American Journal of
Education and Practice
(AJEP)

Family Socioeconomic Status, Parents' Level of Education, and Parental Engagement in Educational Activities in Sheema District – Uganda

Duncans Mugumya, Emmanuel Karooro, and Adrian Rwekaza Mwesigye

American Journal of Education and Practice
ISSN 2520-3991 (Online)
Vol.7, Issue 2, pp 48 – 61, 2023

www.ajpojournals.org

Family Socioeconomic Status, Parents' Level of Education, and Parental Engagement in Educational Activities in Sheema District – Uganda

Duncans Mugumya[1*], Emmanuel Karooro[2], and Adrian Rwekaza Mwesigye[1]

[1]Department of Education, Faculty of Science, Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Uganda

[2]Associate Professor, Department of Education, Uganda Christian University, Bishop Barham University College, Kabale, Uganda.

[*]Corresponding Author's Email: mugumyaduncans@gmail.com

Article History

Received: 17th Feb 2023

Received in Revised Form: 12th Mar 2023

Accepted on: 17th Mar 2023

Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to examine the differences in the levels of parental engagement in the academic activities of learners in government grant-aided secondary schools in Sheema District based on demographic characteristics.

Methodology: The study was quantitative in nature and employed cross-sectional survey design. Participants of the study included Senior 4 students as well as their parents and teachers selected using probability.

Findings: The results indicated a statistically significant difference among parents of different socioeconomic statuses in engagement in provision of basic needs ($X^2_{(4)} = 30.994$, $p < .05$), academic communication ($X^2_{(4)} = 29.317$, $p < .05$), academic decision making ($X^2_{(4)} = 18.906$, $p = .001$), infrastructure development and maintenance ($X^2_{(4)} = 11.412$, $p = .022$), provision of a conducive learning environment at home ($X^2_{(4)} = 25.291$, $p < .05$), and provision of adequate learning resources at home ($X^2_{(4)} = 41.890$, $p < .05$). Differences in parental engagement were statistically significant among parents of different educational levels in provision of learning materials ($X^2_{(4)} = 27.901$, $p < .05$). There was no statistically significant difference in parental engagement among parents with 1—2, 3—4, and 5 and above school-going dependents. Based on these results, It is argued that family socioeconomic status and level of education influence parents' engagement in their children's learning and subsequent academic success.

Recommendation: Government and other key stakeholders to develop and implement policies that can increase parents' socioeconomic status as well as educational attainment in order to engage more fully in the education of their children.

Keywords: *Socio-economic status, education level, parental engagement, dependants, academic performance*

INTRODUCTION

Parental engagement in any given institution of learning has always been critical to the academic performance of students (Reece et al., 2013; Rafiq, Fatima, Sohail, Saleem, & Khan, 2013; Abuya et al. 2014; Jeynes, 2016). Apart from academic performance, other parental engagement benefits which should not be overlooked include improved self-esteem, high rate of school attendance and positive social behaviour (Ma, Shen, Krenn, Hu, & Yuan, 2016). Sivertsen (2015) avows that parental engagement is concomitant to enhanced behaviour, low levels of absenteeism and optimistic attitudes.

Outside Africa, recent research by the Department of Education and Training ([NEA], 2018) of United States has shown that when schools and families work together, children do better, stay in school longer, are more engaged with their school work, go to school more regularly, behave better, and have better social skills. These skills eventually become long-term behaviours that result in long-term economic, social and emotional benefits for the family (NEA, 2018). On the federal front, President Obama called for a new era of mutual responsibility in education—one where all parents, teachers, leaders in Washington, and all citizens across America come together for the sake of their children's success; an era where all people do their part to make that success a reality. "Yes, it takes new resources, but we also know that there is no program and no policy that can substitute for a parent who is involved in their child's education from day one" (Obama, 2008).

Bryk et al. (2010) identified strong relationships among school staff, families, and community partners as one of the essential elements for school improvement. Their longitudinal investigation in Chicago Public Schools indicated that schools with stronger support from families and the community were more likely to experience improvements in student achievement, and that those schools lacking such support were far less likely to see improvements in student learning and performance (Bryk et al., 2010). A recent survey conducted on 19,487 junior school Chinese students found out that students in families of low socioeconomic status had got many benefits from parental engagement activities (Duan, Guan & Bu, 2018). In a quasi-experimental education intervention study that was done by Abuya et al. (2014) involving over 1,200 girls living in two Nairobi urban slums in Kenya, it was revealed that parental participation in their children's education is a stepping stone in influencing and beading their children's learning outcomes. This is not different from Uganda and Sheema District in particular.

