# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN THE LAST 5 YEARS IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF KAYUNGA DISTRICT IN UGANDA. A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY.

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## ABSTRACT:

### Background:

Academic achievement can be defined as excellence in all academic disciplines, in class as well as extracurricular activities. It includes excellence in sports, behavior, confidence, communication skills, punctuality, assertiveness, Arts, Culture, and the like.
The study aims to analyze the student's academic performance in the last 5 years in selected secondary schools of Kayunga district in Uganda.

### Methodology:

In this study, the researcher used a descriptive survey design, used both qualitative and quantitative research methods. study population of 211 respondents included the DEO, head teachers, teachers, and Students.

### Results:

60% of the headteachers strongly disagreed that Schools in our district have been ranked among the top schools in the country in terms of academic performance.100% of the headteachers disagreed that there have been few students scoring Division 9 in most secondary schools for the past 10 years. 78% of the teachers disagreed that schools have had very many numbers of students scoring Division 1 for the past 5 years. 88% of the students disagreed that most students who complete the Advanced level have had a chance of obtaining government sponsorships in different public universities.

### Conclusion:

Schools in Kayunga district have had very few numbers of students scoring Division 1 for the past 5 years; many students were scoring Division 9 in most secondary schools for the past 10 years; schools in the district have been ranked among the least performing schools in the country in terms of academic performance.

### Recommendation:

School managers should adverse means to improve academic performance, especially poor grades. For example, staff motivation, student motivation, remedial teaching, and constant supervision.

## BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY.

Academic achievement can be defined as excellence in all academic disciplines, in class as well as in extracurricular activities which includes excellence in sports, behavior, confidence, communication skills, punctuality, assertiveness, Arts, Culture, and the like, (Thornton, 2015). The academic performance of students is a key feature in education and is considered to be the center around which the whole education revolves, The Academic performance of students determines the success or failure of any academic institution., (Narad and Abdullah 2016). The academic performance of students has a direct impact on the socio-economic development of a country (Malik and Signh, 2016). Academic performance serves as a bedrock for knowledge acquisition and the development of skills (Farooq et al, 2011). Motivation affects student academic performance. While some students are naturally enthusiastic about their learning, many of them need to be motivated and inspired by the instructors. In 2022 out of 1006 in Kayunga District, only 96 students came in Division 1,189 students came in Division 2, 203 students came in Division 3, 210 came in Division 4, and 313 students in Division 9. This has been the same trend for the past 5 years. Thus, it is evident that there are many students in division 9 (failures) compared to other grades which is an alarming situation. The study aims to analyze the student's academic performance in the last 5 years in selected secondary schools of Kayunga district in Uganda.

## METHODOLOGY.

### Study Design.

In this study, the researcher used a descriptive survey design. In here, information is collected by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals. Therefore, the researcher used both questionnaires and interview schedules to collect data. The researcher used quantitative research methods. The quantitative technique was used to analyze statistical data

from the questionnaire in the form of frequency counts and percentages. A quantitative method was used on data from questionnaires.

### Information Sources.

The researcher used both primary and secondary information sources during the study. Secondary sources are documented information which includes textbooks, journals, dissertations, internet sources, and magazines while primary sources include information the researcher used from experience, personal analysis,

observation, and constructed research instruments like questionnaires.

### Study Population.

In this research, the study population included DEO, head teachers, teachers, and Students. These are the key people involved in the running of schools. The population of the study is shown in table 1.

**Table 1: Respondents that the researcher used in the Study.**

| Category of Respondents | N | | | Sample n (Solven's formula) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | F | M | Total | $n = \dfrac{N}{1(1+Ne^2)}$ |
| DEO | 00 | 01 | 01 | 01 |
| Headteachers | 02 | 08 | 10 | 05 |
| TEACHERS | | | | |
| A | 8 | 12 | 20 | 07 |
| B | 11 | 9 | 20 | 07 |
| C | 9 | 11 | 20 | 07 |
| D | 12 | 8 | 20 | 07 |
| E | 10 | 10 | 20 | 07 |
| STUDENTS | | | | |
| A | 7 | 13 | 20 | 07 |
| B | 9 | 11 | 20 | 07 |
| C | 10 | 10 | 20 | 07 |
| D | 7 | 13 | 20 | 07 |
| E | 12 | 8 | 20 | 07 |
| Total | 97 | 114 | 211 | 10 |

### Sample, Sampling Techniques, and Sample Size.

The researcher used purposive sampling techniques to select head teachers and DEO since they are the ones that deal with school management and are therefore vast with the information on teacher absenteeism. Purposive sampling means that the researcher chooses respondents

that he/she believes would be able to provide him/her with important information (Amin, 2005). A simple random sampling technique was used to select teachers because there were many. Simple random sampling is the type of sampling that provides equal chances for every member of the population to be included in the study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). Therefore, the use of random sampling gave all teachers and students an equal chance of being selected to participate in the study.

