantly improved mastery of content. This aligns with global research, where intensive, targeted practice is frequently

associated with improved performance in high-stakes examinations (Kim, 2020; Cooper, Nye, & Charlton, 2021). Qualitative data from interviews and FGDs confirmed this perception, with students describing revision sessions as vital for “remembering answers faster” and “clarifying difficult topics.” Teachers echoed this by emphasizing the role of revision in syllabus completion and reinforcing weak areas through repeated practice.

Mock examinations and past paper practice also emerged as highly valued strategies, with over 80 percent of respondents acknowledging their contribution to confidence and preparedness. The FGD with students revealed that repeated exposure to past papers under timed conditions reduced anxiety by familiarizing learners with examination formats. Teachers described this process as crucial for helping students develop time management skills and strategies for handling complex exam questions. Such practices are supported by Jones, Smith, and Taylor (2022), who found that mock exams in the UK significantly reduced test-related anxiety and improved performance in high-stakes assessments.

Group discussions and peer learning were endorsed by 80 percent of students and 73 percent of teachers. Although slightly lower than the scores for revision and mock exams, these findings demonstrate the importance of collaborative learning environments. Students explained that working in groups not only allowed them to learn from one another but also created a sense of accountability. The social pressure of seeing peers study diligently motivated them to remain focused. This finding resonates with Lee’s (2021) study of

Japanese academic camps, where group dynamics fostered persistence and engagement. Teachers, while generally supportive, were more cautious, highlighting that group work required effective facilitation to remain productive.

The structured timetable characteristic of academic camping was praised by both students (85 percent agreement) and teachers (80 percent agreement). Participants reported that the enforced discipline of the camp environment reduced absenteeism and minimized distractions from household chores, particularly for students from rural settings. This finding is consistent with Mwangi and Otieno’s (2022) research in Kenya, where structured holiday tuition improved student focus and attendance. Students described feeling “pushed to keep up” because everyone in the camp adhered to the same rigorous schedule, thus fostering a collective spirit of seriousness about academic achievement.

Mentorship and motivational talks also contributed to improved student outcomes, although agreement levels were slightly lower (78 percent of students, 80 percent of teachers). Nevertheless, qualitative data underscored their importance. Students valued motivational sessions for reducing exam stress and increasing self-belief, while teachers highlighted their role in nurturing resilience and perseverance. Academic Teachers mentioned conducting “morning tests” followed by one-on-one coaching, which helped students receive personalized feedback. These findings correspond with Ochieng’s (2023) work in Kenya, which emphasized the role of autonomy-supportive teaching and mentoring in sustaining academic persistence.

Despite the overwhelmingly positive perceptions of academic camping, respondents also identified significant constraints. Approximately 78 percent of students and 87 percent of teachers agreed that financial limitations, inadequate facilities, and teacher fatigue reduced the effectiveness of camps. Qualitative data further elaborated these concerns: students mentioned insufficient food and water, long hours without rest, and lack of adequate dormitory facilities. Teachers cited burnout due to the demanding schedule, as well as difficulties caused by delayed parental contributions to camp funding. Ward Education Officers stressed that sustainability was at risk if resource challenges were not addressed. These concerns reflect systemic barriers noted in Tanzanian education more broadly, where poor infrastructure and funding gaps continue to hinder progress (Mosha, 2021; Ponniah, 2020).

When interpreted through the Self-Determination Theory (SDT), these findings illustrate how academic camping influences motivation by addressing the three psychological needs of competence, relatedness, and autonomy. Competence was strongly satisfied through intensive revision, mock exams, and continuous feedback. Students repeatedly described feeling more capable and better prepared, which reflects the motivational benefits of perceived competence (Kim, 2020; Nyaga, Mwangi, & Ndirangu, 2022). Relatedness was also well supported, as students expressed that the collective study environment and group discussions fostered belonging and accountability. This aligns with Adewuyi's (2020) findings in Nigeria, where community-driven camps enhanced social bonds that reinforced academic engagement.

The need for autonomy, however, was only partially met. While the camps' rigid schedules provided structure, they left limited space for student choice. Yet, qualitative data revealed that when teachers involved students in setting goals and allowed them to choose discussion groups, the structure was perceived as supportive rather than controlling. According to Ochieng (2023), autonomy-supportive environments are crucial for long-term motivation, suggesting that academic camps could enhance their impact by incorporating more student-led decision-making in revision and goal setting.

