
Chronic Illness And Class Participation In Secondary Schools In Kisoro District: A Case Study Of St. Andrew's Academy In Kisoro Municipality

Mwubaha Restatuta¹, Byaruhanga Benard²

1, 2 Metropolitan International University

Abstract

The study aimed at chronic illness and class participation in secondary schools in Kisoro district: a case study of St. Andrew's academy in Kisoro municipality **and it was** guided by the following objectives; To find out the level of chronic illness at St. Andrews academy in Kisoro Municipality, to find out the level of class participation in English subject at St. Andrews academy in Kisoro Municipality and to find out the extent to which chronic illness influence class participation in English subject in Kisoro Municipality. The descriptive survey design was adopted; this was because cross sectional approach was useful in obtaining an overall picture as it stood at the time of the study. Cross sectional studies are comparatively cheap to undertake and easy to analyze. The research study was conducted in Kisoro Municipality in Kisoro District. Kisoro District is located in Kigezi region bordered by Kabale in the East, Democratic Republic of Congo in the west, Kanungu District in the North and Rwanda in the south. From the findings, Chronic illness pandemics should be controlled a cross secondary schools in the country so as children can build their career without fear of these serious diseases which most of the times has no cure. An assessment was conducted of the relationship between the level of chronic illness reported by students and their level of participation during classes for the English subject. The findings indicate a very high positive correlation of 0.705 between these two variables, demonstrating that as the level of a student's chronic illness increases, their level of participation in English class also tends to increase. Chronic illness pandemics should be controlled a cross secondary schools in the country so as children can build their career without fear of these serious diseases which most of the times has no cure.

Keywords: Chronic Illness, Class Participation and Secondary Schools

Background of the study

Chronic diseases are generally defined as conditions that last 1 year or more and require constant medical care or limit activities of daily living (Oromo et al., 2023). About 25% of children in the United States between the ages of 2 and 8 have a chronic health condition such as asthma, obesity, other physical conditions, and behavioral/learning problems (Kawachi, 2019). Although it is difficult to estimate and there is no single source of information on chronic diseases in school-aged children, various studies report that among children under 18 years of age, about 16% have poor oral health (S. J. Mark & Jacob, 2023), 7 to 10% have asthma, 4 % food allergy, 0.7% seizure disorder and 0.3% diabetes. Students with chronic health conditions may face lower academic achievement, increased disability, fewer employment opportunities, and limited community interactions as they enter adulthood (Ntirandekura & Christopher, 2022).

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Because these youth spend a significant portion of their time in schools, it is important to understand the relationship between chronic health conditions and academic achievement. Previous reports show that students who are able to manage their chronic health conditions tend to perform better academically (Godfrey et al., 2023). Chronic or long-term illness means having to adapt to the demands of the illness and the therapy used to treat the condition. Studies show that some students with chronic health conditions have lower academic achievement than students without such conditions, although this relationship varies by condition and may be influenced by other factors (Ronald et al., 2023). In this brief, “academic success” refers to academic performance, learning-related behaviors, and cognitive skills. “Academic performance” refers to class grades, grade point average (GPA), standardized test scores, and graduation rates (N. Mark et al., 2023).

Statement of the problem

Approximately 25% of children and other adults in Uganda between the ages of 2 and 68 have chronic health conditions such as asthma, obesity and other physical conditions that affect learning outcomes and participation (Emmanuel et al., 2023). Although it is difficult to estimate and there is no single source of information on chronic diseases in school-age children, various studies report that about 16% of children under the age of 18 have poor oral health, 7 to 10% have asthma, 4% have food allergies (Denis & Richard, 2023),

0.7% have seizure disorders and 0.3% have diabetes. Students with chronic health conditions may face lower academic achievement, increased disability, fewer employment opportunities, and limited interactions with the community as adults (Paul & Kazaara, 2023). Because these youth spend a significant portion of their time in schools, it is important to understand the relationship between chronic health conditions and academic achievement. Previous reports show that students who are able to manage their chronic health conditions tend to perform better academically. Therefore, a research study seeks to determine whether chronic illness had an effect on the teaching of English in secondary schools in Kisoro District (Anthony et al., 2023).

Specific objectives

1. To find out the level of chronic illness at St. Andrews academy in Kisoro Municipality
2. To find out the level of class participation in English subject at St. Andrews academy in

Kisoro Municipality

3. To find out the extent to which chronic illness influence class participation in English subject in Kisoro Municipality

Methodology

The research design that was adopted was the descriptive survey design. This was because the descriptive survey design helped to determine the frequency of occurrences of the phenomenon and discover whether or not relationships

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exited between the variables. The descriptive survey design was adopted; this was because cross sectional approach was useful in obtaining an overall picture as it stood at the time of the study (Jallow et al., 2021). Cross sectional studies are comparatively cheap to undertake and easy to analyze (Kumar, 2020). The research study was conducted in Kisoro Municipality in Kisoro District. Kisoro District is located in Kigezi region bordered by Kabale in the East, Democratic Republic of Congo in the west, Kanungu District in the North and Rwanda in the south (Olanrewaju et al., 2021). The target population consisted students from senior three and four as they were studied as primary respondents, the teachers who had taught for more than 5 years and the head teacher of the school as they were studied as key informants making up a total of 20 as a target population (Nafiu, 2012). A sample was used to Kisoro Municipality where there were many secondary schools both private and public but only one secondary school was chosen for the research study that was St. Andrews academy because the researcher could not manage to consider all the secondary schools in the municipality due to limited time and resources to incur the costs. Therefore, in response to the slovin`s formula, 10 respondents were students, 08 teachers, and 01 head teacher of the school as the parent population (Nafiu et al., 2012). This was because the population more or less shared similar socio-demographic characteristics and also due to resource and time constraints. The respondents interviewed included students from senior three and four, teachers and the head teacher of the school.

