

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTS' LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND PUPILS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE; IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN IPALLISA DSTRICT, UGANDA.

Namukose Hellen<sup>a</sup>, Ssendagi Muhamad<sup>a,b\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup>School of Post Graduate Studies and Research, Team University.

<sup>b</sup>School of Economics and Business, Kigali Independent University.

### ABSTRACT

#### Background:

This study sought to investigate the relationship between parents' level of education and pupils' academic performance in primary schools.

#### Methodology:

A mixed-method research approach was used in this study to generate data.

Using questionnaire and interview guide tools, data was collected from the study respondents including pupils, teachers, head teachers, parents as well and the Area Education Officer.

#### Results:

Findings revealed that parents' level of education influences pupils' academic performance. Tool items such as parents checking books and home works (M=1.70, SD=1.042), parents assisting in doing homework (M=2.43, SD=1.355), parents reading and replying to letters from schools (M=2.01, SD=1.131) and pupils having enough time at home to study (M=1.97, SD=1.050), were found to be among major factors that determine pupils' performance.

#### Conclusion:

Parental level of education was statistically significant towards pupils' academic performance in Palisa District. The educational attainment of their children in both rural and national samples was easily influenced by their conducive home study environment.

#### Recommendation:

Parents are advised to pay full attention to their children's education at home. They should make a timetable for their children regarding homework and studies. In this way, their academic performance will be improved.

**Keywords:** Relationship, Parents, Level of Education, Pupils, Academic Performance.

*Submitted: 2023-12-19 Accepted: 2024-01-19*

**Corresponding Author:** Ssendagi Muhamad\*

**Email:** sendagimoh@gmail.com

*School of Economics and Business, Kigali Independent University.*

### Background to the study

Globally, parents play primary roles in raising children in the society to become productive citizens (Adekey, 2002). Parents' levels of education and type of occupation have a great influence on the child's success or failure. Further studies in Nigeria indicate that parents with high education and formal occupations maintain positive views about the values of education which results in higher levels of academic achievement for their children (Ford and Harris, 1997; Steinberg, 1992).

Sarigiani (1990) noted that parental educational level is significantly related to the educational attainment of their children. This study also had two levels of judging educational level; college or below to college graduates and above. The children of the more educated group tended to

have higher aspirations and higher education plans. Children with highly educated parents are exposed to after-school guidance, coaching, and training in homework and are likely to perform better compared to those with illiterate parents (Sarigiani, 1990).

Much as studies show that the education level of parents affects how well children perform in school, in some cases, parents who have little or no education usually ensure that their children receive better education (Akujeze, 2003). It

is believed that a child from a well-educated family with high socioeconomic status is more likely to perform better than a child from an illiterate family (Rothestein, 2004). This is because the child from an educated family has a lot of support such as a decent and good environment for academic work, parental support and guidance, enough (ResearchWap, n.d.)

Textual and academic materials, and decent feeding. Better-educated parents contribute better to the learning of their children through their day-to-day interactions Saila and Chamundeswari (2014).

Primary Education is the most basic formal education and is valued highly for preparing learners for secondary education, the world of work, scientific and technical application of knowledge, and life skills. Education is a fundamental human right, the key to sustainable development in line with the Millennium Development Goals (UgandaConstitution, 1995). According to Ninomiya (2003), Education does not only provide knowledge and skills but also inculcates values, and training of instincts, fostering the right attitude and habits. He further argues that it is an essential instrument for effective participation in societal activities and enhances peace and stability among countries Wilberforce(2020). This therefore means that without education that fosters the right attitudes, habits, and behaviours, sustainable development cannot be achieved. For the success of any education system, three environments are crucial in the teaching and learning process; the family, the school, and the community (Posse & Melgosa, 2002).

The study aimed to investigate the relationship between parents' level of education and pupils' academic performance; in primary schools in Pallisa District, Uganda.

