
**Impacts Of Parents' Involvement On School Management And Pupils' Retention In Primary Schools Of
Rwamucucu Subcounty, Rukiga District, Uganda**

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Abstract

The study established the impact of parents' involvement on school management and pupils' retention in Rwamucucu Subcounty, Rukiga district, Uganda. A case study research design adopting quantitative and qualitative approaches was used. Data from a sample of 504 respondents was obtained using questionnaires and interview guides which were analyzed descriptively and inferentially. The results of the study showed that parental involvement in school management like involvement in the planning process and participation in meetings such as SMC and PTA had a positive influence on pupils retention in Rwamucucu Sub-County, Rukiga District ($r= 0.512$, $\text{Sig}=0.01$), Parents' involvement in their children's education activities had a positive relationship on the academic performance of their children ($r=0.477^{**}$, $\text{Sig}=0.01$) which means that the more the parents involvement the better the academic performance of their children. The study concluded that parental involvement in school management also affects pupils' retention rate and parental involvement in the children education activities positively affects the pupil's academic performance. The study recommended that school administrations should involve parents and all the stakeholders in the planning process including engaging them in all the meetings and that parents and guardians should give concern to their children's academics and should participate in all the school activities so as to raise the academic performance of their children.

Keywords: Parental involvement, School Management, Pupils' Retention, Academic Performance.

Introduction

As the first primary educators, parents have a great influence on their children's academic performance both in and out of school. (Ntirandekura, Ainebyoona, et al., 2022) explain that parents can support and encourage their children through rewards and praise to give children a sense of initiative and confidence, which are necessary for learning and persistence in school (Ntirandekura, Friday, et al., 2022a). (Anthony, Kazaara, Kazaara, et al., 2023) report that children whose parents are actively involved in their education have high academic results and a positive attitude towards school. On the other hand, parents who constantly criticize, command, punish, and coerce their children may cause them to develop negative attitudes toward education leading to negative academic outcomes (Ntirandekura, Friday, et al., 2022b). Empirical evidence positively correlates shared activities between parents and their children with improved school retention (Godfrey et al., 2023). In West Pokot district, most households are headed by illiterate parents who have not had access to formal education due to marginalization and socialization (Kurgat, 2021). The involvement of parents in the formal education of children is minimal only to the extent of sending them to school. Other studies have focused on maternal involvement. Mothers' involvement in education has been associated with increased levels of academic achievement, increased positive school attitudes, and better teacher-child relationships (McBride, Rane & Bae, 2022). However, other studies have contradicted this view, showing that fathers have a greater impact on boys' educational outcomes than mothers (Victoria et al., 2023). (Moses, 2022) studied boys who dropped out of school in Nyamira district and found that boys whose parents monitored and regulated their activities provided emotional support, encouraged independent decision making and were generally more engaged in their schooling, were less likely to drop out.

Low completion rates in developing countries have long been of interest to academics, researchers and policy makers. Studies have shown that there is a worrying trend in keeping boys in school around the world. In Africa, few studies have focused on boys' schooling, particularly in communities that have generally been slow to adopt formal schooling. (Godfrey et al., 2023) conducted a study in Nigeria to find out the reasons behind primary school dropout and revealed that lack of parental interest, high illiteracy rate and strong inclination towards nomadic culture led to low school completion among boys. Mwangi (2021) conducted a study in Ghana on factors influencing boys' performance and identified household factors such as lack of parental support for boys' education and child labor as key to influencing boys' participation (Jac & Kazaara, 2023). The fight for girls' education has long been used to promote gender equality in education, and the fruits are beginning to show. However, the focus on boys' education has not been given much attention. In West Pokot district, current statistics indicate a decline in the number of boys in upper primary school classes. If this trend continues unchecked, it will lead not only to the waste of human capital but also to gender inequality (Christopher, Komunda, et al., 2022).

