

**Teachers' Qualifications and Experience as Predictors of Students' Academic Performance Kisoro District,
Uganda**

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Abstract

This study sought to establish the relationship between qualification and experience of teachers and academic performance of students in Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) at public secondary schools in Kisoro District, Uganda. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. One hundred and twenty (120) respondents (teachers) were drawn from one hundred and thirty (130) teachers using stratified sampling technique; and all the four (4) head teachers were selected using census. Questionnaire and interview guide were used to collect data for the study. One hundred and twenty (120) questionnaires were administered but the number of respondents (teachers) who returned the filled questionnaires were 104 giving the overall return rate as 86.7%. The study established that qualification of teachers was significantly and weakly related to academic performance of students ($r=0.395^{**}$, $p<0.01$) and a statistically moderate positive and significant relationship between experience of teachers and academic performance of students ($r=0.430^{**}$, $p<0.01$) in Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools in Kisoro District. Employing qualified teachers; teachers with good qualification should be bench marked, provide on job training for newly employed teachers for improved academic performance. The study recommends that teachers with high qualification should be promoted to various positions. Teachers with good or high qualification should be provided with accommodation, qualified teachers should be supported to further their academic levels, teachers with experience should be motivated thus provide them with accommodation, hence bring them closer to school which leads them to perform effectively be involved in all school programmes thus good academic performance among students. Also, provision of allowance to class teachers, Heads of Departments and marking allowances should be given to experienced teachers and this encourages them to do their best hence improved academic performance in Public Secondary School. Experienced teachers should be re- tooled for example sponsor them for further training in others fields and this helps to equip them to better students' academic performance. Staff workshop / seminars should be facilitated for that is both internally and externally, help the teachers improve on students' academic performance at Uganda Certificate of Education.

Keywords: Academic Performance, Experience, Kisoro District, Qualifications, Student, Teachers.

Introduction

Education reform is at the top of the agenda of almost every country in the world and is a fundamental right of every citizen as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (Jac & Kazaara, 2023). Therefore,

it is necessary for different countries to provide quality and relevant education to all their citizens regardless of civilization, gender, location, social group and religion. Education is an instrument of excellence for

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effective national development; therefore it is expected to be of high quality (Racheal et al., 2023). The issue of quality in the education system receives a lot of attention from various education actors. (Victoria et al., 2023) confirm that education actors, especially parents, but also the whole society are now demanding quality in the education system, which may be the result of the system being perceived as low-quality products every year. . The constant call for quality may be due to the low value of the products to fit where their skills are needed and the huge financial investment released into the system (Akankwasa et al., 2022). The need for quality education is paramount given the huge amount of money allocated to the education system. They affirmed that stakeholders should be held accountable for the quality of products from the system. Secondary education is one of the levels of education and a critical level of the education system (Polycarp et al., 2023). It lays the foundations

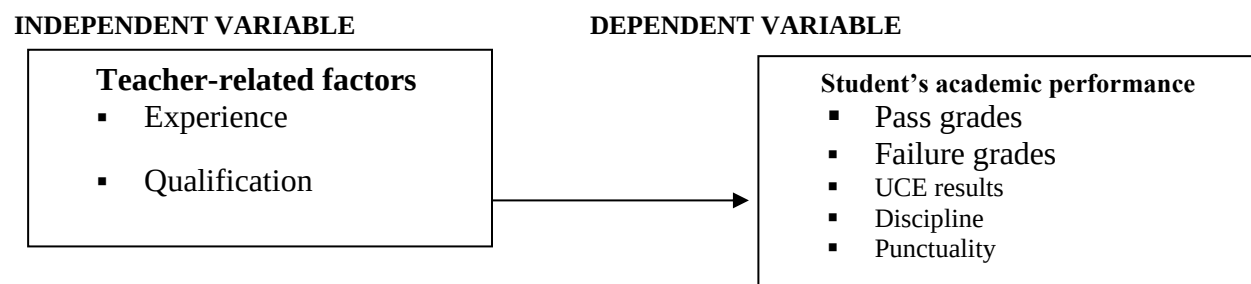
of higher education and the foundation of everything a child wants to become in the future. It is obtained after primary education and prepares students for tertiary education. Secondary education plays a key role in building national capacity at higher rather than lower levels of education (Shamim et al., 2023). According to (Seth & Ntirandekura, 2022), the Kenyan government started and implemented free education in public secondary schools to increase the demand for education at this level. This level of learning has different nomenclature and degrees in different countries of the world. In Uganda, this level extends through senior and ends at stage four where students complete the Uganda Certificate of Examination, while in Nigeria it is divided into junior and senior secondary schools for three years and students complete the Senior Secondary Certificate Education (S.S.C.E) (Richard et al., 2023).

