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Socioeconomic Determinants of Academic Performance: The Influence of Parental Education, Occupation, and Income on Secondary School Students in Kasese District, Uganda

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ABSTRACT

This study determined whether the socioeconomic background of parents leads to significant differences in students' academic performance in the secondary schools of Kitswamba and Rugendabara-Kikongo town councils, Kasese District. Objectives were to: examine parental education, assess parents' occupation, and establish how family income level influences academic performance. Social Darwinism and social conflict theories are what guided this study. The study adopted a cross-sectional design on 250 students and 5 head teachers. Data were collected using a questionnaire and an interview guide. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis. Table 5 suggests that mean scores for those with tertiary education (mean=2.15) were the highest while non-formal education (mean 1.42) had the lowest mean scores. The observed F=3.847 was large with a level of significance (p=0.010, p< 0.05). Therefore, hypothesis to the effect that parental educational level leads to significant differences. The mean scores for those in government civil service (mean=2.14) were highest followed by nongovernmental service (mean=2.13), and commercial and peasant farmers had the same mean (mean=2.11). However, the observed F=0.124 was low with the level of significance (p=0.946, p>0.05). Therefore, the hypothesis to the effect that parental occupation leads to significant differences was rejected. The results for guardians according to income showed that the income of the fathers has a more significant influence than that of the mothers. This is because the F=statistic (F=3.926) for the males was slightly higher (F=3.850) than that of females with a lower p-value (p=0.021) than that of females (p=0.023). Therefore, parental educational level is imperative for students' academic performance. The study recommends that the government of Uganda and schools should promote the education of parents in the country, promote children's education by emphasizing occupation of their parents, and promote the income of parents to support the education of children.

Keywords: Socioeconomic Background, Parental Education, Academic Performance, Parental Occupation, Kasese District, Uganda

INTRODUCTION

Education is globally accepted as the mirror of human civilization and the greatest equalizer of all people in society [1]. It is a human right that every human being should have access to and enjoy [2]; yet still, academic performance is seen as the major fruit and harvest of the learning process. Conditions in the socio-economic background of students are a crucial aspect in determining their performance. High socioeconomic background is what lays a firm foundation for better performance which is the main reason parents put their children in school [3]. This study is about the socio-economic background of parents on student's academic performance in Kitswamba and Rugendabara-Kikongo town councils in Kasese District. No state, church, home, institution, or society can grow beyond its education system [4]. Education is the only basic mechanism for enhancing the population quality of a nation. Childhood does not only affect the achievement and happiness of an individual, but also education shapes the labor force's quality and capacity for innovation and determines the potentiality of the

development of a nation [5]. That is why, World governments are at war to ensure that every student attains education and performs well academically in schools because education is the air that we breathe [6].

Good academic performance gives morale to teachers and other students. It promotes continuity of learning and motivates other learners to study and become better citizens. It helps learners to have low levels of hopelessness and worry in life; instead, they live on hope for the future as they have higher self-regard. However, it results from the level of parental socio-economic background in which students come from [7]. That is why; the government of Uganda recognizes and promotes family income schemes such as EMYOOGA, NAADS, and village SACCOs to enable parents to provide for the learning of their children.

Therefore, the introduction of UPE in 1997 and USE in 2007 was a strong effort to lessen the burden of education on parents and have every Ugandan student access education with ease and perform well in the schooling process [8] During the coronavirus lockdown, for instance, government supplied printed materials to homes and conducted teaching over the radio stations and on local televisions to enhance academic performance of learners [9]. To achieve this, policies including the abolition of school fees expansion and improvement of the provision of infrastructure in schools, and increment in teachers' salaries, all aimed at creating a conducive environment in schools have been put in place [10]. TELA machinery has also been applied daily to curb teachers' absenteeism, late coming, and laziness to achieve better academic performance. Despite all such government efforts, the poor academic performance in Kitswamba and Rugendabara-Kikongo town councils' secondary schools worsened since 2016 and the outcry over this poor performance is now a concern of everyone in the community [8]. Meanwhile, a report by the Kasese District Education Officer (DEO) reveals that over 6,000 students failed promotional exams in 2019. According to UCE results of 2020, only 5 % of the candidates in the secondary schools of Kitswamba and Rugendabara-Kikongo town councils managed to get first grades. The blame for continuous failure has been put on teachers, pupils, school administrators, and sometimes the government but parents have often been left out. To address the problem, the study sought to examine the extent to which the socioeconomic background of parents influences students' academic performance in the two town councils of Rugendabara and Kitswamba respectively.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study used a cross-sectional research design. [11], submit that a cross-section design is useful in basic research because it examines the relationship between exposure and outcome in a defined population at a single point in time. The justification for this cross-section design is that it is flexible and provides opportunities for considering many different aspects of a problem in-depth at a particular time [12]. This study applied qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Also, the application of a cross-sectional study design was that it would allow the researcher to compare many different variables including age, gender, and educational level in relation to how socioeconomic background affects school involvement among secondary schools. The use of qualitative helped in capturing fresh statements from respondents and the quantitative research approach helped in counting or use of numerical figures while determining something.

Study Area

This study was conducted in the secondary schools of Kitswmba and Rugendabara-Kikongo town councils in Kasese district. Rugendabara Town Council is located along Fort-portal-Kasese Road, ten kilometers from Hiima Town Council along Fort-portal Kasese Road in Western Uganda, while Kitswamba Town Council is located five kilometers off Kasese-Fort-portal Road, branching off from Rugendabara-Kikongo town Council on the left. Five different secondary schools were sampled for this study. Taking these schools helped the researcher to achieve the relationship between socioeconomic background and students' academic performance.

Study population

The study population is all universal objects over which research is to be carried out. This involves the selection of people/objects that help to get the necessary data about the study [13]. For [14], population is the totality of persons or objects with which the study is concerned. [15], assert that population is "the complete set of individual, objects or measurements having some common observable characteristics." The population was a total of 1,112 senior to three students for the questionnaire survey and 5 head teachers for the interview guide. The students easily reported about their socio-economic background and academic performance while the head teachers supplemented their responses.

