

Parents' Provision of Scholastic Materials and Pupils' Academic Performance in Selected Primary Schools in Kyotera Town Council, Uganda

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to establish the relationship between parents' provision of scholastic materials and pupils' academic performance in selected primary schools in Kyotera Town Council. The researchers adopted a cross-sectional survey design where both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used. Census and purposive sampling technique were used to select a sample of 71 teachers and 4 head teachers of the selected schools. The major instruments used in the study were a Likert scale type questionnaire which was filled by teachers as well as an interview guide for head teachers. Validity of the research instrument was computed and results were found to be .86 while the reliability obtained was .948. The study utilized SPSS to analyze descriptive data which was presented in form of tables with frequencies and percentages. Equally, a Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient analysis was conducted to establish the relationship between variables. From the findings, the correlation between parents' provision of scholastic materials to children and academic performance was found to be moderate ($r = 0.461$, $N = 71$, $p = .00 < 0.01$). It is being concluded that there is disparity in parents' provision of scholastic materials to their children and this also obtains in the diversity within pupils' academic performance. Thus, the study recommends that the parents and teachers associations (PTA) should ensure that children are provided with basic scholastic materials so that that all pupils can learn efficiently.

Keywords: academic performance, parent, primary school, scholastic materials

Undoubtedly, academic performance is the voice of school performance in Uganda and indeed, Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) results are the indicators of effective school performance (NAPE Report, 2015). The success of any educational institution in the contemporary world depends on the quality of academic performance produced. Globally, schools put a lot of attention and focus on academic performance as it showcases efficiency and effectiveness of

school processes and operations. In many sub-Saharan countries, academic performance is used as a success tool and yardstick for grading of schools. In Uganda, schools are ranked according to academic grades and infrastructure and thus schools struggle to appear in the newspapers as among the best or at least with the best performing pupils. In Kyotera Town Council, schools do a lot to realize high level academic performance especially through enforcing attendance of pupils, overseeing quality assignments as well as ensuring active participation in the teaching and learning process. Some schools even engage both positive (rewarding) and negative (punishing) reinforcement to realize good academic performance.

Despite efforts aimed at transformation of the academic performance of pupils, there are still issues regarding grades posted by learners in final examinations. Indeed, the Uganda National Examination Board and UWEZO reports (UNEB, 2014; UWEZO, 2014) revealed that whereas schools in Uganda had improved, the same cannot be said for all pupils and all the schools. It is thus not surprising that the performance of pupils at Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) often indicates poor performance while a few perform better but several just obtain pass. The situation in Kyotera Town Council is even more alarming as pupils barely pass their final exams.

Parental involvement in pupils' learning has been recognized as a crucial factor in the education systems of various countries like Latin America, Uganda, South Africa, and Ghana. According to the World Bank report (2008), collaborative efforts among parents, teachers and other stakeholders are needed for the improvement of quality of education. In the USA, evidence of parental involvement in education exists both at home and within the school. This is emphasized in The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. In Kenya, the Basic Education Act of Kenya (2013) requires the school boards of management to assess school needs with full participation of the parents (Manasi et al., 2014).

In Uganda, the free and mandatory Universal Primary Education Policy of 1997 stipulates the role of parents at home and school in support of children's learning. This can be reflected in the Education Act 13 for pre-primary and post primary Act 2008 which clearly define the roles of parents and guardians in promotion of education in the Ugandan child. This shows the relevance of parental involvement in children's learning. The Act stipulates that parents are supposed to provide children with the basic needs which include scholastic materials among others. Indeed, many stakeholders like the inspector of schools as well as education officers have always emphasized the need for parents to be involved in the overall running of schools as well as their children's academic processes. Nevertheless, schools continue to decry the challenges posed by parental involvement while academic performance of pupils in primary schools continues to disappoint despite the serious call and trust in parental involvement.