Problem Statement

The study was aiming at teachers' qualifications and experience as predictors of students' academic performance kisoro district, uganda

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual frame work of the study shows the relationship between teacher-related factors and academic performance of students. It has teacher-related factors as the independent variable (IV) linking with academic performance of students as the dependent variables. The intervening variable is also included. This can be shown as follows in Figure 1 below:



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Figure 1: Conceptual framework for the study**Source: Adapted from Alaka (2011) and modified by Researcher (2020)**

Teachers have important influence on the academic achievement of students in schools academic (Ntirandekura, Friday, et al., 2022). Teachers play fundamental roles in educational attainment as they ultimately responsible for the translation of policy into necessary action and principles (Afe, 2001). (Victoria et al., 2023) in their study resolved that the most important factor influencing student learning is the teacher. Teachers stand as the interface in the transmission of knowledge, attitudes, values and skills in the learning process (Anthony et al., 2023). When the teachers are ineffective, students under their tutelage will achieve inadequate progress academically. This is heedless of how similar or different the students exhibit in terms of individual potential in academic achievement (Zulaikah & Rebecca, 2023). There has never been consensus on the specific teacher factors that influence students' academic achievement (Victoria et al., 2023).

The conceptual framework in Figure 1 indicates a roadmap for directing the relationship between the independent variable that is teacher-related factors and dependent variable that is students' academic performance. The intervening variables consist of commitment, family background, peer influence administration, government and in-service training (Emmanuel et al., 2023). Although the intervening variable influences the dependent variable, it is not of primary interest in the study like the dependent variable. The study considers the relationship between teacher-related factors and academic performance of students in Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools in Kisoro District (Deus, 2023). The teachers' experience, qualification, knowledge of subject matter and methods adopted to teach in class are fundamental factors that would ensure good students' academic performance. The moderating variables however were not interrogated as indicated in the conceptual frame work given in Figure 1. They were only brought there to allow the reader see how they influence the dependent variables

Influence of teacher characteristics (e.g., gender educational qualifications and teaching experience) on students' academic achievement have been examined with different findings by many authors. (Moses et al., 2022) found that, there was a significant relationship between teachers' gender and students' academic achievement. However, they found no significant relationship between the gender of teachers and the performance achievement of their students. (Richard et al., 2022) found that teachers' experience and educational qualifications were the prime predictors of students' academic achievement. But, (Mark et al., 2023) found that teachers' teaching experience and educational qualifications were not significantly related to students' achievement. Etsy & Porter (2005) found that the teacher factors that significantly contributed to low academic achievement were incidences of lateness to school, incidences of absenteeism, and inability to complete the syllabi. (Richard et al., 2022) in their findings, claimed that the management of homework and assignments given to students by the teachers has an impact on the achievement of their students.

These grades are the basic requirement for selection into advanced level and institutions of higher learning and skills acquisition. Poor performance of secondary schools in the district undermines students' chances of progressing and gaining admission into Advanced level or institutions of higher learning and denied them the opportunity for job placement and in most cases reduces an individual's active participation in national development and assignment because teachers play a major role in the teaching and learning process (Richard et al., 2023). Factors that affect the teachers in the performance of their duties also affect the academic performance of students. Studies have been done by (Seth & Ntirandekura, 2022) to address factors influencing the performances. These studies did not address the problem of poor performance in relation to teacher factors. This study, therefore examined the influence of teacher-related factors as predictors of academic performance of students in Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools in Kisoro District.