In Uganda, the 2008 Education Act indicates that parental responsibilities include, among others, the provision of learning materials, infrastructure development and child care; this increases student retention in school. Most students who achieve well are well equipped with the necessary learning materials provided by parents (Emmanuel et al., 2023). Several researchers note that the availability of reading materials at home is directly related to children's success in reading comprehension. The absence of basic resources such as reading materials, teachers and quality teaching will put a child at risk (Republic of Uganda, 2022) and thus or request to change schools. (Christopher, Moses, et al., 2022) in their research study titled "Parental Contribution and Retention of Pupils at Primary Level of Education in Bubulo East District, Uganda" argues that the provision of school materials by parents influences children's performance in examinations. He further claims that children whose parents provide enough notebooks, pens, pencils, math sets, are led to do the given class exercises, practice drawing and building polygons compared to children who lack basic teaching aids. Children who lack basic school materials either do not try the given exercises or miss out on school (Richard et al., 2023)

In Rukiga District, completion rates are influenced by how parents provide their children with basic needs at school. They claim that some parents have not provided for basic needs such as functional fees; school supplies such as files and lunch for their children. Failure to provide these basic needs was likely related to a lack of morale and encouragement from parents and thus low retention. Parental participation is the contribution of resources, materials and labor to school activities. Babirye (2021) noted that parents can still be involved by improving the implementation of the school curriculum by contributing to school materials (Richard et al., 2022).

(Richard et al., 2023) state that "the effectiveness of parent-school-community collaboration has been documented in several studies". To foster these complex partnerships, schools must provide opportunities for schools, families, and the community to work together (Ntirandekura & Friday, 2022). These partnerships must be based on mutual respect and interdependence of home, school and community. Similarly, Epstein (1995) notes that "schools strengthen their connection with families by encouraging them to volunteer for school activities and attend school events," participate in planning and decision-making that affect the school; for example, attending PTA meetings and SMC meetings. It is claimed that "families who volunteer for school activities become more familiar with and comfortable with their children's schools and teachers". For example, Epstein claims that:

Parents are likely to appreciate the work of teachers more, develop their own skills, and become increasingly comfortable working with their children and interacting with others at school. Finally, thanks to volunteer help, teachers will be able to devote more attention to individual students. They are also likely to become more open to involving parents in various ways and develop an appreciation for the parental talent base (Cand et al., 2022).

Objective of the Study

The objective of this study was to establish the impact of parents' involvement on school management and learner retention among pupils in Rukiga district, Uganda.

Research Question

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What is the impact of parents' involvement on school management and learner retention among pupils in Rukiga district?

Hypothesis

Parents' involvement has no significant impact on pupils' retention

Methodology

The study used a case study while utilizing a descriptive approach. A case study design as an inquiry explores the subject under study in its real-life context (Yin, 2009). It is thus appropriate because of its advantages including providing an in-depth review, holistic meaning, and exploration of phenomena. Through a case study design, the relationship between parents' involvement and retention of pupils in primary schools, in Rukiga district, was explored as an exemplifying case for parents' involvement in Uganda, in their natural real-life setting. A mixed approach also was utilized in this study, considering quantitative and qualitative research approaches. A quantitative approach was used for quantifiable information, while a qualitative approach is preferred to be used by the researcher to gather the information that may not be quantifiable (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). The study was carried out among UPE primary schools in Rwamucucu subcounty, Rukiga district. The district shares its borders with Kabale District in the south west, Republic of Rwanda in South East, Rubanda District in the North East, Ntungamo District in East and Rukungiri District in the North. Creswell (2020) asserts that population is the vast cohort of people to whom the researcher engenders the results of study that gives a small unit known as the sample size that is always its subset. She mentions that the population depends on the study scope. In this case therefore Rukiga district an area considered for the study had the following respondents' categories suggested to provide the information required. They included; sub county chiefs, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), parish chiefs, headteachers and teachers, political leaders, The total respondents' number was 27543 from whom the sample size was selected. A representative sample of 538 respondents was drawn from a population (N) of 273400 people in Rukiga district. To determine a representative sample from the general population, Yamane's (1967) sampling formula was used. In this formula, a sample (n) is selected from a population (N), taking a sampling error (e) to be 5%.

$$n = \frac{N}{[1+N(e)^2]}$$

Sampling Strategy or technique is a method that allows researchers to infer information about a population based on results from a subset of the population without having to investigate every individual. It is important to reduce the number of individuals in a study reduces the cost and workload making it easier to obtain high quality information (O'Leary, 2014). The study embraced purposive Sampling for Qualitative Approach and Simple Random Sampling for Quantitative Approach as fully explained in each of the subsequent captions. Purposive Sampling technique was used all through the selection of the respondents for the study. Purposive Sampling is described as a form of non-probability sampling in which researchers rely on their own judgment when choosing members of the population to participate in their surveys (Tromp, 2017). The technique captured head teachers, teachers, Sub County chief, Parish

Chiefs, political leaders, local members, and political leaders. These were adopted for their positions that one cannot do anything without them since they are the only ones that serve in their portfolios without alternatives or replacements. Data was analyzed in form of tables, frequencies and percentages using SPSS (Nelson et al., 2022).