Table 1: Showing expected Respondents

Respondents	Target population	Population sample
Headteacher	***5***	***5***
Students	**1,107**	**286**
Total	**1,112**	**291**

Sample Size Determination

The sample size was 286 for the questionnaire survey was determined using the table by [16]. The sample of students from each school was determined by proportionate sampling to ensure proportionate representation. The proportionate sample has been calculated as follows:

Proportion Sample: $n_1 = \frac{\text{size of entire sample}}{\text{target population}} \times \text{sample size}$

For example, the sample for school A has been determined as follows:

$$n_1 = \frac{516}{1{,}112} \times 286 = 133$$

The sample size is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Sample Size

Category	Target population		Sample Size
School	Student	HM	
School A	515	1	133
School B	217	1	56
School C	116	1	30
School E	182	1	47
School F	77	1	20
Total	**1,112**		**286**

Source: Krejcie and Morgan (1970)

Sampling Technique

Sampling refers to the population a researcher uses to explain the size of the sample to be drawn and which method draws it and why [17]. In this case, the sample was selected using two sampling methods, these were: Simple random sampling and purposive sampling. On one hand, simple random sampling was applied to the students as they were selected randomly without considering any chronological order. Purposive sampling, on the other hand, was directed at specific individuals to get data on the phenomenon of interest. The application of this technique helps attain unbiased data.

Purposive Sampling Technique

A purposive sampling technique was employed on 5 particular head teachers as the study was both qualitative and quantitative while targeting those respondents who will give specific information. By applying Purposive sampling, the researcher was able to select a small number of cases which he is sure of getting enough information on the topic of study. In other words, purposive sampling helps in attaining the adequate and specific data required for the study.

Simple Random Sampling Technique

A simple random sampling technique was employed to cover students in different classes at the ordinary level. Using these sampling techniques, the research ensured that respondents were covered accordingly so that the study may generate the adequate data required. [18], submitted that researchers use sampling techniques to select the participants for their samples – these techniques help to minimize cost whilst maximizing general ability. The reason why simple random sampling was applied to parents is that this number of respondents is big and it saved time because every respondent would take a questionnaire and answer on his or her own time.

Data Collection Methods

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and these will include; questionnaire survey, and interview methods.

Instruments of Data Collection

The data was collected using different methods such as a questionnaire and interview guide.

Quality Control Methods

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

Validity of Instruments

Validity is the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences that are based on the research results. Validity is the degree to which the results obtained from the analysis of the data represent the phenomenon under study [19]. Pre-testing of instruments was carried out to establish their validity, to check on the content and the format of the

instruments to find out the relationship between scores contained using one or more other instruments to measure. 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 validity of the content. The validity of the questionnaires was determined by using the Content Validity Index (CVI) formula.

$$CVI = \frac{n}{N}$$

Where; n = items rated relevant

N = Total number of items

CVI = $\frac{44}{50}$ **= 0.88**

The CVI for the questionnaire was 0.88. The questionnaire was considered valid because the minimum validity index should be 0.70 [20]. However, the instruments were corrected to remove unworthy items.

Reliability of Instruments (Cronbach's alpha coefficient)

Reliability refers to the extent the instruments are consistent in measuring what they are expected to measure [11]. It was determined using Cronbach's alpha coefficient

$$\alpha = \frac{(\mathrm{K})(S2 - \sum S2)}{(\mathrm{S2})(\mathrm{k} - 1)}$$

Where **K** stands for the total number of items

S2-, variance in all items

S2**,** variance in individual items

The alpha coefficient for the 44 items is .839, suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency. A reliability coefficient of .70 or higher is considered "acceptable" in most social science research situations.

The researcher also used the expert judgment method in which he made use of the university supervisor and many other experienced lecturers in the faculty of education and the Directorate of Postgraduate Studies and Research.

Procedure of Data Collection

The researcher got an introductory letter from the School of Postgraduate Studies of Kampala International University Western Campus introducing the researcher to Kitswamba and Rugendabara-Kikongo town council authorities, seeking permission for the researcher to be allowed to conduct the study in the specific schools. Having been permitted, the researcher; immediately, went ahead to make the appointments to meet the respondents. The researcher prepared the questionnaires for distribution purposes. The research assistants were selected and oriented concerning the sampling and data collection procedures to be consistent in administering the questionnaires. The researcher and his research assistants requested the respondents to answer as objectively as possible and not to leave any option not answered. 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. The researcher checked the flow of questions in questionnaires and interviews to identify whether he would have problems interpreting 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 researcher and research assistants held a brief discussion with the respondents and explained to them the purpose of the study. On retrieval, all returned questionnaires were checked to see if they were all answered.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data obtained was analyzed using two methods of data analysis namely qualitative and quantitative methods. Data Analysis Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for data processing and analysis.

Quantitative Data

Quantitative data was compiled using the SPSS 24.0 computer package and was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics was in the form of frequencies and percentages. On the other hand, inferential statistics was in the form of Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) to establish variance in the performance of students according to socio-economic background characteristics.

Qualitative Data

The qualitative method used here was content analysis. It helped in the use of determining the relationship between the two variables socioeconomic background of parents and students' academic performance. The data generated was presented and interpreted based on themes that were derived from the sub-themes of the study objectives in the introductory chapter. The qualitative data was obtained from quotations and people's experiences.

Ethical Issues

The researcher ensured that the conduct of the study followed all the required research ethics. First, a letter from REC and DHDR was presented to the school authorities and permission was sought from the concerned officials of the secondary schools involved in the study. In addition, participation in this study was voluntary; and, a copy of the consent form document is attached to the appendices section. Respondents' names were not reflected in this study, to, further, ensure confidentiality. The schools where the respondents came from were not mentioned. More still, the protection of the rights and integrity of human participants was granted.

Limitations of the Study

The researcher envisaged several limitations that might be encountered while carrying out the study. First and foremost, the rigidity of some respondents was a great hindrance. Some people were inquisitive to provide the required data for this study as it involved touching parents' privacy. During data collection, however, the researcher briefed the respondents on the importance of the data being collected. To the students who feared for their parents' privacy, the researcher assured them of total confidentiality and tried to be as friendly as possible.