Literature Review

This chapter presents reviews of both conceptual literature and empirical evidence considered relevant to the study. In line with this, the chapter discusses qualifications of teachers and academic performance of students, experience of teachers and academic performance of students, and knowledge of the subject matter by teachers and academic performance of students (Oromo et al., 2023).

The right to education means the right to a qualified teacher. Indeed, a teacher is deemed to be qualified if he/she has at least the minimum academic qualifications required for teaching a specific subject at the relevant level in a particular country (Anthony et al., 2023). In some countries the minimum requirements are master's degree, in Uganda a high school diploma or a bachelor's degree in education is sufficient. Other countries like Finland the education system is globally exceptional as teachers need the master's degree in education to be qualified for teaching primary or secondary education (Seth & Ntirandekura, 2022), in India the National Council for Teacher Education determines the qualifications for being a teacher while in France teachers are mainly civil servants recruited by competitive examinations. To be qualified means having both academic qualifications and the proper training. (Bonney, et al., 2015).

Teacher qualification gives a teacher authorization to teach in pre- schools, primary or secondary example of teacher qualifications in Uganda include Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), professional graduate diploma in education (PGDE), Diploma in Education and training (DET) and Bachelor of education (Brighton et al., 2023). Teacher qualification means that an individual has sufficient opportunities to practice teaching under the supervision of a qualified mentor during pre-service training and have access to professional development opportunities that target specific skills, needs during in-service employment. Academic performance of student is a complex behaviour with several abilities, for example, memory, previous knowledge or aptitude as well as psychological factors such as motivation, interests, or emotions (Ntirandekura, Friday, et al., 2022). Educational psychologists and researchers have

argued that there are many determinants of academic performance (Ronet et al., 2023). Academic performance of students is measured on the basis of students' grades. This measurement is among the key elements in the construction of an educational institution's image (Joventa et al., 2023) defined academic performance as the outcome of a student's efforts at educational establishments, which is usually expressed through educational grades. Academic performance may also be expressed as a quantitative and qualitative score, a grade, which if coherent and valid, will reflect the level of learning generated by the teacher-student relationship on the basis of the goals set out early in the class (Lydia et al., 2023). Wiley & Yoon (1995) asserted that performance is used to label the observable manifestations of knowledge, skill, concepts, and understanding and idea. Performance is the acquisition of particular grades on examination; it's how or indicates the ability of students, mastery of content, skills in applying learned knowledge to a particular situation. According to (Christopher, Moses, Muhindo, & Nturanabo, 2022), a student is generally judged on examination performance. Therefore, academic performance is the application of learning product that at the end of the process provides mastery of the content. (Ntirandekura, Ainebyoona, et al., 2022) ascertained that academic performance of students at different levels of education appears to be deteriorating every year. In Nigeria, there are many factors influencing the ability of students to cultivate effective and efficient study habit. Meanwhile, (Christopher, Moses, Muhindo, & Komunda, 2022) claimed that study habits are those learning tendencies that enable students to work privately. Study habit, when broken down involves the time put in to study method used in studying and content of study. A great understanding of research provides evidence that study habits and study attitudes are both significant variables, which determine the academic performance of students. Yet, in spite of the perceived importance of study habits and study attitudes to academic achievement, it seems that educational institutions are silent regarding the understanding of these factors (Godfrey et al., 2023).