Many studies have been done on parental involvement in their children's education. Van Voorhis (2001) revealed that regardless of children's family background, involving parents in various ways has a positive effect on

achievement, attendance, behavior and tasks completed. Mbiti (2007) states that when parents attend school functions, they make suggestions, give advice on performance, plus support which can help the school to progress. Ahmad (2013) asserted that parental participation in education has positive effects upon the quality of education as it leads to students' better academic achievement and the overall success of the school. While the Global Education Monitoring Report (2014) indicates that parents influence standards in schools through providing scholastic materials to their children, scrutinizing their exercise books after school, providing them with the necessary guidance or even employing a private teacher to attend to them after school. Nevertheless, these studies are too general and inconclusive while many of them obtain in varying contexts. Thus, this study sought to establish the relationship between parents' provision of scholastic materials to their children and pupils' academic performance in selected schools in Kyotera Town Council, Uganda.

Problem Statement

Pupils' academic performance for the 3 years in Kyotera Town Council has been varying despite expectations of sustained performance. This is evidenced by the grades achieved by schools in the Town Council enshrined in the Kyotera District Education Sector Report (2017, 2018 & 2019). While a number of efforts have been engaged at both school level and policy making levels, the improvements in academic performance of pupils have been less significant. If the issue remains unresolved, schools will continue struggling with low grades of pupils, key stakeholders will lose trust in the school system and pupils' enrolment will go down. In a bid to arrest this, parents have been called upon to provide scholastic materials to their children to enable a smooth conduct of the teaching and learning processes in the schools. However, much as there are strong claims that the academic performance of pupils may not only depend on what goes on in schools but rather the extent to which parents provide for their children's education (Farooq et al., 2011; Saunders & Epstein, 2000), without proper research, this would only remain a matter of speculation and assumption. Unfortunately, the researchers encountered no particular study in the case of Kyotera Town Council to this effect while others have also dealt with parental involvement in general yet others are inconclusive on the matter offering varying perspectives.

Objective

The objective of the study was to establish the relationship between parents' provision of scholastic materials and pupils' academic performance in Kyotera Town Council. Academic performance was focused on given that it is the bedrock of school performance while parents' provision of scholastic materials enables learners to focus and complete all academic tasks effectively.

Hypothesis

The researchers hypothesized that there is no statistically significant relationship between parents' provision of scholastic materials and pupils'

academic performance in Kyotera Town Council. The key assumption of the study was that parents' provision of scholastic materials to their children is directly related to pupils' academic performance holding other factors constant.

Literature Review

The issue of provision of scholastic materials to children by their parents is truly a bedrock of parental involvement in their children's academic processes. Accordingly, several authors have paid attention to the nature of scholastic materials provided by parents to children in the shape of types of scholastic materials, timing of the provision of the scholastic materials and monitoring of the usage of scholastic materials. According to MOES (2008) parents' roles and responsibilities include provision of physical and material support to their children such as exercise books, pens, pencils, mid-day meals, school uniforms, school bags, mathematical set among other requirements. David (2007) states that provision of learning materials and other basic needs at school is fundamental for teaching and learning, for teaching morale and maintaining pupils' interest without these basic needs to the children, retention rates of pupils will remain a problem.

Mugumya (2014) states that, parenting is a critical aspect of a learner's education and school life. The parenting in this case is categorized as proper communication, provision of basic needs and provision of learning materials. The researcher believes that when such variables are in place, the learning environment is made appropriate to all learners to thrive. When parenting goes astray or fails to live up to the expectations of the environment, then learning itself is affected and ultimately the academic performance will turn out to be less impressive. Meanwhile, Osei-Akoto et al. (2012) investigated the extent of parental involvement in academic performance in Ghana using randomized cluster sampling of 100 schools from eight (8) out of ten (10) regions. The results indicated that majority of the parents (83%) hardly assisted children in home work. Koech (2014) investigated the role of parents in enhancing pre- school children's education in a Gishu district, Kenya and found that parental involvement in Education was low. This meant that most of the school activities intended for pre-school children's transformation were either left unhandled or frustrated during the process.