## Methodology

### Research Design

This study used a mixed-method research approach (quantitative and qualitative approaches). The specific design that was used under the mixed method is descriptive research design. Orodho (2004) observes that descriptive

studies allow the researcher to gather information, summarise, present, and interpret for clarification. As observed by Kothari, descriptive studies are those that are concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual or group.

### Study setting:

This research was conducted in Palisa Town Council, Pallisa district. The study was limited to only five UPE schools in Palisa Town Council. This study covered a period of three years, from 2018 to 2022. This period is chosen because it was during this period that pupils' academic performance became a concern to education policymakers in Pallisa District. Therefore, the selected time/ period provided the necessary information about the influence of parents' socio-economic status on pupils' academic performance based on PLE results.

### Study population

#### Research population

The target population included the following categories of respondents.

Categories of respondents, Headteachers, PTA and School Management Committee, District Education Officer, Teachers, and P.7 Pupils. From five primary schools in Palisa

**Sample Size:** Given a population of 401 respondents the sample size was 196 respondents determined using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table for determining sample sizes for a finite population

**Table 1: population and sample size distribution**

| Category                            | Population | Sample size | Sampling techniques    |
|-------------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Headteachers                        | 5          | 3           | Purposive sampling     |
| Teachers                            | 70         | 34          | Simple sampling        |
| District Education Officer          | 01         | 01          | Purposive sampling     |
| PTA and School Management Committee | 115        | 56          | Simple random sampling |
| P. 7 Pupils                         | 210        | 102         | Simple random sampling |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>401</b> | <b>196</b>  |                        |

Source –primary data

## Sampling procedure

The researcher applied purposive sampling alongside random sampling technique. The purposive sampling was used to select respondents based on the nature of their position in the education sector. Simple random sampling was applied in schools to select respondents from different schools in the area of study. The researcher got a list of the selected schools and the selection of teachers will be done in random by getting the list of teachers in each school and the researcher picked names in random. Headteachers, deputy Headteachers, and class masters will automatically selected due to the nature of their position in the school. Teachers were selected randomly to give equal opportunity for all of them to be selected thereby ensuring free bias and full representation.

## Data collection methods and instruments

The study used questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis as the main tools for collecting data. The tools will be preferred because they are flexible to the sample category and would easily generate detailed data from the respondents. The researcher was mainly concerned with the views, opinions, and perceptions, of respondents concerning the problem under study through probing for clarity during interviews. Such information could be collected by use of questionnaires and interview techniques (Bells, 1993)

## Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a data collection instrument used to gather data from a large number of respondents (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). Both open and closed-ended questions were used in this study. Self-administered questionnaires were given to teachers and pupils, they were required to read and answer the questions given.

## Interview Guide

An interview guide is a set of questions that the researcher asks during the interview (Mc Namara, 2009). Interviews are a good method of data collection since they allow the researcher to seek clarification in case he/she does not understand a given concept, something one cannot do in the case of a questionnaire (McLeod, 2014). Interview schedules were administered to head teachers, parents, and A.E.O. Face-to-face interaction with key informants were done whereby the researcher was asked questions written on a piece of paper. Responses given by the interviewees were noted down.

## Documentary Review

The researcher requested documents from school administrators and the Education Office. The documents requested included end-of-term reports, end-of-year reports, class registers, and school PLE results for the previous years and district assessment reports from the education officer were reviewed.

## Quality control methods

To ensure the quality of the data, two quality control methods were used in this study and this included:

## Validity

Validity is the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences, which are based on the research results. Validity is the degree to which the results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represent the phenomenon under study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The validity of research instruments was achieved by ensuring that test items covered all objectives and variables of the study. Consultations and discussions with the supervisor were done to establish the content validity. A content validity test was conducted using the CVI whose formula is:

$$CVI = \frac{\text{Number relevant items}}{\text{Total Number of Items}} \times 100$$

Total Number of Items

When the CVI value became 70% and above, then the instruments were valid. However, the instruments were corrected to remove unworthy items.

## Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent the instruments are consistent in measuring what they are expected to measure (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Random errors arise from unclear instructions to the respondents, ambiguous questionnaires, or attention deficit during interviews.

The researcher minimized random errors by cross-checking the questionnaires during piloting. Piloting was done to test whether the research instruments were clearly stated and whether they were meaningful to respondents. The schools involved in the pilot study were not considered in the final study. During piloting, the researcher checked the flow of questions in questionnaires and interviews and whether he would have problems in asking questions and filling in questionnaires. The results were compiled and used to

improve the consistency and validity of the results in the final data collection exercise. The exercise was done in 2 private schools to enable the researcher to modify, restructure, and eliminate any ambiguous items<sup>3.7</sup>

### **Data analysis techniques**

Page | 3

According to Polit and Hungler (1997), data analysis means to organize, provide structure, and elicit meaning. The data collected were coded and tested for completeness and then analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics using the statistical package of social science (SPSS) and presented using tables, charts, and graphs for easy interpretation. Chi-squares and regression analysis were used to establish the relationship between variables. These types of inferential statistics are easy to compute and interpret and they also help in making conclusions. Descriptive statistical techniques (frequencies and percentages) were employed to analyze field data from questionnaires to assist in the interpretation of data.

### **Ethical considerations**

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), ethical considerations are critical for any research. Leedy and Omrod (2005), affirm that most ethical issues in research fall into four categories, protection from harm, informed consent, right to privacy, and honesty with professional colleagues. In this study, ethical guidelines that were embraced to ensure that ethical values are not violated. The researcher established a good rapport with the respondents by ensuring that the purpose of the study and its potential benefits are clearly explained. The research was conducted on condition of confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents

## **RESULTS**

### **Response rate**

The response rate is the ratio of the respondents who actually participated in a research study to the sample that

was targeted. It is used to evaluate the quality of research data collected from the field.

In this study, the rate was 85% which is above the recommended 67% response rate (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999) which suggests a “representative of what would have been obtained from the population”.

### **Relationship between parents’ level of education and pupils’ academic performance.**

The study sought to establish a relationship between parents’ level of education and pupils’ academic performance. Using a closed-ended questionnaire on parents’ level of education, respondents were asked to rate their perceptions on the contribution of parents’ education to students’ academic performance. All questions were rated using a five-rate system, where 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3= Not Sure 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree. The responses on parents’ level of education about pupils’ academic performance are given the Table 3 below

Scores from the 8-point Likert scale concerning the parents’/guardians’ level of education indicated that parents checking books and homework with mean scores of  $M=1.70$ ,  $SD=1.042$ , parents’ assistance in doing pupils homework ( $M=2.43$ ,  $SD=1.355$ ), parents reading and replying the letters from school ( $M=2.01$ ,  $SD=1.131$ ) and pupils having enough time at home to study with ( $M=1.97$ ,  $SD=1.050$ ) were the tool items that were more influencing pupils’ academic performance.

Other tool items such as parents signing academic homework ( $M=3.24$ ,  $SD=1.320$ ), parents writing comments about homework ( $m=3.22$ ,  $SD=1.382$ ), parents giving pupils a lot of domestic work to do at home ( $M=3.36$ ,  $SD=1.429$ ) and parents denying pupils time for revision at home ( $M=3.77$ ,  $SD=1.398$ ) were less influential in determining the academic performance of pupils. When asked about her involvement in helping her child with homework, a parent of a child at one of the schools responded:

**Table 2: response rate**

| Respondents                         | Number of questionnaires distributed | The number of questionnaires returned | Response rate |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| Headteachers                        | 3                                    | 3                                     | 100           |
| Teachers                            | 34                                   | 30                                    | 88            |
| District Education Officer          | 1                                    | 1                                     | 100           |
| PTA and School Management Committee | 56                                   | 46                                    | 82            |
| P.7 Pupils                          | 102                                  | 87                                    | 85            |
| Total                               | 196                                  | 167                                   | 85            |