Secondly, some asked as to why specifically the researcher was interested in that particular field at that time. This, somehow, caused bias and respondent dishonesty, which was going to affect the quality of the data. During the exercise, however, the researcher explained thoroughly the value of reporting wholeheartedly and how the respondent directly would benefit from the research. On the other hand, the researcher envisaged that there might be inadequate time for data collection as the coverage area was wide and involved extensive qualitative explanations. This was solved by employing well-trained research assistants in data collection and how thoroughly interpreting the questionnaire for the respondents so that they could understand it very clearly. In the meantime, some respondents would think the research was conducted by a well-financed NGO that must pay them for giving out their heartfelt information. The researcher solved this by explaining the consent form to the respondents that there was no direct benefit from the study but that the response they gave was for study purposes and that it may be relied on by policymakers while implementing some programs that may be beneficial to the general public. It was also elaborating that the research was for study purposes and the significance of participating in it was elaborated clearly. In addition, there were various financial constraints. The researcher faced expenses for transport to travel to various parts of the vast two town councils whose schools are scattered in the hilly and rural areas; then, back to KIU to face the supervisor for corrections and clarity. Sometimes, the researcher could walk long distances on foot to collect data. Also, writing and printing out questionnaires was financially demanding. However, this was solved by mobilizing funds from different sources to make the project successful. Finally, the researcher had thought of using the documentary review but this was not used because some officials were too busy to give such documents. Besides, the researcher used questionnaire guides, which needed many interview transcriptions and coded data attached. This has not been possible because of the limited time at hand. Research responses from head teachers and students have been included in this research.

RESULTS

Response Rate

The proposed sample was 286 students for the questionnaire survey. However, appropriate data was obtained from 250 respondents. This was a response rate of 87.4% which was considered to be a very good response rate because according to [21], a response rate above 50% is sufficient in humanity studies. All the five head teachers that had been selected to provide interview data provided their responses.

Background Characteristics

This section presents details on the background characteristics of the respondents which are gender, age, and classes of the students that participated in the study. The data on the same is indicated in Table 3.

Table 3: Background Characteristics of the Respondents

Item	Categories	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	128	51.2
	Female	122	49.8
	Total	250	100.0
Age Categories	Below 14 years	47	18.8
	14 - 18 years	175	70.0
	Above 18 years	28	11.2
	Total	250	100.0
Class of the students	S.1	66	26.4
	S2	78	31.2
	S3	106	42.4
	Total	250	100.0

The data in Table 3 on gender of students revealed that a larger percentage (51.2%) was of males with the females being 49.8%. The data revealed that male students participated in the study more than females. Nonetheless, the responses were representative of both categories of students because even the percentage of females participating in the study was high. The data on age showed that the larger percentage (7.0%) of students was of those between 14-18 years followed by 18.8% that were below 14 years and 11.2% were above 18 years. The results suggest that students of different age categories participated in the study. Therefore, the results can be generalized to students of different age categories in the schools. The data on classes of students showed that the larger percentage (42.4%) was senior three students while 31.2% were senior two and 26.4% were senior ones'. The results suggest that students from different "O" level classes participated in the study. Thus, the results can be generalized to students of different "O" level classes.

Descriptive Results on Variables

The study variables are students' academic achievements the dependent variable and socio-economic background the independent variable. The descriptive results are in terms of descriptive statistics and qualitative explanations.

Table 4: Descriptive Results for Students' Academic Performance

Students' Academic Performance	Basic	Moderate	Outstanding	Mean
My performance in English is	13	193	44	2.12
	5.2	77.2	17.6	
My performance in Mathematics is	15	167	68	2.21
	6.0	66.8	27.2	
My performance in History is	17	115	118	2.40
	6.8	46.0	47.2	
My performance in Geography is	13	187	50	2.15
	5.2	74.8	20.0	
My performance in Physics is	105	87	58	1.81
	42.0	34.8	23.2	
My performance in Biology is	85	125	40	1.82
	34.0	50.0	16.0	
My performance in Chemistry is	122	95	33	1.64
	48.8	38.0	13.2	
My performance in Physical Education is	6	176	68	2.25
	2.4	70.4	27.2	
My performance in religious Studies is	11	136	103	2.37
	4.4	54.4	41.2	
My performance in Entrepreneurship is	10	187	53	2.17
	4.0	74.8	21.2	
My performance in Kiswahili is	6	173	71	2.26
	2.4	69.2	28.4	
My performance in optional Subjects is	7	199	44	2.15
	2.8	79.6	17.6	

The results in Table 4 show that the majority percentage (77.2%) of the students indicated that their performance in English was moderate while 17.6% indicated that it was outstanding and 5.2% revealed that it was basic. The mean = 2.15 close to two suggested that the performance in English was largely moderate. For performance in mathematics, the majority percentage (66.8%) of the students indicated that their performance was moderate 27.2% indicated that it was outstanding and 6.0% revealed that it was basic. The mean = 2.21 close to two suggested that the performance in Mathematics was largely moderate. Regarding performance in history, a larger percentage (47.2%) of the students indicated that their performance was outstanding while 46.0% indicated that it was moderate and 6.8% revealed that it was basic. The mean = 2.40 close to two suggested that the performance in history was largely moderate. Concerning performance in geography, the majority percentage (74.8%) of the students indicated that their performance was moderate while 20.0% indicated that it was outstanding and 5.2% revealed that it was basic. The mean = 2.15 close to two suggested that the performance in geography was largely moderate. Regarding performance in physics, a larger percentage (42.0%) of the students indicated that their performance was basic while 34.8% indicated that it was moderate and 23.2% revealed that it was outstanding. The mean = 1.81 close to two suggested that the performance in physics was largely moderate. Regarding performance in biology, a larger percentage (50.0%) of the students indicated that their performance was moderate while 3.40% indicated that it was basic and 16.0% revealed that it was outstanding. The mean = 1.82 close to two suggested that the performance in biology was largely moderate.

Concerning performance in chemistry, a larger percentage (48.8%) of the students indicated that their performance was basic while 38.4% indicated that it was moderate and 13.2% revealed that it was outstanding. The mean = 1.64 close to two suggested that the performance in chemistry was largely moderate. Regarding performance in physical education, the majority percentage (70.4%) of the students indicated that their performance was moderate 27.2% indicated that it was outstanding and 2.4% revealed that it was basic. The mean = 2.25 close to two suggested that the performance in physical education was largely moderate. Concerning performance in religious studies, a larger percentage (54.4%) of the students indicated that their performance was moderate while 41.2% indicated that it was outstanding and 4.4% revealed that it was basic. The mean = 2.37 close to two suggested that the performance in religious studies was largely moderate.