A research project was done in 2010, in four sub-Sahara African countries (Burindi, Malawi, Senegal and Uganda) by William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, in partnership with Bill and Melinda Gates and anchored by Education and Action Aid, on how to improve learning outcomes in primary schools. Marphatia et al. (2010) reported that for Ugandan parents, other than providing basic learning materials and food, they do not maximally participate in their children's learning. For every three parents only one participated in their children's learning. The major reason was their low literacy levels, dissimilarity on school inputs and misunderstanding of universal education policy as well as dissimilarity due to conflicting communication from national level and school leadership (Marphatia et al. 2010).

Still in Uganda, a research by Mahuro and Hungi (2016) in Iganga and Mayuge Districts found out that parental participation plays a pivotal role in motivating children to improve their academic grades. They therefore concluded that for students to reap maximum benefits in an education system, the learning should not be solely left to the student–teacher relationship but should be extended to include active parental involvement among other education stakeholders (Mahuro & Hungi, 2016). In a very recent study by Sekiwu and Kaggwa (2019), on how parent

participation in child education influences students' academic performance in secondary schools in Tororo District in Uganda, they concluded that as a matter of policy, there is need to encourage parents to get involved in child education, and the more they get involved the more students' academic performance is predicted to increase.

In Sheema District South-Western-Uganda, academic performance of students in government Aided USE schools has remained low compared to government Aided non USE and private schools. The government of Uganda has provided some text books and chemicals, constructed science laboratories, libraries, classrooms and staff quarters, and even employed qualified teaching staff, has allowed foundation bodies to take part in management of these schools by providing BOG members thus inculcating culture and discipline of those respective foundation bodies. Furthermore, the government increased teachers' salaries and introduced allowances for teachers in hard to reach schools and those who teach sciences have been given refresher training and workshops like Secondary School Science and Mathematics (SESEMAT) training for science and mathematics teachers.

However, USE students have continued to perform poorly in academics with some schools failing to achieve a first grade and many with less than 25% in second grade (UNEB, 2015-2017 UCE Results). Even students who join these schools with good first grades (a sign of academic potential on the side of students) fail to achieve first and second grades from UCE after four years of learning. In 2013, Sheema District ranked the highest in strikes, and the majority of the schools that were involved in strikes were USE schools, an indication that the discipline of the students which is a major backer to academic performance is now a disgrace. It is feared that if this trend does not improve, parents might take away their children from Universal Secondary Education schools which might lead to their collapse. This study therefore, tried to find out the influence of parental engagement in government USE schools on students' academic performance

METHODOLOGY

The researcher used a non-experimental cross-sectional design, in which both qualitative and quantitative techniques of collecting and analysing data were applied. The use of the two approaches was based on the principle of triangulation, which helps in converging opinions to be able to arrive at better conclusions (Amin, 2005).

The population of this study was made up of senior four students, parents of senior four students, teachers teaching in senior four and top management (Head teacher, Deputy Head teacher, Director of Studies (DOS), the chairpersons and treasurers of both Parents' Teachers' Association (PTA) Executive and Board of Governors (BOG)) of all the ten government grant aided (Ref. Appendix XVI) USE schools in Sheema District, South-Western Uganda. These types of respondents were approached by the researcher because he believed that they had the necessary information that could help to achieve the research objectives. Senior four students had spent more years than senior ones, twos, and threes in these USE schools and therefore, had observed how parents are involved in their schools and how it had affected students' performance; parents of senior four students knew how they had been involved in the school and how it had affected students' performance. Teachers, Head teacher, Deputy Head teacher, DOS, PTA Executive and BOG knew how parents got involved and even what they talked about their children's performance. It should be noted that, all PTA Executive members (chosen by parents themselves in a PTA's Annual General Meeting (AGM) to represent them) and many members on the BOG of these schools were parents to these schools.