Denga (1986) advised that praises, incentives, recommendation and other forms of reward system should be employed as motivational factors to stimulate students' achievements arguing that what a child achieves during his school days is largely dependent on the kind of family to which he/she belongs. For instance, a child whose parent take a great deal of interest in what she /he does at school and give him/her necessary support by providing all the required books and finances needed has a great advantage over a child whose parents do not give him/her this kind of incentives and encouragements. Muhuro and Hungi (2016) note that parental participation improves student academic achievement having conducted a study in Iganga and Mayuge districts. The gap that this study found out is that much talk and hope is vested within parents' provision of scholastic

materials to their children to spell effective academic performance of pupils. What is not given adequate thought is the fact that academic performance may remain poor even with intensive parental involvement. Therefore, the study sought to establish the relationship between parents' provision of scholastic materials to their children and pupils' academic performance in selected primary schools in Kyotera Town Council Kyotera district given its poor record of pupils' academic performance despite being a town area.

Methodology

Design and Sampling

The researchers adopted a cross-sectional survey design where both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used to obtain the data needed for the study. The population of study comprised of head teachers and teachers in the 4 targeted primary schools and according to the records at the District Education Officer's Desk, there were 4 Head teachers and 71 teachers in the said schools leading to a total of 75 respondents. Census inquiry technique was adopted because the population of teachers and head teachers was manageable and thus no need for further break down.

Data Collection and Analysis

Questionnaires and interview guide were the main instruments for data collection and documentary analysis was also useful for complementary information. Validity of instruments was established via expert judgment and a content validity index with a score of .86 while reliability was established through piloting and computation of a Cronbach alpha coefficient found to be .948. Data analysis was through use of a statistical package for social scientists to generate descriptive statistics while Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis was adopted to establish the relationship between parents' provision of scholastic materials to their children and pupils' academic performance. Qualitative data was analyzed through content analysis. The study upheld confidentiality, anonymity, originality and rights of respondents as the key ethical issues in the study.

Results

The presentation of the findings to the research question was preceded by presentation of demographic information as obtained from the respondents. Equally, findings regarding academic performance of pupils follow suit. All questionnaires administered to 71 teachers were returned and all the targeted interviewees were accessed. Demographic information that was obtained from the study is presented in Table 1. The table shows that the biggest number of teachers 43 (60.6%) who responded to the questionnaire were female while the male teachers were 28 (39.4%). Equally, 35 (49.3%) of the teachers were in the age bracket of 30-34 yet 9 (12.7%) were in the age bracket of 45 and above. Indeed, most of the teachers 23 (32.4%) had spent more than 13 years in service, 19 (26.8%) and 18 (25.4%) had spent from 1-4 years and 9-12 years respectively and the lowest 11 (15.5%) had spent 5-8 years.

Table 1
Demographic Information of Teachers

ITEM	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	28	39.4
	Female	43	60.6
Age	30-34 years	35	49.3
	35-39 years	15	21.1
	40-44 years	12	16.9
	45 and above	9	12.7
Years of Service	1-4 years	19	26.8
	5-8 years	11	15.5
	9-12 years	18	25.4
	13 and above	23	32.4

Source: Field Data (2017)

This showed that all teachers had experience of above five (5) years. The study sought to draw on perspectives of gender, age and years of service in terms of information regarding parents' attendance of meetings and pupils' academic performance in order to get an overall picture of the sample.