The results on performance in entrepreneurship, the majority percentage (74.8%) of the students indicated that their performance was basic while 4.0% indicated that it was moderate and 21.2% revealed that it was outstanding. The mean = 2.17 close to two suggested that the performance in entrepreneurship was largely moderate. With respect to performance in Kiswahili, the majority percentage (69.2%) of the students indicated that their performance was moderate 28.4% indicated that it was outstanding and 2.4% revealed that it was basic. The mean = 2.26 close to two suggested that the performance in Kiswahili was largely moderate.

Regarding performance in optional subjects, the majority percentage (79.6%) of the students indicated that their performance was moderate while 28.4% indicated that it was outstanding and 2.4% revealed that it was basic. The mean = 2.15 close to two suggested that the performance in the optional subject was largely moderate. To establish how overall students rated their academic performance, an average index was calculated for the 12 items measuring the same. The summary results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Summary Descriptive Results for Academic Performance

	Descriptive		Statistic	Std. Error
Students' Academic Performance	Mean		2.11	0.02
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	2.07	
		Upper Bound	2.15	
	5% Trimmed Mean		2.11	
	Median		2.08	
	Variance		0.10	
	Std. Deviation		0.31	
	Minimum		1.33	
	Maximum		2.92	
	Range		1.58	
	Interquartile Range		0.42	
	Skewness		0.36	0.15
	Kurtosis		-0.11	0.31

The summary results in Table 5 indicate a mean = 2.11 close to the median = 2.08 with a negative skew (skew = -0.11). With the mean close to the median, the results the results were normally distributed. The average mean also meant that the students rated their academic performance to be high. The low standard deviation = 0.31 also

suggested a normal distribution of the responses. The normal distribution of the results is also displayed by the normal curve in Figure 1 below.

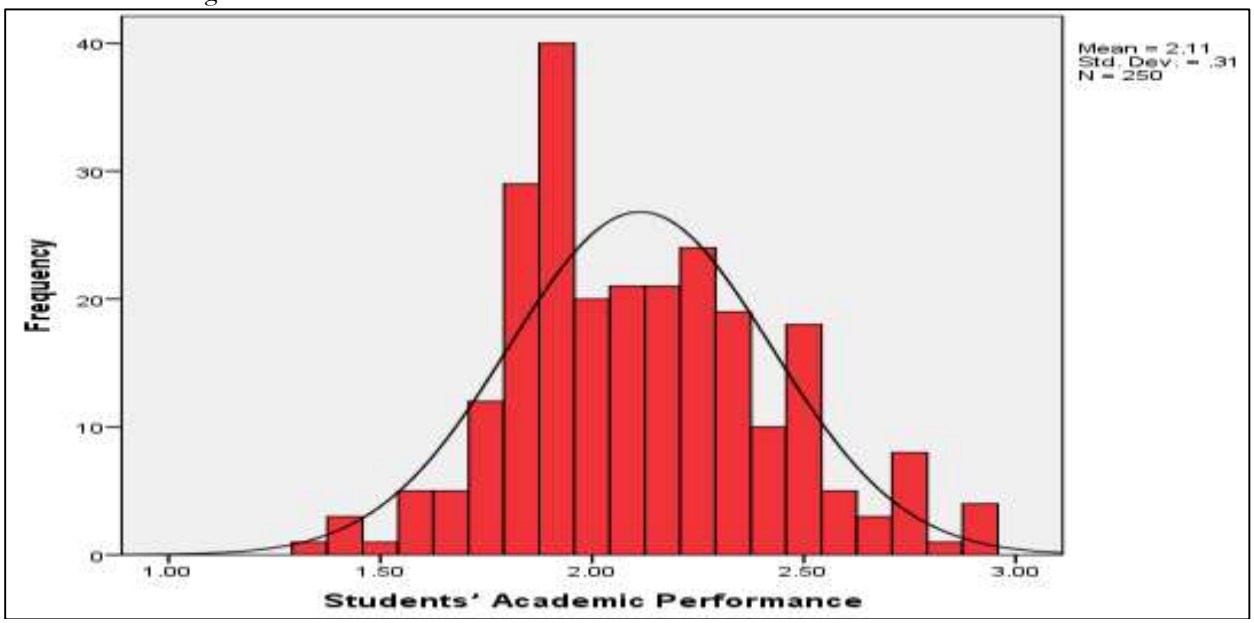

Figure 1: Histogram for Academic Performance

The histogram above (Figure 1) reveals that the teachers rated their academic performance as fair high (mean = 2.11). The standard deviation = 0.31 suggested that the results were normally distributed. This means that the results were appropriate and could be subjected to correlation and regression analyses.

To affirm the students' responses on their academic achievement, the views of the head teachers were sought using interviews'. In the interviews, the head teachers were asked to tell how they assessed the academic performance of students in their schools. The headteacher gave related responses as follows. For instance, Headteacher 1 stated;

> Generally, students' academic performance is not good. Most students fail to produce good results at the end of the secondary school education cycle. Most of the students who are regarded as successful pass in second and third grades with a good number in fourth grade and others failing. This has been consistent for a good number of years.

In agreement with the above, Headteacher 2 remarked;

> The performance of students in our third-world schools is not all that good. Only a few students try with the school getting few first grades but the majority of the students perform moderately in second and third grades. For instance, last year we were only able to get three first grades, 15 second grades, and 25 third grades out of 70 candidates that sat exams that year. The remaining students passed in grade four and others failed.

Further, head teacher 4 stated;

> The performance of students in this school is worrying. This is so because while many students sit exams very few attain first grades and a fair number come in second and third grades. There has been very limited progress in the improvement of the performance of the school despite the high effort we invest in the school.

Consistent with the above, head teacher 5 said;

> The performance of students in this school is just fair. Taking an example of the Uganda National Certificate of Education of last year, only six students passed in grade one. Surprisingly, this was the year the students performed very highly because of the serious effort we had been putting in. The performance of the previous years has been very low.

Overall, the views above suggest the performance of the students in the schools was moderate. This is because the responses suggest that very few students passed in grade one while the majority passed in grades two and three. These findings concurred with those of students who indicated that the performance of students was moderate.

Parental Educational Level and Students' Academic Performance

The first objective sought to establish the influence of parental educational level on students' academic performance. Education was considered in the form of non-formal, primary education, secondary education, and tertiary. The results on the same include descriptive and inferential. The results follow here under.