**Table 3: Parents/Guardians Education Level**

|   | N   | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|-----|------|----------------|
| Parents usually check books and homework for children | 167 | 1.70 | 1.042          |
| parents assist in doing children’s homework           | 167 | 2.43 | 1.355          |
| parents sign academic homework                        | 167 | 3.24 | 1.320          |
| parents write comments about my homework              | 167 | 3.22 | 1.382          |
| parents read and reply the letters from the school    | 167 | 2.01 | 1.131          |
| have enough time at home to study                     | 167 | 1.97 | 1.050          |
| parents give me a lot of domestic work to do at home  | 167 | 3.36 | 1.429          |
| parents deny me time for revision at home             | 167 | 3.77 | 1.398          |
|   |     |      |                |

*“I never studied because of not knowing the value of education. But I want my children to study and get jobs in government and be paid a salary every month like their teachers are”.*

In some schools, teachers were found complaining about the laxity of some parents in providing for their children. For example, a male teacher from one of the schools said,

*“Most parents don’t know the value of education and we find it hard to convince them to provide for their children’s needs for effective learning”.*

This indicates that pupils with parents/guardians who are educated especially professionally have an advantage of being assisted in homework since parents always want their children to communicate. On the other hand, when a parent

is not educated, the child is likely to face inadequate guidance in homework which may affect his/her performance at school as well.

The means in Table 4 demonstrate that respondents rated the academic performance of pupils as moderately high (overall mean = 2.698).

**Testing hypothesis one: There is a significant relationship between parents’ education level and pupils’ academic performance in government aided Primary Schools**

The sign of the coefficient (positive or negative) was used to determine the nature of change in the variables (parents’ education level and pupils’ academic performance at government-aided Primary Schools). The significance of the correlation coefficient (p) was used to test the hypothesis that “There is a significant relationship between parents’

education level and pupils' academic performance of government-aided Primary Schools. Findings are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 shows that there is a moderate positive correlation ( $r = 0.659$ ) between parents' education level and pupils' academic performance. This finding was subjected to verification to test the hypothesis

*“There is a significant relationship between parents' education level and pupils' academic performance”*

by comparing the significance of the correlation ( $p = .000$ ) to the recommended significance at 0.05. Given that the  $p$ -value was less than 0.05, the research hypothesis was accepted.

**Table 4: Descriptive statistics on pupils' academic performance**

| The pupils generally have good grades at PLE.                           | N   | Mean  | Standard Deviation |
|---|-----|-------|--------------------|
| Most pupils perform well in Continuous assessment                       | 167 | 3.245 | 0.164              |
| Termly reports of most pupils are promising                             | 167 | 3.563 | 0.113              |
| Most pupils perform to the expectations of the school administration    | 167 | 2.456 | 0.872              |
| Pupils can do class assignments   | 167 | 1.372 | 0.961              |
| The practical lessons improve the academic performance of the students. | 167 | 3.401 | 0.108              |
| Average   | 167 | 2.698 |                    |

**Table 5: Correlations between parents' education and pupils' academic performance in government-aided primary schools**

|                                     |                     | Parents' Education level | Pupils' Academic Performance |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Parents' Education level</b>     | Pearson Correlation | 1                        | .659*                        |
|                                     | Sig. (2-tailed)     |                          | .000                         |
|                                     | N                   | 100                      | 100                          |
| <b>Pupils' Academic Performance</b> | Pearson Correlation | .659*                    | 1                            |
|                                     | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000                     |                              |
|                                     | N                   | 100                      | 100                          |

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

### Discussion of the Findings

The study sought to establish the relationship between parents' education level and pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Pallisa District, Uganda. The study results from the correlation showed a moderate positive correlation between parents' education level and pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Pallisa District, Uganda

These findings are in line with Sarigiani (1990), that parental level of education is significantly related to the educational attainment of their children in both rural and national samples. Children from parents with higher education levels tend to do better than the ones from parents with low education levels because the latter may form a

cycle of uneducated family members. Therefore, pupils with parents who did not go to school or with low education background faced problems such as being stopped from daily attendance of school by illiterate parents, lacking parental support on homework, and sometimes being discouraged from going to school by both parents and their classmates thus affecting the performance of a child.