**Table 2 shows the sample size and sampling techniques.**

| Category of Respondents | N | | S | Sampling Technique |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | F | M | | |
| DEO | 00 | 01 | 01 | Purposive sampling |
| Headteachers | 02 | 08 | 10 | Purposive sampling |
| Teachers | 64 | 236 | 100 | Simple random sampling |
| Students | 300 | 300 | 100 | Simple random sampling |
| Total | 366 | 545 | 211 | |

### Data Collection Instruments.

The instruments that the researcher employed to gather information included questionnaires and structured interviews.

### Questionnaires.

In this study, both self-developed structured and semi-structured questions were used. Questionnaires were used because they ensure confidentiality of the responses, they are time-saving and they are easy to use on a large population. Questionnaires were self-developed and administered by Headteachers, teachers, and students.

### Interview Guide.

An interview guide was followed to reduce bias and maintain consistency. An interview was conducted to get more detailed information that respondents may have not included in the questionnaire. Questions to be asked were structured and the researcher used observation methods to gauge the reactions of the respondents. Only DEO and head teachers were interviewed since they are always busy and may have limited time. The researcher moved with a book and when the interviewees were responding to the questions, he was noting the answers down.

### Procedure for Data Collection.

The researcher designed data collection instruments and reviewed them with the supervisor. The researcher got an introductory letter from the Dean School of Graduate Studies of Kampala University, Uganda that he presented for authorization to gather data. Initially, a pilot study was conducted in one school that is not part of the targeted schools to guarantee the validity and reliability of data collection instruments. The researcher then asked for authorization from the head teachers of the selected schools to gather information. Before this, a good relationship was established by explaining to the respondents the intention of the study. After, the researcher gave out questionnaires to the respondents. After respondents had completed filling the questionnaires the researcher gathered them. He thereafter made arrangements with interviewees on the time they were free such that interviews could be administered. While conducting the interview, the researcher wrote down the major points which was used later in data analysis.

### Quality/ ErrorControl.

The phrase control in research is employed to refer to the prohibition of experimental situations (Kothari, 2013). The researcher avoided bias by using two methods of data collection. i.e. questionnaire and interview to promote quality information for the research. To guarantee data quality, the researcher edited all the filled questionnaires and double-checked the data carefully to remove all the disparities.

### Validity.

Validity is the magnitude to which the instrument quantifies what it is designed to measure (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). To safeguard validity, data collection instruments were shared with the supervisor and pre-tested for precision before applying them in the study. The researcher ensured that the instruments were relevant and would measure what they were intended to measure. Therefore, for this study, the researcher consulted the supervisor to determine whether the questionnaire and interview guides were applicable before proceeding with data collection.

### Reliability.

Reliability is how consistent a research instrument is. It is the degree of consistency displayed in a study. Reliability implies the dependability of an instrument to get data. Specifically, reliability is the consistent results that an instrument yields when the unit being quantified has remained the same (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). To ensure the reliability of the study, the elements on the questionnaire were assessed for uniformity and honesty in their responses from a pilot study by different. The researcher also picked up schools without personal preference. The researcher also designed questionnaires in an easy and understandable language appropriate for the respondents.

### Strategy for Data Processing, Analysis and Interpretation.

Data analysis is scrutinizing what the researcher has collected in a survey or experiment and making decisions. It involves unveiling hidden information, eliciting important variables, discovering any irregularities, and testing any fundamental assumptions. Data processing, analysis, and interpretation were accompanied by the objectives of the study and the research questions. Data collected was arranged following classifications of the respondents, edited, and coded for accuracy and completeness of the information given. Numerical data from the questionnaires were analyzed by frequencies and percentages and presented in tables and graphs for data interpretation. Descriptive data from interviews were analyzed besides that from the questionnaires.

### Ethical Consideration.

The researcher got information from respondents after seeking their consent to be used in the study. The researcher clarified to the informants the purpose of the study and ensured the confidentiality of the information given. The information obtained was only

employed in educational objectives. The names of the respondents were not included in the dissertation to enhance confidentiality. This helped the researcher to get valid and reliable information since respondents were assured of confidentiality. The respondents were made aware that they could withdraw from the study if they did not feel comfortable without being coerced.