Level of Education of My Father/ Male Guardian

The first question on the parent's education level concerned the level of education of the father or male guardian. The levels of education considered were non-formal, primary education, secondary education, and tertiary levels. The descriptive results on the same were as follows:

Table 6: Level of Education of Father/ Male Guardian

Education Level	Frequency	Percent
Non-formal	2	0.8
Primary education	37	14.8
Secondary education	139	55.6
Tertiary	72	28.8
Total	250	100.0

The results in Table 6 show that the larger percentage (55.6%) of the father or male guardians had secondary education followed by those who had tertiary education (14.8%), then those who had primary education (14.8%), and the least group (0.8%) had non-formal education. To confirm whether the level of education of the father or male guardian leads to significant differences in students' academic performance, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was carried out. The results on the same are presented in Table 7 below.

Table 7: ANOVA Results for Father or Male Guardian Education and Students' Academic Performance

Age Group	Size	Mean	Std	F	P
Non formal	2	1.42	0.01	3.847	0.010
Primary education	37	2.12	0.32		
Secondary education	139	2.10	0.29		
Tertiary	72	2.15	0.32		
Total	250	2.11	0.31		

The results in Table 7 suggest that the mean scores for those with tertiary education (mean = 2.15) were highest followed by those with primary education (mean = 2.12), then those with secondary education (mean = 2.10) with the least being that non-formal education (mean 1.42) had the lowest mean scores. The observed F = 3.847 was large with a level of significance ($p = 0.010$, $p < 0.05$). This suggested that the variations in students' performance by education of father male guardian were significant. Therefore, the hypothesis to the effect that parental educational level leads to significant differences in students' academic performance in secondary schools was supported. Thus, children whose parents had higher levels of education were more likely to perform than those of lower education.

Level of Education of my mother/ Female Guardian

The first question on parent's education concerned the level of education of the mother or female guardian. The levels of education considered were non-formal, primary education, secondary education, and tertiary levels. The descriptive results on the same were as follows:

Table 8: Level of Education of Mother/ Female Guardian

Education Level	Frequency	Percent
Non-formal	4	1.6
Primary education	40	16.0
Secondary education	139	55.6
Tertiary	67	26.8
Total	250	100.0

The results in Table 8 show that the larger percentage (55.6%) of the mother or female guardians had secondary education followed by those who had tertiary education (26.8%), then those who had primary education (16.0%), and the least group (1.6%) had non-formal education. To confirm whether the level of education of the mother or female guardian leads to significant differences in students' academic performance, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was carried out. The results on the same are presented in Table 7.

Table 9: ANOVA Results for Education of the Mother or Female Guardian and Students' Academic Performance

Age Group	Size	Mean	Std	F	P
Non formal	4	1.50	0.23	6.453	0.000
Primary education	40	2.11	0.31		
Secondary education	139	2.10	0.29		
Tertiary	67	2.17	0.31		
Total	250	2.11	0.31		

The results in Table 9 suggest that the mean scores for those with tertiary education (mean = 2.17) were highest followed by those with primary education (mean = 2.11), then those with secondary education (mean = 2.10) with the least being that non-formal education (mean 1.50) had the lowest mean scores. The observed F = 3.847 was large with a level of significance ($p = 0.010$, $p < 0.05$). This suggested that the variations in students' academic performance by education of mother or female guardian were significant. Therefore, the hypothesis to the effect that parental educational level leads to significant differences in students' academic performance in secondary schools was supported. Thus, children whose parents had higher levels of education were more likely to perform than those of lower education. However, the results for parents or guardians according to sex showed that the education of the mothers has a more significant influence than that of the mothers. This is because the F= statistic (F = 6.453) for the females was higher (F= 3.847) than for the males with a lower p-value (p = 0.000) than that of males (p = 0.010). To ascertain the views of head teachers about the influence of parents' education level on the performance of students, the head teachers were asked to give their opinion on the influence of parents' education

level on the performance of their children. Several related responses were given and followed here. Headteacher 2 said;

> Children of parents with high educational levels have the motivation to study hard. This is because their parents act as role models besides motivating them to study and become successful. Such parents provide scholastic materials because they know the value of education. In addition, such parents struggle hard to pay school fees in time even when their economic standing is not good because they do not want their children to be disrupted by sending them home for fees. This enables the learners to concentrate at school.

In agreement with the above, head teacher 3 said;

> Parents who are educated have higher educational expectations from their children. Therefore, they give them appropriate behavioral guidance and make sure they provide them with sufficient scholastic materials to enable them to learn effectively. Therefore, the education of the parent enhances academic performance. In addition, some educated parents support students to do their academic work such as checking their school activities and being in touch with the school to follow the progress of their children.

Consistent with the other head teachers, Headteacher 5 expounded that;

> Parents who are educated facilitate the learning of their children. They provide appropriate learning environments like accessing their children's light, a table, and a chair at home. Such parents also ensure that their children have time to study and revise their books. Above all, educated parents pay fees on time, provide school requirements, and motivate their children to perform well.

The views above from the head teachers showed that parents who were educated effectively supported the education of their children. This finding is consistent with the ANOVA test results which revealed that the variations in students' performance by education of the parents or guardians were significant. Therefore, the educational background of the parents or guardians leads to significant differences in the academic performance of the children.

Parent's Occupation and Students' Academic Performance

The second objective sought to establish the influence of parental occupation on students' academic performance. The occupation was considered in the form of non-formal, primary occupation, secondary occupation, and tertiary. The results on the same include descriptive and inferential. The results follow here under.

Occupation of Father/ Male Guardian

The first question on the parent's occupation concerned the occupation of the father or male guardian. The forms of occupation considered were peasant farmer, commercial farmer, government civil service, and non-government service. The descriptive results on the same were as follows:

Table 10: Level of Occupation of Father/ Male Guardian

Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Peasant Famer	134	53.6
Commercial farmer	73	29.2
Government Civil Service	41	16.4
Non-government service	2	0.8
Total	250	100.0

The results in Table 10 show that the larger percentage (53.6%) of the fathers or male guardians was of peasants followed by commercial farmers (29.2%), then those who were in government civil service (14.8%), and the least group (0.8%) were in non-government service. To confirm whether the occupation of the father or male guardian leads to significant differences in students' academic performance, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was carried out. The results on the same are presented in Table 11.