Table 1; shows different Categories of the People in the Study sample with their Sizes.

Population (N)	Target	Sample
Students	11	10
Teachers	08	08
Head teacher	01	01
Total	20	19

The respondents in this study were students as primary respondents. Simple random sampling was used to select respondents in the group of students within the school. A total of 10 students from St. Andrews academy participated in the study and their selection involved simple random sampling and specific attention were paid to inclusion of both male and female students in the study school. The researcher used the questionnaire as the major primary data collection in this study. Questionnaire is referred to as a set of questions used for collecting data from respondents

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in order to carry out the researcher. The researcher prepared 10 questionnaires for the students, 08 for the teachers and 01 for head teacher of the school to supplement the interview as the key informants (Abdi et al., 2020). Data processing was done through, coding, editing and tabulation. Data analysis was done using computer analysis with the help of the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social sciences). Descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution and percentages was used to analyze the data. Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis in which all the responses were categorized according to their thematic areas and analyzed according to their contents. Presentation was done on tables, and figures. Statistical Package for Social sciences (SPSS) software was used to aid in the analysis of data (Nelson et al., 2022).

RESULTS

Table 1: Correlation between level of chronic illness, level of class participation in English subject, Chronic Illness And Class Participation In Secondary Schools

		level of chronic illness	level of class participation in English subject	Chronic Illness	Class Participation
level of chronic illness	Pearson Correlation	1	.705**	.669**	.518**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.019	.000
	N	19	19	19	19
level of class participation in English subject	Pearson Correlation	.705**	1	.607	.638**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	19	19	19	19
Chronic Illness	Pearson Correlation	.669**	.607	1	.669*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	.000		.019
	N	19	19	19	19
Class Participation	Pearson Correlation	.518**	.638**	.317*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.010	
	N	19	19	19	19
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).					

Source; Primary Data

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The table presented shows the results of analyzing the correlation between four variables: the level of chronic illness, the level of class participation in the English subject, chronic illness itself, and overall class participation among students in secondary schools. An assessment was conducted of the relationship between the level of chronic illness reported by students and their level of participation during classes for the English subject. The findings indicate a very high positive correlation of 0.705 between these two variables, demonstrating that as the level of a student's chronic illness increases, their level of participation in English class also tends to increase (Nelson et al., 2023). This strong relationship was determined to be statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

The table also examined the correlation between a student's level of chronic illness and simply whether they have a chronic illness or not. The results revealed a fairly high positive correlation of 0.669 between these two variables, signifying that students experiencing higher levels of chronic illness were more likely to have a chronic illness. This correlation was found to be statistically significant at the 0.05 level. Furthermore, the analysis determined the correlation between a student's level of chronic illness and their overall rate of participation in class. A moderate positive correlation of 0.518 was observed, indicating that students with greater chronic illness severity tended to have moderately higher classroom participation across all subjects. This correlation was deemed statistically significant at the 0.01 level. The assessment also looked at the correlation between a student's participation level specifically in English class and their general participation across all classes. An extremely high positive correlation of 0.638 was reported, meaning students who were very engaged during English were also very engaged in other classes. This correlation was significant at the 0.01 level. Finally, the table examined the correlation between simply having a chronic illness or not and a student's overall class participation. A moderate positive correlation of 0.669 was found, suggesting that students with chronic illnesses participated moderately more in classes overall. This last correlation was significant at the 0.05 level.

Conclusion

Conclusively, students with chronic illness in terms of asthma, obesity, epilepsy, blood pressure had lower standardized test scores or grades and tended to be absent more frequently than other students, and performed poorly academically as their peers who did not have asthma progressed positively. It showed that a modest increase in risk of academic problems among children with asthma compared with other children; among children from lower-income families, children with asthma were twice as likely to fail a grade as children who were well.

Students with chronic illness experience low morale for participating with others, experiences anger, trauma, depression, shame, frustration, anxiety and feels uncomfortable while in class with others hence low academic

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performance. The study findings also indicated that Students with chronic health conditions like epilepsy, diabetes, asthma, blood pressure, cancer, obesity, may face lower academic achievement, increased disability, fewer job opportunities and limited community interactions as they enter adulthood.

Recommendations

Chronic illness pandemics should be controlled across secondary schools in the country so as children can build their career without fear of these serious diseases which most of the times has no cure.

Ministry of health should put strict measures and policies to curb down chronic illness across the country since education is key to the success of the young generations.

Students with chronic illness should always be treated equally like other students in the school without any form of discrimination to reduce anger, anxiety, and depression among the patient students. This will increase their morale to participate in class, reduce absenteeism, redundancy, shame and low self-esteem.

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