

NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

THE EFFECTS OF HOME ENVIRONMENT
ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF
CHILDREN IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN
NSAMBYA PARISH, KAMPALA DISTRICT (UG)

BY
ONESMUS TAYEBWA

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate
School in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Christian Education

JULY 2005

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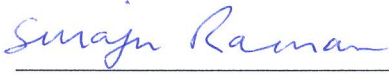
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July, 2005

Student's Declaration

**THE EFFECTS OF HOME ENVIRONMENT ON THE ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE OF CHILDREN IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN
NSAMBYA PARISH, KAMPALA DISTRICT (UGANDA)**

I declare that this is my original work and has not been
submitted to any other College or University for academic credit.

The views presented herein are not necessarily those of the Nairobi Evangelical
Graduate School of Theology or the Examiners

(Signed) _____
ONESMUS TAYEBWA

JULY, 2005

ABSTRACT

This study was carried out in Nsambya Parish in Kampala District. It attempted to establish the extent to which the home environment affects school achievement of a primary school child. The research questions used to guide the study were centered on the impact of socio-economic status and attitude of the parents on the performance of their children at school.

The literature review availed a multiplicity of circumstances in the homes that had impact on children. Random sampling and stratified sampling were used to collect data. The sample was split into three strata drawn from the population under study: 90 respondents were parents; 90 were pupils and 30 were teachers.

Questionnaires were administered to the pupils and teachers, and the interviews were conducted for parents. Data analysis was based on percentages. It was concluded that family size, socio-economic background, parents' attitude and education level of the parents affected the performance of the pupils at school. The data collection involved the use of a questionnaire questions. The research sought Children in Nsambya primary Schools.

To

My dear wife Norah Tayebwa and our children

Chris, Mark and Martha.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work would have not been completed without the valuable support of various people. My sincere gratitude goes to my supervisor, DR. Suraja Raman, The Head of Department of Educational Studies whose counsel, technical advices, encouragement and Christian fellowship have made this work a success.

I am also greatly indebted to Mrs Rosemary Mbogo in Educational Studies who provided me with a foundation in Educational Studies who provided me with a foundation in Educational Research. The head teachers of the primary schools together with the teachers, parents and pupils from whom I picked the research data, optimummly deserve my warm and professional thanks especially for the collegial atmosphere they showed me when I visited them.

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	ix
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	8
3. METHODOLOGY	15
4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS	19
5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	35
REFERENCE LIST.....	39
Appendices	
1. Sample Questions for Primary School Pupils	40
2. Interview Guide for Parents	42
3. Sample Questionnaire for Primary Teachers	43
4. Observation Guide for different families.....	45
5. Frequency Tables.....	46

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Professions of the Parents.....	20
2. Family Size of the Parents.....	21
3. Educational levels of Parents.....	22
4. Residence of Pupils.....	23
5. Tasks Assigned to Children after School.....	23
6. Pupils with School Fees Problems.....	24
7. Attitude about the Profession of Respondents.....	27
8. Parents' Attitude towards Profession of Respondents.....	28
9. Tasks Assigned to Children and Profession of Respondents.....	28
10. Parents' Attitude towards Family Size of the Respondents.....	30
11. Pupils' Attitude about Family Size of the Respondents.....	30
12. Pupils' Attitude about the Educational Level of the Respondents.....	33
13. Parents' Attitude about the Educational Level of the Respondents.....	33

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MOE: Ministry of Education and Sports

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

BECCAD: Basic Education Childcare and Adolescent Development

COPE: Complementary Opportunities for primary Education

AFHS: Adolescent Friendly Health Services

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background

The role of formal education in development has been recognized ever since the days of Plato. Education, Plato believed, is indispensable to the economic health of a good society, for education makes citizens ‘reasonable men.’ Since education has high economic value, Plato argued that a considerable part of the community’s wealth must be invested in education.

Education arguably is one of the most important means of raising worker productivity and thus raising incomes in developing countries although schools tend to be concentrated in urban areas than in rural areas. In the past there used not to be any differences in academic performance between schools in the rural areas and schools in urban areas (Apolot 1984, 74). However, today there is a great difference between the academic performance of schools found in rural areas and those found in urban areas. For example while the majority of the schools found in urban areas have proved to perform best although, many and majority of schools in Nsambya Parish, Kampala District have been having a steady poor performance whereas in the urban area and in the suburbs of the city (Apolot 1984, 164).