Table 11: ANOVA Results for Father or Male Guardian Occupation and Students' Academic Performance

Occupation	Size	Mean	Std	F	P
Peasant famer	134	2.11	0.32	0.124	0.946
Commercial farmer	73	2.11	0.31		
Government Civil Service	41	2.14	0.28		
Non-government service	2	2.13	0.29		
Total	250	2.11	0.31		

The results in Table 11 suggest that the mean scores for those in government civil service (mean = 2.14) were highest followed by nongovernmental service (mean = 2.13), and commercial and peasant farmers had the same mean (mean = 2.11). However, the observed F = 0.124 was low with the level of significance ($p = 0.946$, $p > 0.05$). This suggested that the variations in students' performance by occupation of the father or male guardian were

insignificant. Therefore, the hypothesis to the effect that parental occupation leads to significant differences in students' academic performance in secondary schools was rejected. Thus, children's academic performance was not dependent on the parents' occupation.

Occupation of my mother/ Female Guardian

The second question on parent's occupation concerned the occupation of the mother or female guardian. The forms of occupation considered were peasant farmer, commercial farmer, government civil service, and non-government service. The descriptive results on the same were as follows:

Table 12: Level of Occupation of Mother/ Female Guardian

Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Peasant Famer	149	59.6
Commercial farmer	65	26.0
Government Civil Service	33	13.2
Non-government service	3	1.2
Total	250	100.0

The results in Table 12 show that the larger percentage (59.6%) of the mothers or female guardians was of peasants followed by commercial farmers (26.0%), then those who were in government civil service (13.2%), and the least group (1.2%) were in non-government service. To confirm whether the occupation of the mother or female guardian leads to significant differences in students' academic performance, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was carried out. The results on the same are presented in Table 13.

Table 13: ANOVA Results for Mother or Female Guardian and Students' Academic Performance

Occupation	Size	Mean	Std	F	P
Peasant Famer	149	2.12	0.32	0.653	0.582
Commercial farmer	65	2.12	0.31		
Government Civil Service	33	2.05	0.26		
Non-government service	3	2.25	0.30		
Total	250	2.11	0.31		

The results in Table 13 suggest that the mean scores for those in non-government service (mean = 2.25) were highest followed by peasant and commercial farmers respectively (mean = 2.12), and the lowest group was those in government service (mean = 2.05). However, the observed F = 0.653 was low with the level of significance (p = 0.653, p > 0.05). This suggested that the variations in students' performance by occupation of the mother or female guardian were insignificant. Therefore, the hypothesis to the effect that parental occupation leads to significant differences in students' academic performance in secondary schools was rejected. Thus, children's academic performance was not dependent on the parents' occupation.

To find out how the head teachers assessed the contribution of the occupation of the parents or guardians on students' academic achievement, the head teachers were asked, to give their comments on the performance of children whose parents were in formal employment, peasantry, or business. The head teachers gave various varied responses which followed. Headteacher 1 stated;

> The kind of job determines support for children by parents which influences academic achievement. For instance, those in formal service tend to be well educated hence knowing the meaning of education hence, such parents support their children which enhances their academic achievement. However, majority of the parents may find it hard to fully support their children while some business people are interested in sustaining their businesses that support the children especially when the businesses are small.

On the other hand, head teacher 3 said;

> These days one job might not matter because people are interested in the education of their children. However, those in formal employment have a higher probability of giving more support to their children including checking their school activities because they are expected to be well educated. On the other hand, the business and peasants may largely not understand schoolwork.

Further, head teacher 4 remarked; "Those in formal employment such as teachers, NGO workers, and other government workers are more likely to support their children and provide them sufficient scholastic materials. This might positively influence the academic achievement of children." The responses above reveal that those in formal employment are more likely to influence the academic performance of students than others. However, it was also pointed out that this might matter because these days all people are interested in the education of their children. This means that the effect of the nature of the job on the academic performance of the children is not certain. This finding to extent concurs with the ANOVA test results which revealed that variations in students' performance by occupation of the parents or guardians were insignificant.

Family Income Level

Family income level was considered in terms of the income of the father or male guardian and the income of the mother or female guardian. The results follow.

Level of Income of my Father/ Male Guardian

The first question on the parent's income level concerned the level of income of the father or male guardian. The levels of income considered were up to 198, 900 per month (low-income level), up to 343,583 per month (middle-income level), and above 343,583 per month (high-income). The descriptive results on the same were as follows:

Table 14: Level of Income of Father/ Male Guardian

Income Level	Frequency	Percent
Up to 198, 900 per month (low-income level)	85	34.0
Up to 343,583 per month (middle-income level)	84	33.6
Above 343,583 per month (high income)	81	32.4
Total	250	100.0

The results in Table 14 show that the larger percentage (34.0%) of the father or male guardians had up to 198, 900 per month (low-income level) while 33.4% had up to 343,583 per month (middle-income level), and32.4 had up to 343,583 per month (middle-income level). To confirm whether the level of income of the father or male guardian leads to significant differences in students' academic performance, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was carried out. The results on the same are presented in Table 15.

Table 15: ANOVA Results for Father or Male Guardians Income and Students' Academic Performance

Age Group	Size	Mean	Std	F	P
Up to 198, 900 per month (low-income level)	85	2.04	0.31	3.926	0.021
Up to 343,583 per month (middle-income level)	84	2.16	0.30		
Above 343,583 per month (high income)	81	2.14	0.31		
Total	250	2.11	0.32		

The results in Table 15 suggest that the mean scores for those with up to 343,583 per month (middle-income level) (mean = 2.16) were highest followed by those with above 343,583 per month (high-income) (mean = 2.14), and least category (mean = 2.04) was of those with income of up to 198, 900 per month (low-income level). The observed F = 3.847 was large with a level of significance ($p = 0.010$, $p < 0.05$). This suggested that the variations in students' performance by income of father or male guardians were significant. Therefore, the hypothesis to the effect that parental income level parental income level leads to significant differences in students' academic performance in secondary schools was supported. Thus, children whose parents had higher levels of income were more likely to perform than those of lower income.