Therefore, the researcher was convinced that all these gave enough information on the influence of Parental engagement on students' performance in these schools. Non-teaching staff were not considered because they had less information concerning this topic since they are never involved in PTA meetings with parents and rarely handle issues concerning students and their parents. The total population was 3,150 people out of which 736 were sampled as shown in the table 1.

Table 1: Study population, sample size, sampling method and instruments

Category	Population	Sample size	Sampling method	Instrument
Top Management team	5 x 10 = 50	44	Purposive sampling	Interview guide
Senior four subject Teachers	10 x 10=100	80	Purposive sampling	Questionnaire
Parents of Senior four students	150 x 10=1,500	306	Convenience Sampling	Questionnaire
Senior four students	150 x 10=1,500	306	Cluster Sampling	Questionnaire
Total	**3,150**	**736**		

Source: Primary data modified according to the Table of determining sample size from a given population developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). (Ref. Appendix VII).

Sampling is the process of selecting elements from a population in such a way that the sample elements selected represent the population. This means that as much as possible, most characteristics of the population should be represented in the sample selected (Amin, 2005). According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), selection of participants or sampling refers to the process used to select a portion of the population for a study. Purposive, convenience and cluster sampling techniques were used to get information from the respondents depending on the category in which they belong as shown in figure above. The sample size was determined using tables developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) which ensures a good decision model.

In this study, data collection was done both qualitatively and quantitatively putting under consideration the nature of the underlying responses, using both primary and secondary data collection methods. Balinggan (2018) defines primary data as the data collected by an investigator or a researcher for a specific purpose. Secondary data is data that had been collected by someone else for a specific purpose but which is employed for another purpose by another researcher (Mitchel, Namey, & Guest, 2013).

The researcher with the help of research assistants distributed the questionnaires - designed carefully for collecting data in accordance with the specifications of the research questions and hypotheses (Amin, 2005), to the intended respondents. This offers a greater assurance of anonymity because the target sample gives sensitive information without fear, as their identity is not needed on the questionnaire (Amin, 2005). Questionnaires also helped the researcher to easily cover large numbers of students and staff. O'Leary (2014) suggests some obvious strength for this research method, as administering a questionnaire allows the researcher to generate data specific to their own research and offers insights that might otherwise be

unavailable. Furthermore, the questionnaire method has an advantage in terms of low cost and that there is no need to employ many field staff.

To each data collection method mentioned above, the researcher developed a corresponding data collection instrument which was used to collect the necessary information for this study. This was achieved by designing the questions in sections that fully correspond with research objectives, questions and hypotheses for this study.

A questionnaire is the instrument for collecting the primary data (Cohen et al, 2013). Questionnaires were self-administered on all students, parents and staff. Questions in here were semi-structured of which some were open and others close ended. The instrument is preferred because it is time saving during data collection from respondents unlike if one used an interview guide. O'Leary (2014) suggests that questionnaires can: reach a large number of respondents, represent an even larger population, allow for comparisons, generate standardised, quantifiable and empirical data, generate qualitative data through the use of open-ended questions, and be confidential and even anonymous. The researcher observes that respondents are literate enough to fill them in their free time.

However, Cohen et al. (2013) offer special considerations for administering questionnaires within an educational setting: gaining access to schools and teachers,gaining permission to conduct the research, resentment by principals, people vetting what could be used, finding enough willing participants for your sample, schools suffering from 'too much research' by outsiders and insiders, schools/people not wishing to divulge information about themselves, schools not wishing to be identifiable, even with protections guaranteed, local political factors that impinge on the school, teachers' fear of being identified/traceable, even with protections guaranteed, fear of participation by teachers (lose their contracts), unwillingness of teachers to be involved because of their workload, the principal deciding on whether to involve staff, without consultation with the staff, schools/institutions fears of criticism/loss of face, the sensitivity of the research, the issues being investigate. The above was taken care of by the researchers.

The researcher obtained an introductory letter from MUST's Dean of Department of Education Foundations and Psychology and took it to different authorities in government grant-aided USE schools in Sheema District, South-Western Uganda. The researcher asked for permissions from the different administrations to meet different respondents in the schools (for students and teachers but some parents were followed up in their villages). Some key informants like members of BOG and PTA executives were first contacted through phone calls (the researcher got their phone numbers from their respective schools) and after talking to them, planned and met them at their convenience. The information from these respondents while meeting with the researcher was recorded by the researcher.