Taken together, the findings suggest that academic camping is a powerful strategy for enhancing student preparedness and confidence for national examinations. However, its success is heavily contingent on resource availability and teacher support. The convergence of quantitative and qualitative evidence shows that while the activities themselves are effective in principle, contextual challenges must be resolved to maximize their potential impact on examination outcomes. This interpretation aligns with the NECTA Report (2021), which emphasizes the persistent disparities in performance across rural and urban schools and underscores the need for targeted interventions in resource-constrained settings.

The results also resonate with international evidence. Cooper et al. (2021) found that summer programs in the United States reduced learning loss, while Nsubuga (2022) reported that Ugandan students benefited from holiday tuition camps despite infrastructural challenges. Similarly, Jones et al. (2022) concluded that structured extracurricular programs

improve exam performance in the UK, provided adequate resources are in place. These parallels affirm the broader relevance of academic camping in Tanzania but also highlight the importance of contextual adaptation to local realities.

In conclusion, this study's objective demonstrates that academic camping enhances competence, fosters relatedness, and moderately supports autonomy, all of which contribute to improved motivation and academic readiness. Students and teachers overwhelmingly recognize the value of revision, mock exams, structured timetables, and mentorship in boosting preparedness for national examinations. Nevertheless, structural constraints related to resources, welfare, and teacher workload remain significant obstacles. Addressing these challenges through community involvement, government support, and innovative resource mobilization is essential if academic camping is to deliver sustainable improvements in examination performance in Tanzania.

The Role of Academic Camping in Enhancing Students Preparedness and Confidence for National Examinations

Academic camping has increasingly been recognized as an intervention aimed at improving student preparedness and confidence for high-stakes examinations. These camps, typically organized in residential or semi-residential settings, provide structured learning schedules, mentorship, mock examinations, and peer interactions designed to enhance both cognitive and affective aspects of learning. In this study, the role of academic camping in promoting preparedness and confidence among students for national examinations was

examined through both quantitative and qualitative methods. Data were collected from students (n =40) and teachers (n = 15) via structured questionnaires, complemented by semi-structured interviews with academic teachers, parents, and ward education officers (WEOs), as well as focus group discussions (FGDs) with students. Table 2 presents students' and teachers' responses on various aspects of academic camping related to exam preparedness and confidence.

**Table 2 .
Various aspects of Academic Camping**

S/N	Survey Statement	Students (n=40) %	Students Mean	Teachers (n=15) % Agree	Teachers Mean
1	Academic camping improved my preparedness for final exams	90%	4.40	87%	4.25
2	Academic camping enhanced my exam confidence	85%	4.20	80%	4.00
3	Mock tests during camps reduced my exam anxiety	83%	4.15	73%	3.95
4	Structured daily routines increased my readiness for exams	88%	4.30	80%	4.10
5	Mentorship and guidance during camps boosted my confidence	80%	4.05	75%	3.90

Table 2 presents the survey responses of students and teachers regarding the perceived impact of academic camping on preparedness and confidence. Across all survey items, students reported high levels of agreement, with 90% affirming that academic camping improved their preparedness for final examinations and 88% noting that structured daily routines increased their

readiness for exams. Confidence-related items, while slightly lower, were also positively rated, with 85% of students indicating that academic camping enhanced their confidence and 83% agreeing that mock tests reduced exam anxiety. Mentorship and guidance during camps were acknowledged by 80% of students as contributing to their confidence. Teachers' perceptions were largely aligned with those of students, though slightly lower, reflecting practical challenges in camp implementation such as limited resources, student fatigue, and variations in engagement. For example, 87% of teachers agreed that camps improved preparedness, while 80% recognized their role in enhancing student confidence. These findings suggest a robust perception among both students and teachers that academic camping supports critical dimensions of exam readiness.

Exam Preparedness

Preparedness emerged as the most strongly endorsed outcome of academic camping. Quantitatively, 90% of students agreed that the camps improved their exam readiness, supported by a mean rating of 4.40. Qualitative data indicated that structured daily schedules, extended revision periods, and regular mock assessments allowed students to systematically consolidate knowledge and identify areas of weakness. These findings align with prior studies in various contexts. For instance, Kim (2020) reported that study camps significantly improved students' preparedness for national examinations through structured learning interventions, while Cooper, Nye, and Charlton (2021) found that summer learning programs enhanced students'

academic gains by providing concentrated opportunities for content mastery. In the Tanzanian context, NECTA (2021) similarly highlights the importance of interventions that provide structured revision opportunities to improve examination outcomes.