In most of secondary schools, the subjects that were taught are of very significant in the development of the nation. But due to the present situation, science subjects are considered to be superior to others. Those concerned policy makers and government should consider this issue and organize a committee to investigate the certification of teachers that teach in secondary schools. It was noted that the ability of a teacher to teach is not derived only from one's academic background but it is based upon outstanding pedagogical skills acquired (Seweje & Jegede, 2005). Akinsolu (2010) in his study submitted that availability of qualified teachers determined the performance of students in school. Huang & Moon (2009) in their study submitted that teacher qualification accounted for 40-60% of variance in the average of students' achievement in assessment.

Although these results demonstrate that regularly qualified teachers outperform non-qualified teachers in terms of student's academic performance, the research was conducted in countries of different geographical context which require masters to teacher primary level. In Uganda, a diploma or bachelor's degree in Education is sufficient. It was therefore important to employ qualified teachers those was diploma, bachelors and master's degree that aims at improving students' academic performance in Uganda and in public secondary schools in Kisoro district.

It has been established that in-experienced teachers perform less effectively than the experienced ones. The inexperienced ones are those with less than three years' experience. Hanushek (1996) found that in the 109 previous studies fewer than half of the estimated of teacher experience shows a statistically significant effect on students' achievement. Owolabi (2007) recommended that government should find all possible means to retain veteran and experienced teachers who are still willing to serve so that they can contribute their wealth of experience to improving the system as experience plays significant role in teaching and learning processes. Bamidele & Adekola (2014) found in their study that there is no significant difference in the achievement of junior secondary school III students groomed by teacher with long time experience and students taught by teachers with short experience. Whereas, Tucker & Hindman (2007) and Kosgei *et al.* (2013) asserted that there is a positive correlation between teachers' experience and students' academic achievement.

Therefore, this present study was designed to determine if teachers' classroom experience has significant influence on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Kisoro District. It was aimed at answering the following question: "Do teachers' classroom experience have significant influence on student's academic performance?" In answering this question, the study determined and described the relationship between teachers' experience and the academic performance of students. Therefore, this study is significant because the results enabled the researcher to proffer useful suggestions to the ailing problem of poor academic performance of students in public secondary schools.

Analysis and Discussion of Findings

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation between teachers' qualification and students' academic performance

Variables	Computed index	Teachers' qualification	Students' academic performance
Teachers' qualification	Pearson Correlation	1	.395**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	104	104
Students' academic performance	Pearson Correlation	.395**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	104	104

Source: Results of the Analysis (2019)

Results in Table 1 revealed that the (Pearson product moment correlation was applied to establish the relationship between teachers' qualification and students' academic performance at Uganda Certificate of Education Examination in public secondary schools in Kisoro District and the results show) a statistically weak positive and significant

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relationship between teachers' qualification and students' academic performance ($r=0.395^{**}$, $p<0.01$). Thus, rejecting the null hypothesis. This implies that there was a variation on students' academic performance due to changes in teachers' qualification. The implication of the findings is that the teachers' qualification was significantly and weakly related to students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kisoro District.

Regarding the statement on relationship between teachers' experience, responses from the respondents are presented in Tables 5 - 7.

Table 2: Students with experienced teachers perform well in UCE?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	17	16.3
Disagree	3	2.9
Undecided	15	14.4
Agree	56	53.8
Strongly agree	13	12.5
Total	104	100.0

Source: Results of the Analysis (2019)

Results in Table 2 indicated that majority (66.3%) of the respondents (teachers) were in agreement that students with experienced teachers perform well in UCE, 19.2% were in disagreement while 14.4% were undecided. This implies that students with experienced teachers perform well in UCE in their various public secondary schools in Kisoro district.

Table 3: Experienced teachers are effective in UCE performance

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	9	8.7
Disagree	17	16.3
Undecided	24	23.1
Agree	43	41.3
Strongly agree	11	10.6
Total	104	100.0

Source: Results of the Analysis (2019)

Results from Table 3 revealed that majority (52%) of the respondents (teachers) were in agreement that experienced teachers are effective in UCE performance, 25% were in disagreement while 23.1% were undecided. This implies that experienced teachers are effective in UCE performance in their various public secondary schools in Kisoro district.