Quantitative data was analysed using SPSS to derive relevant descriptive statistics (Frequencies, tables, graphs, pie chart and percentages) which was further be analysed in order to arrive at relevant conclusions. The relationship between variables was computed using Pearson's correlation coefficient. Study hypotheses were tested using Pearson correlation and two-way ANOVA with the intention of either accepting them or rejecting them. In trying to determine the contribution of each predictor variable on the dependent variable, multiple linear regressions were used.

An Ordinal Scale was used to measure the variables. This scale provides for variables which generate responses that can be ranked. This study will use a Likert scale (O'Leary, 2014), the level of agreement was ranked (strongly agree reflected more agreement than just agree, just

like strongly disagree was compared to disagree) (Likert 1981). Descriptive statistics obtained using SPSS allowed the generalisation of the data to give an account of the structure or the characteristics of the population as represented by the sample.

Ethical issues in research command increased attention today (Creswell, 2014). The researcher anticipated the ethical issues that would arise during the study (Berg, 2001; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Punch, 2005). Research involves collecting data from people, about people (Punch, 2005). Therefore, the researcher needs to protect the research participants; develop a trust with them; promote the integrity of research; guard against misconduct and impropriety that might reflect on his institution; and cope with new, challenging problems (Israel & Hay, 2006). Ethical questions are apparent today in such issues as personal disclosure, authenticity, and credibility of the research report; the role of researcher in cross-cultural contexts; and issues of personal privacy through forms of Internet data collection (Israel & Hay, 2006).

In conducting the study, therefore, explanations about its aims were made to the respondents, so as to obtain their informed consent. Secrecy of the respondents was also assured and the data that they provided was treated with utmost discretion. As such, the respondents participated in the study voluntarily and mention of their schools and names was avoided.

RESULTS

Difference in Parental Engagement by Family Economic Status

A Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to determine whether there is an effect of family economic status on the level of parental engagement in academic activities of children. Results in Table 2 indicate that there was a statistically significant difference in parental engagement among very poor, poor, average, rich, and very rich families.

Table 2: Kruskal Wallis test for difference in parental engagement by family economic status

	Family's economic status	N	Mean Rank	Chi Square	p
Basic needs	Very poor	1	65.00		
	Poor	23	66.76	30.994	.000
	Average	144	107.51		
	Rich	53	150.13		
	Very Rich	6	139.83		
Communication	Very poor	2	92.00	29.317	.000
	Poor	22	87.61		
	Average	142	101.77		
	Rich	55	149.30		
	Very Rich	5	175.30		
Decision making	Very poor	2	3.75	18.906	.001
	Poor	23	95.67		
	Average	139	106.90		
	Rich	57	140.31		
	Very Rich	6	135.50		

Infrastructural development and maintenance	Very poor	2	19.50	11.412	.022
	Poor	21	98.43		
	Average	145	110.43		
	Rich	54	130.85		
	Very Rich	6	153.67		
Learning environment	Very poor	1	8.50	25.291	.000
	Poor	20	100.28		
	Average	136	96.86		
	Rich	55	141.19		
	Very Rich	6	153.08		
Learning resources provision	Very poor	2	130.25	41.890	.000
	Poor	21	71.76		
	Average	145	102.74		
	Rich	56	159.76		
	Very Rich	6	158.92		

There was a statistically significant difference in parents' provision of basic needs ($X^2_{(4)}$ = 30.994, p < .05), academic communication ($X^2_{(4)}$ = 29.317, p < .05), academic decision making ($X^2_{(4)}$ = 18.906, p = .001), infrastructure development and maintenance ($X^2_{(4)}$ = 11.412, p = .022), provision of a conducive learning environment at home ($X^2_{(4)}$ = 25.291, p < .05), and provision of adequate learning resources at home ($X^2_{(4)}$ = 41.890, p < .05). In each case, the hypothesis that there is a statistically significant difference among parents of different socioeconomic statuses was accepted. Therefore, being very poor, poor, average, rich, or very rich affects the level of parental engagement in learners' academic activities in government grant-aided USE schools in Sheema District. Results in Table 2 show that richer parent have higher rank of parental engagement. This mean that richer parents provide more basic needs, exhibit better academic communication, take part in academic decision making, contribute more to infrastructure development and maintenance, and provide more learning materials.