Results

The school managements ensure that parents are involved in the planning process regarding the academic performance.

Table 1: Shows findings on whether the school managements involves parents in the planning process.

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	34	6.8	6.7
Disagree	35	6.9	13.6
Not Sure	30	6	19.5
Agree	55	10.9	30.4
Strongly Agree	350	69.4	100
Total	504	100	

Source: Primary Data (2023)

According to the above table 34(6.8%) strongly disagreed that school managements do not involve parents in the planning process, 35(6.9%) disagreed, 30(6%) were not sure, 55(10.9%) agreed while the majority 350(69.4%) strongly agreed. This implies that majority of the respondents believed that parents are highly involved in the planning process and are consulted on key issues to be taken on regarding academic performance (Victoria et al., 2023).

Parents participate in school meetings like SMCs, PTA and annual general meetings where major decisions are made.

Table 2: Shows findings about whether parents participate in meetings like SMC, PTA and annual general meetings.

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	40	7.9	7.9
Disagree	35	6.9	14.8
Not Sure	30	5.9	20.7
Agree	55	10.9	31.6
Strongly Agree	344	68.4	100
Total	504	100	

Source: Primary Data (2023)

According to table 5 above, 40(7.9%) strongly disagreed that parents are not involved to participate in meetings like SMC, PTA and annual general meetings, 35(6.9%) disagreed, 30(5.9%) were not sure, 55(10.9%) agreed and

344(68.4%) strongly agreed. This implies that majority of the respondents believed that parents participate in school meetings like SMCs, PTA and annual general meetings where major decisions are made (Ronald et al., 2023).

In an interview, one of the respondents revealed that; *“Most schools call for PTA, SMC meetings and parents highly participate in school decision-making and in those meetings the parents are informed about the schools academic performance in national exams and co-curricular activities among others.*

Parents participate in the selection of school associations and management leaders like PTA and SMC Chairpersons who represents them democratically.

Table 3: Shows findings about whether parents participate in the selection of school associations and management leaders

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	4	0.8	0.8
Disagree	40	7.9	8.7
Not Sure	95	18.8	27.5
Agree	100	19.9	47.4
Strongly Agree	265	52.6	100
Total	504	100	

Source: Primary data (2023)

According to the above table 4(0.8%) strongly disagreed that parents are not allowed to participate in the selection of school associations and management leaders, 40(7.9%) disagreed, 95(18.8%) were not sure, 100(19.9%) agreed and 265(52.6%) strongly agreed. This implies that majority of the respondents highly believed that that parents participate in the selection and election of school associations and management leaders like PTA and SMC chairpersons who represents them democratically (Paul & Kazaara, 2023).

Correlation between parental involvement in school management and pupils’ retention in primary schools of Rwamucucu Sub-County.

To determine the degree of the relationship, a Pearson’s correlation coefficient analysis was run as follows;

Table 4: Shows the correlation between parental involvement in school management and pupils’ retention in public schools of Rwamucucu Sub-county, Rukiga District.

		Parental involvement	Pupils retention
Parental involvement	Pearson Correlation	1	.512**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	504	
Pupils retention	Pearson Correlation	.512**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

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	N	504	504
** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Source: Primary data (2023)

Pearson's Correlation Coefficient for parental involvement and pupils' retention in Rwamucucu Sub- County was $r = 0.512$, which was positive with probability value ($p = 0.000$) that is less than $\alpha = 0.01$ level of significance showing a strong positive effect of parental involvement in school management and pupils' retention in public schools of Rwamucucu Sub-County, Rukiga District (Nelson et al., 2023). The result provides justification that the school managements ensures that parents are involved in planning process, parents participate in school meetings like SMC and PTA and annual general meetings where various school decisions are made and parents fully participate in the selection and election of school association and management leaders like PTA and SMC chairpersons.