Level of Income of my mother/ Female Guardian

The first question on parent's income concerned the level of income of the mother or female guardian. The levels of income considered were up to 198, 900 per month (low-income level), up to 343,583 per month (middle-income level), and above 343,583 per month (high-income). The descriptive results on the same were as follows:

Table 16: Level of Income of Mother/ Female Guardian

Income Level	Frequency	Percent
Up to 198, 900 per month (low-income level)	82	32.8
Up to 343,583 per month (middle-income level)	91	36.4
Above 343,583 per month (high income)	77	30.8
Total	250	100.0

The results in Table 16 show that the larger percentage (36.0%) of the father or male guardians had up to 343,583 per month (middle-income level), 32.8% had up to 198, 900 per month (low-income level), and 30.8% were above 343,583 per month (high income). To confirm whether the level of income of the mother or female guardian leads to significant differences in students' academic performance, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was carried out. The results on the same are presented in Table 17.

Table 17: ANOVA Results for Income of the mother or Female Guardian and Students' Academic Performance

Age Group	Size	Mean	Std	F	P
Up to 198, 900 per month (low-income level)	82	2.04	0.30	3.850	0.023
Up to 343,583 per month (middle-income level)	91	2.16	0.31		
Above 343,583 per month (high income)	77	2.14	0.31		
Total	82	2.11	0.31		

The results in Table 17 suggest that the mean scores for those with up to 343,583 per month (middle-income level) (mean = 2.16) were highest followed by those with above 343,583 per month (high-income) (mean = 2.14), and least category (mean = 2.04) was of those with income of to 198, 900 per month (low-income level). The observed F = 3.850 was large with a level of significance ($p = 0.023$, $p < 0.05$). This suggested that the variations in students' performance by income of mothers or female guardians were significant. Therefore, the hypothesis to the effect that parental income level parental income level leads to significant differences in students' academic performance in secondary schools was supported. Thus, children whose parents had higher levels of income were more likely to perform than those of lower income. However, the results for parents or guardians according to income showed that the income of the fathers has a more significant influence than that of the mothers. This is because the F= statistic (F = 3.926) for the males was slightly higher (F= 3.850) than of the females with a lower p-value (p = 0.021) than that of females (p = 0.023).

To establish how the head teachers perceived the contribution of the income of the parents or guardians on students' academic achievement, the head teachers were asked, to give their comments on the performance of children according to income. The head teachers gave various varied responses which followed. Headteacher 1 stated;

> Higher household income may translate into more financial support for education in the form of paying for transportation to and from school, uniforms; investments in children's health, instructional resources, and additional private instruction. Income is crucial since a poor parent cannot afford to send his or her child to a good school with higher tuition fees, good books, good meals, and uninterrupted study time. Children whose parents are economically well off are well facilitated and hence have higher chances of better academic performance.

In relation to the above, head teacher 2 said;

> Parents who have income support their children's education. However, students who are experiencing financial difficulty engage in income-generating activities. Due to their need to survive, students, especially day students, are compelled to use alternative coping mechanisms, such as skipping meals, taking on menial tasks, and even participating in sex for cash, particularly for girls. As a result, these actions have a negative impact on their academic achievement. Therefore, if a parent can provide, academic performance is likely to be high.

Further, in agreement with the other head teachers above, head teacher 5 stated;

> Parental income is a pointer to parental support of a student's learning and school-related behavior once the student is in school. This is related to attendance of the student or absenteeism. This means that students whose parents are economically well are likely to perform well.

The responses above from the head teachers indicated that parents who had high incomes effectively supported the education of their children leading to better academic performance. This finding is consistent with the ANOVA test results which revealed that the variations in students' performance by income of the parents or guardians were significant. Therefore, the income of the parents or guardians leads to significant differences in the academic performance of the children.

DISCUSSION

Parental Educational Level and Students' Academic Performance

The first objective of the study sought to examine whether parental educational level led to significant differences in students' academic performance in secondary schools. The hypothesis derived from the objective was to the effect that parental educational level leads to significant differences in students' academic performance. The test hypothesis test results and qualitative analysis revealed that parental educational level leads to significant differences in students' academic performance. This finding was in agreement with the findings and assertions of previous scholars. For example, [22] asserted that the parent's level of education is important to schooling because parents want their children to maintain the status quo. Accordingly, parents with higher educational levels had stronger confidence in their children's academic abilities and they also had higher expectations from them. Such parents expect their children to earn good grades, behave well in school, and attend college or University. These expectations and confidence in their children motivated them to do well at school. According to

[23], the confidence that parents have in their children helps them build their confidence and self-concept which is important in their education. Further, the finding of the study agrees with [24] who established educated parents involved themselves in the learning activities of their children which made them develop more keenness in their studies hence performing well as compared to those children of parents who were not – involved. In a related case, [23] indicated that highly educated parents have greater success in providing their children with cognitive and language skills that contribute to success in school. In the same way, [25] expounded that highly educated parents had more resources to meet the needs of their homes, while the low-educated parents had limited resources for the same. Therefore, educated parents can support the education of their children.

Also, in agreement with the findings of the study, [26] noted that parents of higher education status support school activities while parents of low education destroy schools due to perceived or actual discrimination of their children by the school. In agreement, [27] reported that educated parents offer learning guidance and counseling to their children while parents with low education do not. Accordingly, lack of guidance and support from parents of low education status was the reason that low-income, middle school students were less likely to attend college despite the parents' aspirations and involvement. Consistently, [28] indicated that lower academic performances, completion of fewer years of schooling, and lower career aspirations were associated with adolescents from families with lower education. Generally, the discussion above shows that parental education level influences students' academic performance. Therefore, variations in the academic achievement of learners are significantly linked to the education levels of their parents.

Parental Occupation and Students' Academic Performance

The second objective of the study sought to whether the parents' occupations led to significant differences in students' academic performance in secondary schools. The findings revealed that variations in students' performance by occupation of the parents or guardians were insignificant. This finding was consistent with [29] who reported that there was no significant relationship between parents' occupation and academic performance of students. In the same vein, [30] investigated the relationship between parental occupation and children's school outcomes in Mathematics among 15-year-olds. The results indicated that the students' math scores were affected by or depended on the presence of one family member in a math-related career. However, the finding was inconsistent with the findings of most scholars. For example, [31] found existence of a significant relationship between parents' occupational background and the academic performance of students. Accordingly, students with working parents who earn regular salaries and work in offices, especially within the school setting, performed better than those with parents who were not working or who earn an irregular income.

In consistent with the finding of the study, [32] also established that there were statistically significant differences in the mean achievement scores of the students belonging to different occupational groups. This meant that the parents' occupation was related to students' academic performance. Similarly, [33] revealed that civil servants children performed better followed by children of business parents. But the poorest performance came from farmer's children. Further, [34] indicated that parents' occupation is an important variable which determines the economic status of the family. Higher occupational levels of the parents indicate better economic condition and this result in material support for the education of their children which result in better academic performance. Likewise, [35, 36] reported that occupation of parents influenced the school performance of children.