Difference in Parental Engagement among Parents of Various Levels of Education

A Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to determine whether there was an effect of parents' level of education on the level of parental engagement in academic activities of children. Results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Kruskal Wallis Test for difference in parental engagement by highest level of education of most educated parent

Parental engagement	Parents' highest level of education	N	Mean Rank	Chi Square	P
Basic needs	Never went to school	8	99.69	4.719	.451
	Primary	78	112.35		
	Secondary	66	108.52		
	Certificate	30	105.70		
	Diploma	15	139.60		
	Degree and above	29	126.31		

Academic Communication	Never went to school	9	106.28	4.867	.432
	Primary	74	106.31		
	Secondary	68	117.09		
	Certificate	30	100.88		
	Diploma	16	136.34		
	Degree and above	28	122.55		
Decision making	Never went to school	8	89.38	2.087	.837
	Primary	78	111.67		
	Secondary	68	112.75		
	Certificate	28	112.66		
	Diploma	16	120.97		
	Degree and above	28	123.89		
Structural development and maintenance	Never went to school	9	100.67	3.512	.622
	Primary	79	109.13		
	Secondary	65	110.71		
	Certificate	31	113.37		
	Diploma	15	136.97		
	Degree and above	27	124.41		
Learning environment	Never went to school	8	66.63	7.771	.169
	Primary	73	105.32		
	Secondary	65	109.47		
	Certificate	29	102.57		
	Diploma	14	129.11		
	Degree and above	28	126.21		
Learning resources provision	Never went to school	8	72.38	27.901	.000
	Primary	82	96.10		
	Secondary	67	110.97		
	Certificate	30	130.73		
	Diploma	16	164.19		
	Degree and above	26	149.67		

Results in Table 3 indicate that there was a statistically significant difference in parental engagement in provision of learning materials among parents of various educational levels ($X^2_{(5)} = 27.901$, $p < .05$). Hence Hypothesis that "there is a statistically significant difference in Parental Engagement by Highest Level of Education of Most Educated Parent" was accepted for parental engagement in provision of learning materials. The trends in Table 3 indicate that the higher the level of education, the higher the rank of parental engagement, except that beyond diploma, the rank reduces. This implies that an increase in the level of education increases the parent's potential to afford and hence provide learning materials to learners. Parents of a diploma and above are usually more engaged in their professional work and tend to be too busy for their children.

Parents with less education have a will and try their best but are limited by other challenges especially poverty and lack of exposure. Circulars from GGAUSES to schools are always written in English and parents of primary education level and below may not interpret what the circular wants. Even knowing the learning materials to provide to the learners may be a problem.

There was no statistically significant difference in provision of basic needs ($X^2_{(4)} = 4.719$, $p > .05$), academic communication ($X^2_{(4)} = 4.867$, $p > .05$), academic decision making ($X^2_{(4)} = 2.087$, $p > .05$), infrastructural development and maintenance ($X^2_{(4)} = 3.512$, $p > .05$), and provision of a conducive learning environment at home ($X^2_{(4)} = 7.771$, $p > .05$) among the parents of various educational qualifications. Therefore, Hypothesis 1b was rejected. This implies that parental engagement in academic activities through provision of basic needs, communication, decision making, infrastructure development and maintenance and provision of learning materials does not depend on education levels of the parents. Administrators in GGAUSES should design programs to sensitise all the parents to be engaged in all these activities irrespective of their education levels.

Difference in Parental Engagement among Parents of Different Number of Dependants

To test Hypothesis that there is a statistically significant difference in parental engagement among parents of different numbers of dependants, a Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to determine whether there was an effect of the number of dependants on the level of parental engagement in academic activities of children. Results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Kruskal Wallis Test for difference in parental engagement by number of dependants

Parental engagement	Number of Dependants	N	Mean Rank	Chi Square	p
Basic needs	1-2	5	92.80	1.287	.525
	3-4	78	110.40		
	5 and above	146	118.22		
Communication	1-2	5	78.90	1.697	.428
	3-4	78	111.92		
	5 and above	144	116.34		
Decision making	1-2	5	112.30	.597	.742
	3-4	75	109.79		
	5 and above	148	116.96		
Structural development and maintenance	1-2	5	95.70	.417	.812
	3-4	78	114.76		
	5 and above	145	115.01		
Learning environment	1-2	4	77.50	1.798	.407
	3-4	72	115.77		
	5 and above	143	108.00		
Learning resources provision	1-2	3	77.00	1.049	.592
	3-4	79	117.19		
	5 and above	149	116.15		