Responses on Pupils' Academic Performance

The researchers first drew on the descriptive views relating to academic performance of pupils in primary schools Kyotera Town Council. This was intended to lay the background for a correlation between parents' provision of scholastic materials and pupils' academic performance. The responses were premised on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree to strongly agree. Some of the responses are presented in Table 2 as follows;

Table 2
Responses on Pupils' Academic Performance

ITEM	SA		A		UN		SD		D	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Students in my class have a high failure rate in the end term examinations	37	52.1	13	18.3	0	00	8	11.3	13	18.3
Students get poor scores in class work	36	50.7	12	16.9	1	1.4	5	7.0	17	23.9
Students in my school pass PLE with low grades	26	36.6	19	26.8	1	1.4	14	19.7	11	15.5

Source: Field Data (2017)

According to Table 2, the biggest percentage (52.1%) represented by 37 teachers strongly agreed with the statement that students in my class have high failure rate in the end of term examinations followed by 13 teachers (18.3 %) who also agreed with the statement SA as compared to 13 (18.3%) who disagreed and the

8 (11.3%) who strongly disagreed with it. The overall results indicated that there was high failure rate in the end of term examinations in the teachers' respective classes. As it can also be seen from Table 2 that majority of the teachers 36 (50.7%) strongly agreed with this while 12 (16.9%) were in agreement compared to 5 (7%) who strongly disagreed and only 17 (23.9%) who disagreed showing that most of the students in the study schools got poor scores in class work. Meanwhile, 1 teacher (1.4%) was undecided on this particular item. Meanwhile, majority 26 teachers representing 36.6% strongly agreed that the students in their schools passed PLE followed by 19 teachers reflecting 26.8% who also agreed as compared to 14 (19.7%) who strongly disagreed and 11 (15.5%) who disagreed with the statement. Notably, 1 teacher (1.4%) was undecided on the issue. This showed that majority of students in study schools passed PLE with low grades.

From the interviews conducted, it was discovered that the academic performance of pupils is actually known to be less impressive and interviewees put this down to parents being less supportive when it comes to involvement in their children's learning processes. A summarized narrative to this effect was as follows:

The performance is not as it is expected, because teachers do their work but there are gaps in handling of pupils when they go back home, their parents leave them to watch movies, these days, pupils are given phones, cooking food, playing foot/net ball, listening to radios, mention but a few and yet teachers give them work to do while at home, a pupil comes to school without breakfast and such a child may find it hard to pass well.

The interviewees indeed requested the parents to keep in touch with the teachers as this will reduce cases of mismanagement of time as far as home and school activities are concerned to create a conducive environment for the academic excellence of pupils both at home and school. It is this double-edged support of children by both parents and the school that can galvanize academic performance of the pupils.

Responses Regarding Parents' Provision of Scholastic Materials

Provision of scholastic materials is one of the boosters of pupils' academic excellence, so the researchers were called upon to query on whether the parents in this study area provided scholastic materials to children and the responses to this were as presented in Table 3.

As per the table, when teachers were asked whether parents provide pupils with enough pens, majority of them 22 (31%) disagreed with the statement as compared to only 20 (28.2%) who agreed with the statement. Meanwhile, 16 teachers (22.5%) strongly agreed with the statement and 13 them (18.3%) strongly disagreed with the statement. However; the overall comparison shows that those who agreed with the statement almost equaled those who disagreed with it, clearly indicating a disparity in parents' provision of scholastic materials to their children.

Table 3

Responses Regarding Parents' Provision of Scholastic Materials (N = 71)

ITEM	SD		D		UN		A		SA	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Parents provide pupils with enough pens	13	18.3	22	31	0	0.0	20	28.2	16	22.5
Parents provide exercise books to pupils	5	7.0	12	16.9	0	0.0	35	49.3	19	26.8
Parents provide pupils with reading books	25	35.2	20	28.1	2	2.8	13	18.3	11	15.4
Parents provide pupils with mathematical sets	17	23.9	19	26.7	2	2.8	18	25.3	15	21.1
Parents provide pupils with calculators	31	43.6	18	25.3	3	4.2	11	15.4	8	11.2

Source: Field Data (2017)

Also, regarding parents' provision of exercise books to pupils, 35 (49%) of the teachers agreed followed by 19 (26.8%) who strongly agreed, and only a few 12 (16.9%) disagreed with the statement, meanwhile, 5 of them (7%) strongly disagreed. This denotes that majority of the parents in this study area provided exercise books to their children. Nevertheless, it is surprising that some parents are still too negligent in terms of taking care of their children if at all they can fail to provide exercise books to their children.