In the same vein, [37] revealed that parents' profession had positive correlation on students' performance and it varied with respect to their professions. The study only focused on learning of English but this research was focused on the general academic performance of secondary school students. In the same case, [38] found out that that parental occupation highly leads to significant differences in students' academic performance. Also, [39] reported that parental occupational level significantly leads to significant differences in students' academic performance. Further, [40] indicated that students from a parent with formal occupation performed well than those from parents with informal occupation. Overall, most of the studies were inconsistent with the finding of the study suggested that parental occupation leads to significant differences in students' academic performance [41]. However, since the finding of this study was inconsistent with the findings of previous scholars, it can be surmised that the influence of parents' occupation on academic performance is related to the context.

Family Income Level and Students' Academic Performance

The third objective of the study sought to establish how family income level influenced the academic performance in the secondary schools. The hypothesis derived from the objective was to the effect that parental educational level leads to significant differences in students' academic performance. The hypothesis test results and qualitative analysis revealed that family income level was a significant determinant of the variation in students' academic performance. This finding concurred with the findings of previous study by [42], who asserted that parents with higher levels of income can afford to take their children through preschool learning and this has a greater impact in their later educational outcomes since it provides them with the required cognitive and social development.

Similarly, [43] indicated that parents of higher income take their children to school earlier than their lower income counterparts. This affects their cognitive development affecting their academic performance. [44], revealed that families with lower incomes often have to work longer hours to earn more for their families. Therefore, they are often left with less time to spend with their family members and getting more involved in their children's educational activities. In addition, parents in inferior occupation work for long hours hence lack the time to support their children's learning which negatively affects their academic performance [45].

Concurring with the finding of the study, [46] reported that children from low-income families are more likely to be preoccupied with environmental stressors within their neighborhood such as feelings on insecurity about their safety, housing status, and violence within their community to the detriment of their academic achievement. Accordingly, students from wealthier families outperform those from poor families on academic achievement tests [47]. Similarly, [48] indicated that pupils from high poverty backgrounds tend to skip classes, have more behavioral problems, have less motivation for academic success, and even possibly feel that performing successfully on their academics is embarrassing. [49], indicated that educators have known for years that pupils from high-income families academically perform better than those from low-income families. Pupils from low-income families are much more likely to drop out of school or are retained in a particular grade. The answers to the problem of educating such pupils are challenging and demanding [50]. Further still, concurring with the finding of the study, it is revealed that students from parents with formal occupation perform well than those from parents with informal education [51]. On the whole, the discussion above indicates that family income and students' academic performance have a strong relationship.

CONCLUSION

The discussion above led to the making of conclusions on the influence of socioeconomic background and students' academic performance in secondary schools. The conclusions are as follows;

1. Parental educational level is imperative for students' academic performance. Students whose parents have higher levels of education especially at the tertiary level are more likely to perform better. This is because highly educated parents effectively support the education of their children. Educated parents provide appropriate learning environments like accessing their children's light, a table, and a chair at home. Such parents also ensure that their children have time to study and revise their books. Above all, educated parents pay fees on time, provide school requirements, and motivate their children to perform well.
2. The parents' occupation is lowly linked with students' academic performance. Therefore, the education of students is not dependent on the occupations of parents whether peasant farmers or commercial farmers nor being government civil service or non-government service. This is because these days generally all parents whether formally or informally employed, are interested in the education of their children.
3. Family income is vital for students' academic performance. Students with parents who earn up to 343,583 = shillings and above per month are likely to perform better. This is because these parents effectively support the education of their children leading to better academic performance. Parental income is a pointer to parental support of a student's learning and school-related behavior once the student is in school.

Recommendations

The conclusions above led to the making of recommendations based on the discoveries on the influence of socio-economic background and students' academic performance in secondary schools. For instance, it was discovered that parents, supported by some politicians, have always distanced themselves from the learning of their children, and many terms it as a failure of school administrators, calling the learners the president's grand-Children, "The BAZUKKULU". Besides, the decline in parental socio-economic background is a result of the decline in maize, beans, cotton, and coffee prices and harvests due to constant and prolonged droughts. Further, Kasese is located on the leeward side of the western rift valley leading to unpredictable weather changes in Agricultural produce. This is further exacerbated by the disintegration of the Nyakatonzi Cooperative Society and the collapse of the Kilembe Copper Mines which usually offered a substantial amount of job opportunities that enabled many parents to educate their children in the 1980s, and90s. The study, therefore, recommends that;

1. The government of Uganda and schools should promote the education of parents in the country. The government should ensure that potential parents attain up to tertiary education such that they will be able to support the education of their children. Therefore, potential parents should have the opportunity to easily access tertiary education. For those parents with low levels of education, the government and schools should sensitize them about the importance of their children's education such that they support it. School leaders, also, should organize for seminars to sensitize parents on the need to make the education of their children a priority and give much attention to it.

2. The government of Uganda should promote children's education without emphasizing occupation of their parents. Therefore, parents of different occupation levels should be encouraged to take their children to school. Education sensitization and promotion programs should focus on all parents despite their occupation.
3. The government of Uganda should promote programs that enhance the income of parents such that they can be able to support the education of their children. The government should aim at ensuring that each family in the country earns at least up to 343,583 = shillings and above per month. Findings indicate that about 80% of the population in Kitswamba and Rugendabara town councils derive their livelihood from farming and a few others in business. Therefore, Irrigation schemes and better farming methods should be extended to the community to curb drought-related challenges to increase production and be able to provide for the education of their children in secondary schools. Simple loan schemes like EMYOOGA and PDM should further be extended to the women groups/guardians because they have proved to be chief supporters of children's education.

Suggestions for Further Research

The results for the second hypothesis of the effect that parental educational level leads to significant differences in students' academic performance were contrary to what was hypothesized. Therefore, further researchers using different contexts should further test the hypothesis. Further, this study was largely quantitative hindering deep exploration of the relationship between socio-economic background and students' academic performance in secondary schools. Therefore, future scholars should dominantly use the qualitative approach for deep exploration of the impact of socio-economic background and students' academic performance in secondary schools.

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