Results in Table 4 show that there was no statistically significant difference in all the aspects of parental engagement, that is, provision of basic needs ($X^2_{(4)} = 1.287$, $p > .05$), academic communication ($X^2_{(4)} = 1.697$, $p > .05$), academic decision making ($X^2_{(4)} = .597$, $p > .05$), infrastructural development and maintenance ($X^2_{(4)} = .417$, $p > .05$), provision of a conducive learning environment at home ($X^2_{(4)} = 1.798$, $p > .05$), and provision of adequate learning resources at home ($X^2_{(4)} = 1.049$, $p > .05$) among parents with 1—2, 3—4, and 5 and above children. Therefore, Hypothesis that there is a statistically significant difference in parental engagement among parents of different numbers of dependents was rejected. This implies that the number of dependents does not significantly influence the level of parental engagement among parents of learners in government grant-aided USE schools in Sheema District in western Uganda. School administrators should encourage parents to support the needy children where possible since having dependents does not significantly affect their engagement in their children's learning.

DISCUSSION

The study established the differences in the levels of parental engagement by family socioeconomic status, highest level of education of most educated parents, and number of dependents in the family. According to Tiwari and Tiwari (2020), numerous psychological factors influence whether or not parents get engaged in their children's education. One aspect that inspires parents to become interested in their children's education is the example they set. Socially acceptable parents are ones who conform to prevalent social norms. The behaviour of parents will be formalised in a set of societal norms. The views parents hold about their children's development, as well as their own experiences and viewpoints, influence their involvement in their children's education.

Results indicate a statistically significant difference between the very poor, poor, average, rich, and very rich parents in their provision of basic needs, academic communication, academic decision making, infrastructure development and maintenance, provision of a conducive home learning environment, and provision of adequate home learning resources. Richer parents provided more fundamental necessities, demonstrated better academic communication, participated in academic decision-making, contributed more to infrastructure creation and upkeep, and gave their children more learning resources. These findings agree with those of Odama and Ezati (2017) who discovered that parents of schools in central Uganda, the region with the highest socioeconomic position in the country, were more engaged in their children's academic activities than those from the northern part of Uganda. It was mentioned that the schools in the central area held parents' meetings with administration and subject teachers for students with special needs and encouraged parents to check on their children's development daily. The authors also discovered that parents met with each subject teacher for guidance, held House Meetings, and that the school administration and staff encouraged parents to express their opinions openly during those meetings, as well as considered those opinions.

Similarly, Rutherford and Edgar (1999) acknowledge that parents from lower socioeconomic backgrounds face a greater number of barriers to involvement in their student's secondary education, such as inflexible work schedules, lack of resources, transportation issues, and stress due to living in disadvantaged communities. The authors further indicate that low-income urban parents can and wish to participate as much as middle-class parents in their children's schooling. Hence the finding of this study that parents of various educational qualifications showed statistically significant differences in engagement in provision of learning materials is plausibly explained by the differences in socioeconomic status. Rutherford and Edgar also emphasise that inflexible work policies and child-care responsibilities sometimes impede

single-parent engagement. However, as pointed out by Sekiwu and Tamale (2019), the variation in students' academic performance, though attributable to parental engagement in child education and parents' socio-economic status, is also highly highly influenced and explained by other factors. Such factors need to be taken into consideration when planning for students' academic activities.

The trends in the results indicate that the higher the level of education, the higher the rank of parental engagement, except that beyond diploma, the rank reduces. This implies that parents who were once students know what studentship entails and so are able to engage in the study activities of their own children both at school and at home. Such parents are more likely than their less educated counterparts to help with the children's homework. A study by Núñez (2021) reveals that many parents lack the education to provide appropriate supervision and, as a result, come in only to control (aimed at the behavioural aspect of the child's involvement in homework, tending to ensure that homework is completed) rather than to provide motivational and emotional support (aimed at ensuring that students have the motivational and emotional conditions necessary to complete homework). As expected, this study revealed a nonsignificant difference in provision of basic needs, academic communication, academic decision making, infrastructural development and maintenance, and provision of a conducive learning environment at home among the parents of various educational qualifications. Many lowly educated parents are engaged in small scale business ventures which are able to generate the required income for provision of the school requirements. Differences are likely to arise only in motivational and emotional support.