The process of achieving academic excellence is a result of many interacting forces. On one hand, is the formal education system provided through school systems, on the other hand, is the role and contribution of families and community to the

environment as well as the individual faculties of a pupils learning. The two systems combine to influence the education excellence of an individual child.

Among the many factors, which have been thought of to accelerate the poor performance in Nsambya Parish Primary schools is Home Environment. Home environment has been thought of to be the cause of either good or bad performance by children in schools. Areas to consider in home environment include family ability to sustain their children's educational requirements both economically and socially, children's feeding at home, relationships, family sizes, and other related issues.

In the world today, education should not be perceived as a duty of teachers' guidance to learning experience only, which provide an individual with personal and social skills, but also a responsibility of the parents who dominate the home environment. Fontana (1981), noted that the influence of the home environment is of critical importance in a child's psychological development generally and in particular in the use he makes of his abilities in the formation of his attitudes and opinions and in the development of his motivation towards school and toward a future career. He further says that the environment in which a child is reared can have a powerful effect on his development. How a child develops depends very much on the people around him, he said.

The issue has been much debated in relation to poor educational achievement of disadvantaged children. These are children who come from the economically and socially most deprived sectors of the community with environmental problems. According to Fontana (1981, 154), environmental problems include a poor or depressed background in which the child has no encouragement to read or use language, in which there are no facilities for homework or private study and in which the values of school are rejected and perhaps even help to ridicule

There may also be cases of actual physical deprivation such as shortage of food, extreme shortage of sleep, physical abuse brought about by broken homes or by alcoholism in one or both parents. Worse conditions exist where homes have been broken by the desertion or divorce of husband or wife. This results in neglect of children at a period when parental care and affection are essential.

Children cannot grow happily when poverty and ignorance govern family life. If children are not well fed and treated with kindness, they will not be successful at school. Therefore, as environmental factors are of paramount importance to all individuals, parents have a role to play in recognizing the everyday living conditions of African homes to primary school children in achieving their full potentialities of learning. They must realize that hungry and sickly children cannot make progress in school, but well fed children and healthy children learn more quickly and make more rapid progress both physically and mentally. Thus the more meaningful, useful and relevant environmental experiences the more rapidly will intelligence develop and the more intelligent will the individual functioning in that environment become (Durojaiye 1976, 116).

Durojaiye, further went on to say that physical and psychological growth potentials are set by heredity, but they can be dwarfed or enhanced, mutilated or enriched, destroyed or built up by the environmental factors. Differences in health, mental or intelligence are due to heredity and environment in equal measures or to a small proportion on heredity and a large proportion of environment.

Since the desire for academic excellence is felt at individual family level, school level as well as national level, poor academic performance is therefore, a serious concern of many parties as stated above. Therefore, efforts to bring about excellence in school performance are both a responsibility of the school system and

home environment. The school provides the formal, structural and curriculum activities while the home environment provides the supportive and collaborative services to the child's needs for his academic excellence. This study attempts to explore the impact of home environment on the academic performance of children at Nsambya Primary school.

Statement of the Problem

There is a wide spread campaign by the government of Uganda to fight all forms of backwardness with emphasis on the improvements of the educational standards. The researcher felt concerned about the continued decline in performance of primary schools in Nsambya Parish, Kampala District compared to those schools in the same district.

Various researches have been conducted on the problem of poor performance in schools in other areas. For example, many have mentioned, in passing, factors that hinder the academic performance in rural areas pointing to the social economic factors. However, available literature on the subject indicates lack of comprehensive research in this area particularly on factors concerning the home environment. So it is the researcher's intention to assess the impact of home environment on the academic performance of children in primary schools in Nsambya Parish.

The Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of the study is to find out the role-played by the socio-economic status of parents in regard to children's academic performance. Second and consequently, the researcher also sought to make useful recommendations, on the basis of the conclusion arrived at, to both the School authorities and to the parents

concerning the effect of some of the factors affecting their schools' academic performance.

Research Questions

1. What are the socio-economic statuses of the pupils' parents?
2. How do the socio-economic statuses of the parents affect the academic performance of their children?

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess whether the socio-economic background of parents has an effect on the children's academic performance.
2. To evaluate the attitude of parents towards the academic performance of their children.

The Scope of the Study

The study will be conducted in Nsambya Parish, Kampala District. The researcher however, lays emphasis on primary schools in this parish. In this study, the role of parents in the child's performance is considered; as parents dominate looking at the pupils' home environment so that they can help to work on the factors that affect their children's performance. This study focused on the impacts of socio-economic factors such as family size and educational level of the parents on the academic performance of their children due to financial and time constrains.