**RESULTS.**

**Demographic characteristics of the respondents.**

**Table 3: Respondents' Gender.**

| Category | Frequency(f) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Male | 114 | 54.0 |
| Females | 97 | 46.0 |
| Total | 211 | 100 |

*Source*: **Primary data**

From Table 3, 54.0% of the respondents were male whereas 46.0% were females. This indicates that there are more males compared to females in the entire population of secondaryschools in the Kayunga district.

**Table 4: Respondents' Age.**

| Category | Frequency(f) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Below 20 | 84 | 39.8 |
| 20-30 | 72 | 34.1 |
| 31-40 | 47 | 22.3 |
| 41-50 | 08 | 3.8 |
| Total | 211 | 100 |

*Source*: **Primary data**

From Table 4, the majority of the respondents (39.8%) were below 20 years of age. This wasfollowed by 34.1% who were between 20 and 30 years of age. 22.3% were between 31 and 40years of age whereas the least number of respondents (3.8%) were above 50 years of age. An indication that the majority of the respondents were below 20 years of age because they were students.

**Table 5: Respondents' marital status.**

| Category | Frequency(f) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Married | 82 | 38.9 |
| Divorced | 02 | 1.0 |
| Separated | 7 | 3.3 |
| Widowed | 04 | 1.9 |
| Single | 116 | 54.9 |
| Total | 211 | 100 |

*Source*: **Primary data**

From Table 5, the majority of the respondents (54.9%) were single. This was followed by 38.9% who were married, 3.3% had separated 1.9 were widowed whereas the least number ofrespondents (1.0%) were divorced. This means that since the majority were students that is the justification for a higher percentage of those below 20 years. The second largest category was composed of married respondents because they were teachers and with families.

**Table 6: Respondents' educational level.**

| Category | Frequency (f) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Diploma holders | 61 | 28.9 |
| Graduate Degree holders | 46 | 21.8 |
| Masters Degree holders | 04 | 1.9 |
| Others | 100 | 47.4 |
| Total | 211 | 100 |

*Source*: **Primary data**

From Table 6, the majority of the respondents (47.4) had other qualifications since they were students, this was followed by 28.9% who were diploma holders, 21.8% were Graduate Degree holders and 1.9% were master's degree holders. Others with the highest percentage is an indicator that most respondents were students with no professional qualifications. Thus, the above figure indicates that since the majority of the respondents were students, that is the major reason why the highest percentage is on other qualifications.

**Table 7: Headteacher's responses on students' academic performance for the last 5 years in selected secondary schools of Kayunga District in Uganda.**

| Item | SA f | SA % | A f | A % | UD F | UD % | D f | D % | SD f | SD % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Schools have had very many numbers of students scoring Division 1 for the past 5 years. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 8 | 80 | 2 | 20 |
| There have been few students scoring Division 9 in most secondary schools for the past 10 years. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 10 | 100 | - | - |
| Schools in our district have been ranked among the top schools in the country in terms of academic performance. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4 | 40 | 6 | 60 |
| Teachers have been motivated to ensure academic excellence. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 8 | 80 | 2 | 20 |
| Most students who complete the Advanced level have had a chance to obtain government sponsorships in different public universities. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 7 | 70 | 3 | 30 |

*Source: primary data*

Responses from Table 7 indicate that 80% of the headteachers disagreed that schools have had very many numbers of students scoring Division 1 for the past 5 years. This was followed by 20% of the same respondents who strongly disagreed. In addition to the above, 100% of the headteachers disagreed that there have been few students scoring Division 9 in most secondary schools for the past 10 years.

60% of the headteachers strongly disagreed that Schools in our district have been ranked among the top schools in the country in terms of academic performance. This was followed by 40% of the same respondents who disagreed. Furthermore, 80% of the headteachers disagreed that teachers have been motivated to ensure academic excellence. This was 20% of the same respondents who strongly disagreed. Finally, 70% of the respondents disagreed that most students who complete the Advanced level have had a chance of obtaining government sponsorships in different public universities. 30% of the same respondents also strongly disagreed.

**Table 8: Teacher's responses on students' academic performance for the last 5 years in selected secondary schools of Kayunga District in Uganda.**

| Item | SA | | A | | UD | | D | | SD | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | F | % | f | % | F | % | f | % | F | % |
| Schools have had very many numbers of students scoring Division 1 for the past 5years. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 78 | 78 | 22 | 22 |
| There have been few students scoring Division9 in most secondary schools for the past 10 years. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 89 | 89 | 11 | 11 |
| Schools in our district have been ranked among the top schools in the country in terms ofacademic performance. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 34 | 34 | 66 | 66 |
| Teachers have been motivated to ensure academic excellence. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 58 | 58 | 42 | 42 |
| Most students who complete t h e Advanced level have had a chance to obtain governmentsponsorships in different public universities. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 77 | 77 | 23 | 23 |