The results showed that the number of dependants did not significantly influence parental engagement in provision of basic needs, academic communication, academic decision making, infrastructural development and maintenance, provision of a conducive learning environment at home, and provision of adequate learning resources at home among parents with 1—2, 3—4, and 5-and-above children. Given that the data were collected from participants associated with the school system, then the parents most probably affected negatively by an increased number of dependents were not part of the sample. Generally, in the Ugandan setting, most parents take their responsibilities seriously and meet the scholastic needs of their children.

According to Mehta and Kaur (2022), regular parental influence is necessary for enhanced communication and interactions between parents, teachers, and administration. When parents and teachers work to reduce the impact of pupils' diverse upbringings on their academic performance, students from all backgrounds gain academically. However, as Jeynes (2007) notes, parental involvement in their children's education changes with their age. It has been noticed that parents are more involved in the activities of their younger children than those of their older children. A study by Odama and Ezati (2017) similarly posits that learners' perceptions of parental support demonstrated positive effects on academic performance in secondary-school children, but not in children in the last few years of primary school. Therefore, while both learners and teachers may value various forms of parental participation, it may have less of an effect on academic performance among different demographics of learners and parents.

CONCLUSION

The study has shown that there are variations in different aspects of parental engagement based on family socioeconomic status and level of education of parents. This implies that parental engagement needs to be defined and evaluated while keeping in mind a mixture of cultural and individual characteristics of parents and children in different ethnic groups. A one-size-fits-all approach to the design of parental engagement interventions is very likely to fail in diverse

populations of different religious foundations, rural-urban divide, ownership of the school, composition by gender, and the like.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Researchers recommend that the government should develop programs that aim at improving the socioeconomic status and education levels of parents, since these significantly affect the levels of parental engagement in their childrens' academic activities. It is also recommended that school administrators should sensitise and encourage all parents to participate in academic activities of their children irrespective of their education levels. The belief that highly educated people provide basic needs, engage in decision making (like attending PTA meetings), communicate academic issues to their children, and create a conducive learning environment for their children has been challenged by this research.

REFERENCES

Abuya, B., Ngware, M., Hungi, N., Mutisya, M., Nyariro, M., Mahuro, G.,& Oketch, M. (2014). *Community participation and after-school support to improve learning outcomes and transition to secondary school among disadvantaged girls*. Retrieved from http://aphrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Improving-Learning-Outcomes-Midterm-Report-2014.pdf.

Amin, M. E. (2005). *Social Science Research: Conception, Methodology and Analysis*. University of Yaounde I, BP 755 Yaounde Cameroon and Makerere University.

Balinggan, G. (2018). "Difference Between Primary Data and Secondary Data''. DifferenceBetween.net. [http://www.differencebetween.net/language/wordslanguage/difference-between-primary-data-and-secondary-data].

Bell, J., Waters, S., & Ebooks Corporation. (2014). Doing your research project: A guide for first-time researchers (Sixth ed.). Maidenhead, Berkshire: Open University Press.

Berg, B. L. (2001). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences* (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Bryk, A. S., Sebring, P. B., Allensworth, E., Luppescu, S., & Easton, J. Q. (2010). Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lessons from Chicago. The University of Chicago Press: Chicago.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., Morrison, K., & Ebooks Corporation. (2011; 2013; 1993). *Research methods in education* (7th ed.). Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203720967

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches (4th ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Duan, W., Guan, Y., & Bu, H. (2018). The Effect of Parental Involvement and Socioeconomic Status on Junior School Students' Academic Achievement and School Behavior in China. *Front. Psychol.* 9:952. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.00952

Hesse-Biber, S. N., & Leavy, P. (2011). *The practice of qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Israel, M., & Hay, I. (2006). *Research ethics for social scientists: Between ethical conduct andregulatory compliance*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Jeynes, W. H. (2016). A meta-analysis: the relationship between parental involvement and African American school outcomes. *J. Black Stud.* 47, 195–216. https://doi.org/10.1177/0021934715623522

Khan, A. A., Tufail, M. W., & Hussain, I. (2014). A Study on the Impact of Parenting Styles and Self-esteem on Academic Achievement of Post-graduate students. *The Sindh University Journal of Education*, Vol. 43, 96-112 Retrieved from: sujo.usindh.edu.pk/index.php/SUJE/article/download/1971/1758

Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). *Determining Sample Size for Research Activities. Educational and Psychological Measurements*, 30, 607-610.