When teachers were asked whether parents provide pupils with reading books, 25 (35.2%) disagreed with the statement, 20 (28.1%) disagreed, 2 (2.8%) were undecided, 13(18.3%) were found to agree with the statement and 11 (15.4%) strongly agreed with the statement. This implies that over 63% of the teachers indicated that parents were not providing appropriate reading books to their children. This is absurd given that reading bolsters pupils' academic competence and thus performance. It is however good to note that some parents are putting in some effort in this regard.

On whether parents provided pupils with mathematical sets, 17 (23.9%) of the teachers strongly disagreed, 19 (26.7%) were in disagreement, 2 (2.8%) were undecided, 18 (25.3%) agreed with the statement while 15 (21.1%) strongly agreed. The findings indicate that there is a clear disparity among parents when it comes to provision of mathematical sets to their children. Almost half of the teachers indicated that parents provide mathematical sets to their children while almost a similar percentage expressed concern that parents do not provide mathematical sets. This implies that pupils may not perform well since mathematical sets help learners during the teaching and learning process.

In relation to whether parents provided pupils with calculators, 31 (43.6%) of the teachers strongly disagreed with the statement, 18 (25.3%) expressed disagreement, 3 (4.2%) preferred indifference, while 11 (15.4%) were in agreement and 8 (11.2%) strongly agreed with the statement. With over 68.9% of the teachers stating that parents do not provide their children with calculators, it is very clear that parents have not played their role very well and this can derail efforts of the school to post good academic performance of pupils since such calculators are used in the execution of especially mathematical concepts.

The study established that there is diversity in parents' provision of scholastic materials to their children which has a bearing on the teaching and learning processes. Some provide the scholastic materials to their children while some do not. This lack of parental provision of scholastic materials is likely to affect pupils' academic performance which creates a significant problem for the school. *"Our parents at least have tried to provide some requirements to their children though there are still some who come without books however, we found out that some lose them and others do forget them home"* said one of the interviewed head teachers (HTR2). On the same issue, another head teacher pointed out that some of the scholastic materials are neglected. This is what the head teacher had to say;

"I think some of our parents have underestimated the value of some scholastic materials because they provide some and neglect some. This makes their children struggle during the teaching and learning process when they don't have the materials required" (HTR3).

To this, another head teacher added; *"the parents have realistically decided to choose between which scholastic materials are valuable and those which are not. This makes life hard for the learners, teachers and the school in general"* (HTR1). This indicated that there was a common agreement between the head teachers and teachers that parents are trying to provide the scholastic materials to their children but there is no uniformity in this case.

Correlation Analysis

A correlation analysis was conducted to establish the relationship between parents' provision of scholastic materials and learners' academic performance. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 4. which reveals that, there was a positive, significant but moderate correlation between parents' provision of scholastic materials and learners' academic performance represented by ($r = .461$, $N = 71$, $p = .000 < .01$). This signified that, parents' provision of scholastic materials significantly correlated with learners' academic performance. This is consistent with the view of Redman (2008) who stated that correlation scores between .3 and .6 are indicative of moderate relationships. The result means that the null hypothesis set is rejected since the relationship was found to be significant and moderate.

Table 4

Correlation Analysis Between Parents' Provision of Scholastic Materials and Learners' Academic Performance

		Provision of Scholastic Materials	Academic Performance
Provision of Scholastic Materials	Pearson Correlation	1	.461**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	71	71
Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	.461**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	71	71

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

This research finding is also supported by one of the head teachers who asserted that; *"It is the sole responsibility of the parent to provide the child with all the needed materials if better academic performance is to be realized."* (HTR1). Even another head teacher stated that *"without parents providing their children with scholastic materials, the academic performance of their pupils is likely to be affected since these materials work as inputs"* (HTR2). Indeed, such pupils can struggle to get on with tasks in the teaching and learning process. The agreement in views between head teachers is an indicator of the perceived critical relationship between parents' provision of scholastic materials to their children and the latter's academic performance.