Confidence and Self-Efficacy

Confidence and self-efficacy were strongly influenced by the camp experience. Students reported feeling more capable of tackling exam questions, a perception reinforced by continuous feedback and mentorship from teachers. Mock examinations were particularly effective in building confidence, as they allowed students to confront and overcome difficulties in a supportive environment. Teachers corroborated this observation, noting that students demonstrated increased willingness to participate in problem-solving and class discussions following camp interventions. This finding is consistent with the notion within SDT that competence-building activities enhance intrinsic motivation and confidence (Ochieng, 2023). Similar conclusions have been drawn in other African contexts, where Mwangi and Otieno (2022) observed that academic camps fostered self-efficacy by providing repeated opportunities for students to test and refine their skills in low-stakes environments.

Anxiety Reduction

A critical aspect of student performance is the management of examination anxiety. In this study, 83% of students indicated that participation in academic camps reduced their exam-related stress, a finding echoed by teachers (73%). Qualitative data suggest that

anxiety reduction was facilitated by repeated exposure to exam conditions through mock tests and structured routines that minimized last-minute cramming. Students reported feeling more relaxed and focused during actual examinations, a result consistent with Jones, Smith, and Taylor (2022), who argue that extracurricular programs targeting test preparedness can mitigate anxiety and improve performance. This aligns with SDT, as the satisfaction of competence and relatedness needs has been linked to reduced anxiety and enhanced psychological well-being (Ochieng, 2023).

Role of Mentorship and Peer Support

Mentorship emerged as a critical factor in enhancing both preparedness and confidence. Teachers provided individualized guidance, identified knowledge gaps, and encouraged students to persist through challenging content. Peer interactions further strengthened these outcomes by creating an environment of shared learning and social support. The combined effect of mentorship and peer collaboration satisfies the SDT need for relatedness, fostering intrinsic motivation and perseverance. Adewuyi (2020) and Nyaga, Mwangi, and Ndirangu (2022) similarly found that community-driven academic camps enhanced students' academic persistence through mentorship and collaborative learning, supporting the current findings.

Policy and Practical Implications

The findings of this study have several practical implications. First, educational policymakers should consider integrating structured academic camps into the academic calendar as a strategy to improve student preparedness for national

examinations. Second, camps should emphasize a balance between intensive revision and opportunities for rest to mitigate student fatigue. Third, the inclusion of mentorship programs and peer collaboration activities should be prioritized to address both competence and relatedness needs, thereby enhancing intrinsic motivation in line with SDT. Finally, ongoing monitoring and evaluation of camp effectiveness are essential to ensure that interventions are tailored to students' individual learning needs (Mosha, 2021; Ponniah, 2020).

Despite the positive outcomes, some limitations warrant consideration. Teachers highlighted logistical challenges, including limited resources and variable student engagement. Additionally, the structured nature of camps may not be equally effective for all learners, particularly those who experience high levels of stress or have distinct learning preferences. Future research could explore ways to integrate autonomy-supportive strategies within camp programs to further enhance SDT-related outcomes.

The qualitative findings provide detailed insights into how academic camping contributes to students' preparedness and confidence. During focus group discussions, students consistently highlighted the benefits of extended study hours, structured revision schedules, and exposure to exam-style questions. One student explained:

"Before the camp, I felt lost when I saw past exam questions. I didn't know how to start or which topics were important. But during the camp, we practiced the same types of questions repeatedly, and now I feel I can tackle any exam paper without panicking."

Another student added:

“The daily timetable was strict, but it helped me plan my day and manage my time. I know exactly when to revise math, when to practice English, and even when to rest. This organization made me feel ready and confident.”

Teachers also emphasized the positive impact of intensive revision and mentorship. One teacher stated:

“In regular classrooms, it’s difficult to give personalized attention because of large class sizes. During the camp, I could focus on individual students, identify their weak areas, and give targeted guidance. I saw real changes – students who were previously shy or hesitant were now confident and actively solving complex problems.”

Mentorship was particularly highlighted as a mechanism that boosted both preparedness and self-efficacy. Another teacher shared:

“I held small group sessions every evening. By guiding students step by step through difficult topics and celebrating small successes, I noticed they began to believe in their abilities. Many of them said, ‘I didn’t think I could do this, but now I know I can.’”