Likert, R. (1981). System 4: A resource from improving public administration. Public Administration Review, 41(6), 674-678.

Ma, X., Shen, J., Krenn, H. Y., Hu, S., & Yuan, J. (2016). A meta-analysis of the relationship between learning outcomes and parental involvement during early childhood education and early elementary education. *Educ. Psychol. Rev.* 28, 771–801. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-015-9351-1

Mahuro, G.N. & Hungi, N. (2016). *Parental participation improves student academic achievement: A case of Iganga and Mayuge District in Uganda*. Cogent Education (2016), 3: 1264170. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2016.1264170

Marphatia, A. A., Edge, K., Legault, E., & Archer, D. (2010). Politics of participation:Parental support for children's learning and school governance in Burundi, Malawi, Senegal and Uganda. Retrieved from http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/ilops_parents_final.pdf.

McMillan, J.H., & Schumacher, S. (2010). Research in Education, Evidence-based research, Pearson, Boston.

Mehta, A., & Kaur, S. (2022). Relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement among viiith grade students. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts, 10*(8), a48-a58.

Mitchel, M. L., Namey, E. E., & Guest, G. (2013). Collecting Qualitative Data: A Field Manual for Applied Research. Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks (CA).

National Education Association (2018). Great Public Schools for Every Student: NEA Handbook. Retrieved from https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/NEA_Handbook_2018.pdf

Núñez, J. C., Pascual, S., Suárez, N., & Rosário, P. (2021). Perceived parental involvement and children's homework engagement at the end of Primary Education: A cluster analysis. Revista de Psicología y Educación, 16(1), 88-103, https://doi.org/10.23923/rpye2021.01.204

O'Leary, Z. (2014). *The essential guide to doing your research project* (2nd ed.) London: SAGE.

Obama, B. (2008). "*What's Possible for our Children".* Speech delivered at MESA in Thornton: Published by "The Denver Post" on newsroom@denverpost.com on Wednesday, 28th May 2008, at 8:00am and updated May 7th, 2016 at 10:09am.

Odama, S., & Ezati, B. A. (2017). Parents' contributions towards education process and variations in school performance indices (SPI) in Uganda certificate of education (UCE) examinations in central and northern Uganda. *Journal of Education & Social Policy*, *4*(2), 80-96.

Punch, K. F. (2005). *Introduction to social research: Quantitative and qualitative approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rafiq, H. M. W., Fatima, T., Sohail, M. M., Saleem, M., & Khan, M. A. (2013). Parental involvement and academic achievement; A study on secondary school students of Lahore, Pakistan. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 3(8).

Reece, C., Staudt, M., & Ogle, A. (2013). Lessons learned from a neighborhood-based collaboration to increase parent engagement. School Community Journal, 23(2), 207-226.

Rutherford, R. B., & Edgar, E. (1999). Teachers and parents: A guide to interaction and cooperation. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.

Sekiwu, D., & Kaggwa, V. T. (2019). Parent Involvement in Child Education as a Correlate of Academic Performance: Analyzing Denominational Secondary Schools in Uganda. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal*, 6(6) 52-67.

Sekiwu, D., & Tamale, K. V. (2019). Parent involvement in child education as a correlate of academic performance: Analyzing denominational secondary schools in Uganda. Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal, 6(6) 52-67. Doi:10.14738/assrj.66.6628.

Sivertsen, J. (2015.). Washington Christian Academy Blog: *The Importance of Parental Involvement in Your Child's Education.* Retrieved from http://www.washingtonchristian.org/blog/the-importance-of-parental-involvement-inyour-childs-education.

Tiwari, N. S., Tiwari, S. K. (2020). Relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement in higher secondary school students. *IJARIIE, 6*(6), 90-96.