Discussion

Since it was established that pupils pass with relatively low grades, it can be concluded that the findings are inconsistent with the view of Lamas (2015) who claimed that passing with good grades is a major indicator of academic performance. Indeed, low grades can even kill the morale of pupils and without much care and guidance, dropping out may become a likely scenario. Whereas a combination of other reasons can be used to attribute to good grades, parents' provision of scholastic materials is one among those that contribute highly to improved grades.

Generally, therefore, much as the parents provided basic scholastic materials to their children, this could not guarantee that these children received them on time and that were able to use them. Indeed, as reported by head teachers, some parents provided the scholastic materials while others do not. Also, some forms of scholastic materials were provided while other forms were neglected. This finding is consistent with what has been opined by Anne et al. (2012), who investigated parents' involvement in provision of teaching and learning resources in Teso North District. The respondents indicated that parents are partially involved in their children's educational processes. Also, Manasi et al. (2014) researched the influence of parental involvement in provision of teaching learning resources on educational outcomes in Teso North sub-county primary schools and equally found limited parental involvement. With limited scholastic materials,

participation of pupils in the teaching/learning process remains limited too; yet Duncan et al. (2012) believe that active participation in the teaching and learning process is a precursor to academic performance.

Based on the correlation analysis made, the finding is supported by Mugumya (2014) who states that parenting is an aspect involving a number of variables like proper communication, provision of basic needs and provision of learning materials which are central to the teaching and learning process. Thus, the researchers reaffirm that provision of scholastic materials plays a critical role in influencing the academic performance of pupils. However, when this factor is not taken into account, pupils' academic performance is greatly impaired. Thus, parents as key stakeholders in the education system, should ensure that they play this role for their children to excel in academics.

The fact that parents' provision of scholastic materials to their children is an element of parental involvement in their children's education is a greater indicator of consistency between the current study findings and those of previous studies. Indeed, Nyarko (2011) investigated the effect of parental involvement in school on students' academic performance in Ghana. The results reveal a positive and significant correlation between mothers' school involvement and academic performance of children. Interestingly, there was non-significant correlation between fathers' school involvement and students' academic performance. Lesanjir (2013) also explored the effect of parental involvement on academic performance of girl child in public primary schools in Samburu County Kenya. The results indicated that a unit increase in parental involvement predicts 0.787 increases in academic performance scores. Meanwhile, even Koroset al. (2006) reported a positive association between parental involvement and pupils' performance. The easiest and most vivid way of parents getting involved in their children's education is through provision of the basic scholastic materials required in the teaching and learning process.

Conclusion

It was established that there is a positive, significant but moderate relationship between parents' provision of scholastic materials to their children and pupils' academic performance ($r = .461$, $N = 71$, $p = .000 < .01$). According to this moderate relationship, it can be concluded that most parents in this study area do not provide certain key scholastic materials to their children while some parents endeavor to and this hinders their academic excellence. Normally, children who are provided with scholastic materials always perform better than those who do not receive them. This is true especially since these are generally usable materials which are required on a daily basis. Nevertheless, there are also scenarios where the parents are simply negligent while others have an attitude to the effect that scholastic materials are provided for by government under the Universal Primary Education Program. In some cases, too, the materials are delivered quite belatedly, thus, affecting the ideal concentration of the child at school.

Recommendations

Having realized that there is laxity in parents' provision of scholastic materials to their children which can affect the academic performance of the pupils, it is being recommended that the parents and teachers' associations should come up with a policy of enforcing parents' provision of scholastic materials to their children since there is seeming negligence on the part of some parents. Also, schools should seek collaboration with some service providers to enable parents procure materials at a relatively cheaper amount with flexible payment modes. The researchers propose future research on other levels of education other than primary schools to paint a bigger picture regarding all levels of education.

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