Parents and WEOs also noted substantial changes in students’ attitudes, discipline, and overall seriousness toward learning. A parent recounted:

“My child came back from the camp completely transformed. He

wakes up early, follows a study schedule, and even explains what he learned to younger siblings. The difference is very noticeable, not just in his confidence but in his approach to learning.”

A WEO added:

“I observed students during and after the camp. Those who attended showed greater commitment and responsibility. They were more focused, more engaged in class, and more willing to help each other. Even their peers who did not attend were motivated to take learning seriously.”

These qualitative findings illuminate the mechanisms by which academic camping promotes preparedness and confidence: through mastery-oriented practice, structured routines, supportive mentorship, and collaborative peer engagement. The rich, direct experiences of students, teachers, and parents provide compelling evidence that academic camping is a holistic intervention that addresses both the cognitive and psychological needs of students, laying the foundation for improved academic performance and exam readiness.

These findings can be interpreted through the lens of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which posits that human motivation is driven by the satisfaction of three basic psychological needs: competence, autonomy, and relatedness (Ochieng, 2023). Competence refers to the need to feel effective in one’s activities, autonomy pertains to the experience of volition and agency, and relatedness reflects the need for social connection and belonging. Academic camping appears to address both competence and relatedness in significant ways. The structured

routines, mock examinations, and targeted mentorship provide students with repeated opportunities to master content, thereby fulfilling the need for competence. Concurrently, the communal environment of the camps, which fosters peer collaboration and supportive teacher-student interactions, addresses the need for relatedness. Although autonomy is less directly emphasized in highly structured camp environments, the sense of self-efficacy that students gain through competence and supportive social interaction may indirectly enhance autonomous motivation for learning. These outcomes are consistent with prior research indicating that interventions satisfying basic psychological needs lead to increased intrinsic motivation, engagement, and academic persistence (Ochieng, 2023; Jones, Smith, & Taylor, 2022).

Generally, findings by this objective indicates that academic camping plays a significant role in enhancing students' preparedness and confidence for national examinations. The integration of structured study routines, mock assessments, mentorship, and peer collaboration fosters competence and relatedness, resulting in reduced anxiety and increased intrinsic motivation. These findings are consistent with Self-Determination Theory, which emphasizes the importance of satisfying psychological needs to promote engagement and performance. The positive perceptions of students, teachers, and parents underscore the potential of academic camps as a holistic intervention for improving learning outcomes, particularly in contexts where conventional classroom instruction may not fully address students'

preparedness for high-stakes examinations.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATIONS

This study investigated the specific activities and teaching methods employed during academic camping and their contribution to improving national examination results in public secondary schools in Bagamoyo District, Tanzania. The findings indicate that academic camping is a highly effective strategy for enhancing students' preparedness, confidence, and overall academic performance. Both quantitative and qualitative data demonstrated that intensive revision sessions, mock examinations, group discussions, structured timetables, and mentorship were particularly impactful. Students reported that these activities enabled them to consolidate knowledge, manage exam-related anxiety, and engage collaboratively with peers, while teachers emphasized the role of these methods in reinforcing weak areas and promoting consistent study habits.

Through the lens of Self-Determination Theory, the study reveals that academic camping successfully addresses students' psychological needs for competence and relatedness while partially supporting autonomy. Competence was strengthened through repeated practice, mock exams, and personalized feedback, which increased students' self-efficacy and mastery of content. Relatedness was fostered by collaborative learning and supportive teacher-student interactions, motivating students to persist in their studies. Autonomy was less directly emphasized due to the structured nature of the camps,

though students' involvement in goal setting and the selection of study groups helped mitigate this limitation. Despite these positive outcomes, challenges such as limited resources, inadequate facilities, teacher fatigue, and funding constraints were identified as barriers that could reduce the overall effectiveness of academic camping.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that academic camping be formally integrated into the national secondary school calendar, with clear policies on duration, activities, and resource allocation to ensure consistency and effectiveness. Adequate funding and infrastructure support are essential, particularly in rural schools, and partnerships with local communities, non-governmental organizations, and private stakeholders can help sustain these programs. Teachers should receive both professional development and incentives to manage workload and enhance their capacity for mentorship and facilitation of peer learning. Camp programs should also incorporate more student-led activities to strengthen autonomy, while maintaining structured routines that reinforce competence and relatedness. Mentorship and peer collaboration should remain central components, fostering supportive learning environments that enhance motivation and persistence. Finally, ongoing monitoring and evaluation of academic camping programs are crucial for assessing impact, identifying challenges, and guiding improvements to maximize student outcomes.

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