*Source: primary data*

Responses from Table 8 indicate that 78% of the teachers disagreed that schools have had very many numbers of students scoring Division 1 for the past 5 years. This was followed by 22% of the same respondents who strongly disagreed. In addition to the above, 89% of the teachers disagreed that there have been few students scoring Division 9 in most secondary schools for the past 10 years. This was followed by 11% of the same respondents who strongly disagreed. 66% of the teachers strongly disagreed that Schools in our district have been ranked among the top schools in the country in terms of academic performance. This was followed by 34% of the same respondents who disagreed. Furthermore, 58% of the teachers disagreed that teachers have been motivated to ensure academic excellence. This was 42% of the same respondents who strongly disagreed. Finally, 77% of the respondents disagreed that most students who complete the Advanced level have had a chance of obtaining government sponsorships in different public universities. 23% of the same respondents also strongly disagreed.

**Table 9: Students' responses on students' academic performance for the last 5 years in selected secondary schools of Kayunga District in Uganda.**

| Item | SA | | A | | UD | | D | | SD | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | F | % | f | % | F | % | f | % | F | % |
| Schools have had very many numbers ofstudents scoring Division 1 for the past 5 years. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 61 | 61 | 39 | 39 |
| There have been few students scoring Division9 in most secondary schools for the past 10 years. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 92 | 92 | 8 | 8 |
| Schools in our district have been ranked among the top schools in the country in terms ofacademic performance. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 65 | 65 | 35 | 35 |
| Teachers have been motivated to ensure academic excellence. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 72 | 72 | 28 | 28 |
| Most students who complete t h e Advanced level have had a chance to obtain government sponsorships in different public universities. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 88 | 88 | 12 | 12 |

*Source: primary data*

Responses from Table 9 indicate that 61% of the students disagreed that schools have had very many numbers of students scoring Division 1 for the past 5 years. This was followed by 39% of the same respondents who strongly disagreed. In addition to the above, 92% of the students disagreed that there have been few students scoring Division 9 in most secondary schools for the past 10 years. This was followed by 8% of the same respondents who strongly disagreed. 65% of the students disagreed that schools in our district have been ranked among the top schools in the country in terms of academic performance. This was followed by 35% of the

same respondents who strongly disagreed. Furthermore, 72% of the students disagreed that teachers have been motivated to ensure academic excellence. This was 28% of the same respondents who strongly disagreed. Finally, 88% of the respondents disagreed that most students who complete the Advanced level have had a chance of obtaining government sponsorships in different public universities. 12% of the same respondents also strongly disagreed. Students' academic performance in the last 5 years in selected secondary schools of Kayungadistrict in Uganda. The second objective was to analyze the student's academic performance in the last 5 years in selected secondary schools of the Kayunga district in Uganda. The study was tested on grades attained, school attendance, students' attitudes towards learning, conducive learning environment, and students' discipline. Results indicated that schools had very few students scoringDivision 1 for the past 5 years; many students were scoring Division 9 in most secondary schools for the past 10 years; schools in the district have been ranked among the least performing schools in the country in terms of academic performance; teachers have not been motivated to ensure academic excellence and that most students who complete Advanced level have had no chance of obtaining government sponsorships in different public universities.

## DISCUSSION.

Results indicated that schools had very few numbers of students scoring Division 1 for the past years; many students were scoring Division 9 in most secondary schools for the past 10 years; schools in the district have been ranked among the least performing schools in the country in terms of academic performance; teachers have not been motivated to ensure academic excellence and that most students who complete Advanced level have had no chance of obtaining government sponsorships in different public universities. In support of the above findings, Malik and Signh (2016) also argued that the academic performance of students has a direct impact on the socio-economic development of a country. Similarly, Farooq et al (2018), asserted that students' academic performance serves as a bedrock for knowledge acquisition and the development of skills.

## CONCLUSIONS.

Schools in Kayunga district have had very few numbers of students scoring Division 1 for the past 5 years; many students were scoring Division 9 in most secondary schools for the past 10 years; schools in the district have been ranked among the least performing schools in the country in terms of academic performance; teachers have not been motivated to ensure academic excellence and that most students who complete Advanced level have had no chance of obtaining government sponsorships in different public universities.

## RECOMMENDATION.

School managers should adverse means to improve academic performance, especially poor grades. For example, staff motivation, student motivation, remedial teaching, and constant supervision.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.

**DEO:** District Education Officer.

## SOURCE OF FUNDING.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST.

No conflict of Interest.

## AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY.

Gasiwo Moses Magoola is a student of a master of arts in education management and administration at Kampala University.

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