Parental involvement in children education activities and academic performance of primary schools in Rwamucucu Sub-County, Rukiga District

The third objective of the study was to establish the relationship between parental involvement in their children's education activities and pupils' academic performance in primary schools of Rwamucucu Sub-County, Rukiga District. Parental involvement in education activities was conceptualized to include indicators of parents helping learners with academic work at home, parents encouraging learners to remain at school and learners being inspired by their parents to remain at school among others. Five statements which were scored on five Likert scale ranging from (5) for strongly disagree (4) for disagree, (3) for not sure (2) for agree (1) for strongly agree were given to respondents with the aim of establishing their views regarding parents' involvement in their children's education activities. Data collected was both quantitative and qualitative and the results were presented, analyzed and interpreted as follows:

Whether parents' involvement lead to better academic performance of learners in school

The findings about whether parents' involvement in their children's academics lead to a better performance are elaborated in the following table.

Table 5: Shows findings about whether parents involvement lead to better academic performance

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	85	16.9	16.9
Disagree	35	6.9	23.8
Not Sure	69	13.7	37.5
Agree	45	8.9	46.4
Strongly Agree	270	53.6	100
Total	504	100	

Source: Primary data (2023)

According to the above table, 85(16.9%) strongly disagreed that parents' involvement in their children's education lead to better academic performance, 35(6.9%) disagreed, 69(13.7%) were not sure, 45(8.9%) agreed while 270(53.6%) strongly agreed. This implies that majority of the respondents believed that parents' involvement lead to better academic performance.

Whether parents help learners with academic work at home.

The respondents were asked to indicate their opinion about whether parents help learners with academic work at home especially when the pupils are given homework assignments and the findings are elaborated as below.

Table 6: Shows findings about whether parents help learners with academic work at home.

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	300	59.5	59.5
Disagree	90	17.9	77.4
Not Sure	12	2.3	79.8
Agree	18	3.4	83.4
Strongly Agree	84	16.7	100
Total	504	100	

Source: Primary data (2023)

According to the above table, 300(59.4%) strongly disagreed that parents help learners with academic assignments at home, 90(17.9%) disagreed, 12(2.3%) were not sure, 18(3.4%) agreed while 84(16.7%) strongly agreed. This shows that majority of the participants did not believe that parents help their children with academic work at home (Annet et al., 2023).

During the interview session one of the respondents said: *"Most of the parents in Rwamucucu Sub-County are illiterate and do not know the value to of education and there is no way they can help their children with academic work instead when the children come back from school they are given house core assignments like fetching water, cooking, collecting fire wood and babysitting their young siblings"*.

Whether parents encourage learners to remain in schools.

The participants were asked to indicate whether most parents in Rwamucucu Sub-County encourage their children to remain in schools and the findings are shown in the following table 10.

Table 7: Shows findings about whether most parents encourage their children to remain in schools

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	145	28.8	28.8
Disagree	24	4.8	33.6
Not Sure	55	10.9	44.5

Agree	30	5.9	49.4
Strongly Agree	250	49.6	100
Total	504	100	

Source: Primary data (2023)

According to the above table 145(28.8%) of the participants strongly disagreed that most parents in Rwamucucu sub-county encourage their children to remain in schools, 24(4.8%) disagreed, 55(10.9%) were not sure, 30(5.9%) agreed while the majority 250(49.6%) strongly agreed. This implies that most of the participants believed that other factors notwithstanding most parents in Rwamucucu Sub-County, Rukiga District encourage their children to remain in schools (Anthony, Kazaara, Kazaara, et al., 2023).

Findings about whether there is a significant relationship between parents' involvement and pupils' academic performance

The participants were tasked to explain whether they feel that there is a significant relationship between parents' involvement and pupil's academic performance and the findings are portrayed in the followings Table 8:

Table 8: Shows findings about whether respondents feel that there is a relationship between parents' involvement and pupil's academic performance.

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	23	4.6	4.6
Disagree	14	2.8	7.4
Not Sure	82	16.3	23.7
Agree	25	4.9	28.6
Strongly Agree	360	71.4	100
Total	504	100	

Source: Primary data (2023)

According to the above table, 23(4.6%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that there a significant relationship between parents' involvement and pupils' academic performance, 14(2.8%) agreed, 82(16.3%) were not sure, 25(4.9%) agreed while the majority 360(71.4%) strongly agreed. This shows that majority of the respondents believe that there is a significant relationship between parents' involvement and pupils' academic performance (Emmanuel et al., 2023)

Learners are always inspired by their parents to remain at school.