Table 4: Students taught by teachers with more experience perform better than those taught by far less experience in UCE.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	0	0.0
Disagree	15	14.4
Undecided	28	26.9
Agree	50	48.1
Strongly agree	11	10.6
Total	104	100.0

Source: Results of the Analysis (2019)

Results from Table 4 revealed that majority (58.7%) of the respondents (teachers) were in agreement that students taught by teachers with more experience perform better than those taught by far less experience in UCE, 14.4% were in disagreement while 27% were undecided. This implies that students taught by teachers with more experience perform better than those taught by far less experience in UCE in their various public secondary schools in Kisoro district.

Regarding the testing of hypothesis one, Pearson product moment correlation analysis was conducted between teachers' experiences and students' academic performance at Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools in Kisoro District.

Table 5: Pearson Product Moment Correlation between teachers' experiences and students' academic performance at Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools in Kisoro District

Variables	Computed index	Teachers' experiences	Students' academic performance
Teachers' experiences	Pearson Correlation	1	.430**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	104	104
Students' academic performance	Pearson Correlation	.430**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

	N	104	104
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Source: Results of the Analysis (2019)

Results in Table 5 revealed that the Pearson product moment correlation was applied to establish the relationship between teachers' experiences and students' academic performance at Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools in Kisoro District and the results show a statistically moderate positive and significant relationship between teachers' experiences and students' academic performance at Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools ($r=0.430^{**}$, $p<0.01$) (Nelson et al., 2023). Thus, rejecting the null hypothesis. This implies that there was a variation on students' academic performance due to changes in teachers' experiences. The implication of the findings is that the teachers' experiences was significantly and moderately related to students' academic performance at Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools in Kisoro District.

During interviews, when most head teachers were asked about the influence of teachers' experience on the students' academic performance, they revealed that: All the four public secondary school in Kisoro District put emphasis on employing teachers with more experience. Another head teacher said: The school motivates such teachers with more experience, with teachers' accommodation, allowance like transport refund, head of department allowances, food baskets and class teachers' allowances. Bamidele & Adekola (2014) found in their study that there is no significant difference in the achievement of junior secondary school III students taught by teacher with long time experience and students taught by teachers with short experience.

Conclusions

The study concluded the perception of the respondents is that the majority teachers are qualified, students taught by teachers who are more qualified perform better than those taught by far less qualified, qualified teachers are benchmarked, teacher qualification has helped students to improve academically, qualified teachers usually carry out team teaching, teachers with high qualification are not promoted, teachers who are not qualified are not tolerated and teacher qualification in this school is emphasized. The study established that teachers' qualification was significantly and weakly related to students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kisoro District. As indicated $r = 0.395$, $P < 0.01$ it was concluded that teachers' qualification in public secondary school in Kisoro improves students' academic performance significantly, finding of 49.0% which indicates a significant of teachers' qualification on students' academic performance.

Similarly, the study concluded that students with experienced teachers perform well in UCE, experienced teachers are effective in UCE performance, students taught by teachers with more experience perform better than those taught by far less experience in UCE and all teachers in this school are more experienced. The study has established that there is a statistically moderate positive and significant relationship between teachers' experiences and students' academic performance at Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools in Kisoro District.

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Recommendations

The study recommends that teachers with high qualification should be promoted to various positions. Teachers with good or high qualification should be provided with accommodation, qualified teachers should be supported to further their academic levels, teachers with experience should be motivated thus provide them with accommodation, hence bring them closer to school which leads them to perform effectively be involved in all school programmes thus good academic performance among students. Also, provision of allowance to class teachers, Heads of Departments and marking allowances should be given to experienced teachers and this encourages them to do their best hence improved academic performance in Public Secondary School. Experienced teachers should be re- tooled for example sponsor them for further training in others fields and this helps to equip them to better students' academic performance. Staff workshop / seminars should be facilitated for that is both internally and externally, help the teachers improve on students' academic performance at Uganda Certificate of Education.

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