In addition, findings showed that parents checking books and homework ( $M=1.70$ ,  $SD=1.042$ ), parents assisting pupils in doing homework ( $M=2.43$ ,  $SD=1.355$ ), parents reading and replying to the letters from school ( $M=2.01$ ,  $SD=1.131$ ) and pupils having enough time at home to study with ( $M=1.97$ ,  $SD=1.050$ ), indicated positive statistical influence implying that such items were being practiced. This is in line with Zehri and Abdelbaki's (2013) findings who submitted that parents' educational background

influences the academic achievement of students. This is because the parents are in a good position to be second teachers to the child, and even guide and counsel the child on the best way to perform well in education and provide the necessary materials needed by the child (*Boniface(2017).*).

Although most studies show that the education level of parents affects how well children perform in school (Adekey, 2002; Akujieze, 2003; Rothstein, 2004), in some cases, parents who had little or no education usually ensured that their children receive a good education. It is believed that a child from a well-educated family with high socioeconomic status is more likely to perform better than a child from an illiterate family (Rothstein, 2004). Children with parents who never went to school or with low education backgrounds were affected by such factors since they did not assist in homework, did not read the letters assigned to them from a school, and had no time for them.

On the other hand, factors such as parents signing academic homework, parents writing comments on homework, parents giving a lot of domestic work to do at home and parents denying time for revision at home were less practiced.

## Conclusions

The study concludes that parental level of education was statistically significant towards pupils' academic performance in Palisa District. The educational attainment of their children in both rural and national samples was easily influenced by their conducive home study environment.

## Recommendations

**School Administrators:** School administrators being the technical people on the ground should thoroughly advise parents irrespective of their education level on the values of educating their children. This can be backed by parents giving children more time to make revisions and limiting the absenteeism of their children

School administrators are encouraged to comply with national policies aimed at providing quality education to children in schools. This is possible by buying and emphasizing hygiene facilities, and scholastic materials, and ensuring that they are put to proper use in schools.

## Pupils

Pupils are also recommended to always accomplish their homework from school to get time for doing home activities while at home.

## Parents

The majority of parents are not aware of the home environment that influences students' academic achievement and therefore it is strongly recommended that

parents should be made aware of the importance of the home environment in their children's academic achievement.

For this purpose, teachers, educationists, and leaders may play their role to make them aware of the importance of the home environment for their student's academic achievement. It is the responsibility of Parents to understand that they can improve the education of their children through encouragement, provision of educational facilities, and participation.

It is strongly recommended that interaction and communication between the parents and teachers should be strengthened since their involvement and participation influence pupils' academic performance.

Parents are advised to pay full attention to their children's education at home. They should make a timetable for their children regarding homework and studies. In this way, their academic performance will be improved.

## Acknowledgments

Above all, the Almighty God receives the highest appreciation and acknowledgment for sparing my life and providing me with sufficient energy, time, wisdom, and knowledge to write this dissertation.

I wish to thank the Headteachers in Primary schools for allowing me to access their schools to collect data. I do recognize all the respondents who provided me with the necessary data that has enabled this study to attain its current shape. May the Almighty provide you with longevity in your offices.

On a special note, my heartfelt appreciation goes to my supervisor, Dr.Ssendagi Muhamad, for the fatherly and untiring close supervision they accorded this work despite their busy schedule. May God richly bless you!