The respondents were requested to disclose whether they felt that learners are inspired by their parents to remain at school and the findings are recorded in the following table 12:

Table 9: Shows findings about whether learners are inspired by their parents to remain at school

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
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Strongly Disagree	180	35.7	35.7
Disagree	102	20.2	55.9
Not Sure	72	14.3	70.2
Agree	50	9.9	80.1
Strongly Agree	100	19.9	100
Total	504	100	

Source: Primary data (2023)

According to the table above, 180(35.7%) of the participants strongly disagreed that learners are inspired by their parents to remain at school, 102(20.2%) disagreed, 72(14.3%) were not sure, 50(9.9%) agreed and 100(19.9%) strongly agreed. This indicates that majority of the respondents believed that the pupils are not inspired by their parents to remain at school.

Correlation analysis between parental involvement and pupils' academic performance.

To determine relationship between parental involvement and pupils' retention in Universal Primary Schools of Rwamucucu Sub-County, Rukiga District, a Pearson Correlation analysis was conducted as follows;

Table 10: Shows a correlation analysis on the relationship between parental involvement and pupils' retention in public schools of Rwamucucu Sub-County.

	Parental involvement	Academic performance
Level of parental involvement	Pearson ¹	
Sig. (2-tailed)		.477**
N	504	504
Perceived level of academic performance	.477**	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
N	504	504

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

The findings presented in Table 13 above indicate the Pearson's correlation coefficient $r = .477$ between parents' involvement and pupils' academic performance as positively related. The Pearson's correlation coefficient $r = .477$ and sig.value (sig.000) indicate that there is a moderate positive and significant relationship between parents' involvement and pupils' academic performance (Nelson et al., 2023). This relationship shows that a significant change

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in parents' involvement leads to a significant change in pupils' academic performance. Therefore, this positive relationship between the variables confirms that parents' involvement influences pupils' academic performance of pupils in Rwamucucu Sub-County, Rukiga through participating in education activities at home, participating in education activities at school and parent-teacher communication.

Summary of the study finding

The study also found a positive significant relationship between parents' involvement in school management and pupils' retention rate ($r=0.512$ and significance $p \text{ Sig}=0.01$). The result provides justification that if the school managements ensures that parents are involved in planning process, parents participate in school meetings like SMC and PTA and annual general meetings where various school decisions are made and parents fully participate in the selection and election of school association and management leaders like PTA and SMC chairpersons the pupils' retention would be high. This is because there would be a sense of ownership and the parents and caregivers would encourage their children to remain in schools.

Discussion

The study aimed at finding out whether parents' involvement in school management affects learners' retention in primary schools of Rwamucucu Sub-County, Rukiga District. This result concurs with Rutherford & Billing (1995) that to promote academic performance the school managements must provide opportunity for school, families and the community to work together. These partnerships must be based on mutual respect and interdependence of a home, school and the community. In the same vein, Epstein (1995) notes that "schools enhance their connection to families by encouraging them to volunteer in school activities and attend school events," participate in planning and in decisions that affect the school; for example, attending PTA meetings and the SMCs meetings. It therefore argued that "families who volunteer in school activities grow more familiar and comfortable with their children's schools and teachers."

The study found out that majority of the parents and care givers participate in school meetings like SMC, PTA and annual general meetings.

Conclusion

The study also concludes that parental involvement in school management highly affects pupils' retention in Rwamucucu Sub-County, Rukiga District because it was found that parents involving parents in school planning process and participating in school meetings like SMC and PTA as well as participation in the selection of SMC and PTA chairpersons who represents them highly affects pupils' retention.

Recommendation

Since parental involvement in school management highly affects pupils retention in Rwamucucu Sub-County, it is recommended that the school administrations should involve parents in the planning process and should encourage them to participate in in school meeting such as SMC and PTA as well as participation in the selection of the leaders of PTA and SMC. This is because the policies agreed in such meetings can influence pupils' retention if well implemented by the necessary authorities.

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