Finally, I must unreservedly thank my husband, colleagues Opedun John, Namukose Micheal, and Opela Stephen for their encouragement and my brother for paying part of my tuition who participated in one way or another in producing this dissertation.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

**UPE:** Universal Primary Education

**PLE:** Primary Leaving Examination

**PEO:** Principal Education Officer

**Conflict of interest:** None

**Source of funding:** None

**Author's Biography:**

## REFERENCES

- Adekeye, A. (2002). *Teaching social studies in Nigerian colleges*. Ue-Ife Press.
- Akujjeze, N. (2003). Impact of parents' socioeconomic background on students' achievement in agricultural science at the secondary school level in Ogbomosho, Oyo state, Nigeria
- Bells, J. (1993). Principles for the design of teaching: Education studies in Mathematics. Vol. 24, Issue 1
- Donald, K. Kombo and Tromp, A. (2006). *Proposal and Thesis writing; An introduction*. Paulines Publications Africa, Nairobi, Kenya.
- Ford, D., & Harris, J. (1997) A study of the racial identity and achievement of black males and females. *Roeper Rev.*20,105-110.
- Jjemba, E. (2011). Socio-economic determinants of learning achievements in primary schools in Uganda, Makerere University, Kampala.
- Leedy, D. & Omrod, J. E. (2005). *Practical Research: Planning and Design* 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, Ohio; Memill Prentice Hall.
- M.C. Namara. (2009). *Academic leadership in nursing*.UCD Health Sciences Centre, Dublin, Ireland
- McLeod, J. (2014) Attitudes & behavior. *Journal of psychology*. Manchester University. The UK.
- Mugenda, O. & Mugenda, A. (1999). *Research Methods: Quantitative & Qualitative approaches* revised 2003—African Center for Technology Studies; Nairobi.
- Mugenda, O. & Mugenda, A. (2003). *Research Methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*, Nairobi: Africa Centre for Technology Studies.
- Ninomiya, A. (2003). Access to Education among the Maasai in Tanzania; Geneva. UNISEF.
- Polit, D. et al. (1997). *Essentials of Nursing Research Methods; appraisal and utilization*. J.B.Lippin Cott Company. Philadelphia.
- Posse, R., & Melgosa, J. (2002). *For raising your child*. Madrid: Editorial Safeliz.
- Rothestein, R. (2004). Class and schools use social economic and educational reforms to close the white and black achievement gap. Economic Policy Institute, USA
- Saila, T. & Chamundeswari, S. (2014). *Development of socioeconomic background scale*. ISSN:2347-3215, Vol.2 No.12.
- Sarigiani, P. (1990). Self-image and educational plans of adolescents from two contrasting communities. *Journal of consulting and clinical psychology*, San Francisco.
- Steinberg I, et al. (1992). Ethnic differences in adolescent achievement; An ecological perspective. *American psychology*. vol.47, 723-729.
- Zehri, C. and Abdelbaki, A. (2013). Influence of parental occupation and level of Education on academic performance of Accounting students in Nigeria. *International open journal of Economics*. Vol.1
- Boniface—2017—Influence of Parental Occupation and Level of Educ.pdf*. (n.d.). Retrieved January 16, 2024, from <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/234675962.pdf>
- ResearchWap. (n.d.). *INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL STATUS ON STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOL*. Research Project Topics, Topics Ideas and Research Materials. Retrieved January 16, 2024, from <https://researchwap.org/education/prgXyJmDmdqkhA>
- Wilberforce—INFLUENCE OF PARENTS' SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS ON PUP.pdf*. (n.d.). Retrieved January 17, 2024, from <https://backend.kab.ac.ug/server/api/core/bitstreams/c6258bee-a24d-428b-82b4-cdb4a796e356/content>

### Publisher details.

#### SJC PUBLISHERS COMPANY LIMITED



**Category: Non-Government & Non-profit Organisation**

**Contact: +256775434261(WhatsApp)**

**Email: [admin@sjpublisher.org](mailto:admin@sjpublisher.org), [info@sjpublisher.org](mailto:info@sjpublisher.org) or [studentsjournal2020@gmail.com](mailto:studentsjournal2020@gmail.com)**

**Website: <https://sjpublisher.org>**

**Location: Wisdom Centre Annex, P.O. BOX. 113407 Wakiso, Uganda, East Africa.**