Limitations of the Study

Having used a formal interview schedule, which doesn't provide readily guided questions in respect to each variable: there will be a problem of deviating from the theme of the interview. The process of interview will be an up-hill due to the fact that both the researcher and the respondents are strangers. This I know will pose a problem of suspicion on part of the respondents that some may decide to offer a mask of refusal. However, the researcher will try to offer a degree of tolerance at some respondents who have no interest, thus, at last cooperating. Some parents do not know anything about the school activities; therefore the researcher will influence them in their answers in the process of clarity. Establishing representative categories during data coding so that there will not be a problem.

Significance of the Study

The results of this study will provide a theoretical and practical platform for the management of the schools under study to put in place relevant strategies to insure the negative impacts of home environment that are minimized for better performance of the pupils. The school management will use the findings of the study to raise awareness among the parents, and study will further give solutions to those particularly affected by environmental conditions, such as those under study. Teachers who deal with children from various environments will gain insights pertaining to the improvement of educational services.

Various departments will benefit a lot from the findings of this study like the Department of Probation and Child care Protection. They outcome of this undertaking will enable them to advocate for children's rights, responsibilities and the psychosocial development.

International agencies such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) elaborate on the findings of this study to strengthen and streamline their programs. This would be of particular interest to programs such as Basic Education Child care and Adolescent Development (BECCAD), Complementary Opportunities for Primary Education (COPE), and Adolescent Friendly Health Services (AFHS).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature by other experts on issues related to the academic performance of children in Africa, Uganda in particular. The Uganda's education systems are included in this chapter.

Uganda's Education Systems

Uganda's education, in retrospect, is based on the imported British colonial system, which is dominated by the political and commercial life of western cultural values. In Uganda, there has been a wide criticism over the education system, for its failure to achieve the intended goals and also for the harmful nature of much of its impact upon the society. The curricular is said to be bookish oriented towards higher levels of education, which are beyond the reach of the majority of the pupils. The pupils who graduate from this education system are said to be divorced from the life and culture of the local people and consequently unsuited for preparing the child for life in his own community.

In support of the views above, Halphanny (1975, 32), who carried out a study on rural primary schools in Uganda about factors responsible for the poor academic performance, found that most families in Buganda were very poor who could not afford better lighting systems and instead used poor lighting systems. Very

few families were in possession of radios; no newspapers were read therefore, such pupils have very few stimulating sources of academic excellence. Halphanny continues to say that most rural parents are illiterate, where vernacular languages are used which offer no opportunity to practice English, the language that is the main mode of communication at school.

Home Environment

The concept home environment refers to the family environment as a student's background where he comes from to attend school. The role played by home environment in determining the child's performance at school appears to be central to this investigation.

Dennisoff and Waharman (1983) attempted to establish factors leading to differentials in academic performance among college students. They stressed that the family background is a good prediction for success at school, differences in motivation, preparation and encouragement at home leads to passivity of many students at school. Factors such as lighting facilities, food at home, general health and related conditions pertaining to good living conditions that play a very important role. Socio-economic factors and the parent's attitude were of particular interest for this undertaking due to their impact on the academic performance of the children.

Performance at School

Durojaiye (1976, 28-29) expressed that it is at home that the child should have an opportunity to re-examine the teaching of the school, to practice good points and discard the bad ones. Home is a place for the application and further preparation of the facts taught at school. Home with facilities for reading may help the individual to

develop enthusiasm. Awareness of the parents to the value of reading may stimulate the child's learning even if they themselves cannot read.

Fontana (1981, 154) stated that a depressed background in which the child has no encouragement to read or to use language and where no facilities for homework or private study, presents problems to school children. It is likely that the home will overweigh school activities in case of conflict of values about education. In other words parents can enhance or suppress the child's educational potentials. He further noted that children's failure in the education system, in other words is ascribed not so much to some genetic inferiority as to the factors operating in the home, which result in an inability to make use of whatever intellectual capacities they have.

Social-economic Factors

Ezewu (1983, 23), has shown that people of high social economic status have the means and opportunity of sending their children or off-springs to nursery schools which lays a foundation for good performance. According to Wallace (1975, 40), poor people given major time and resource constraints see school in terms of costs and benefits. People would prefer to refrain their children from schooling if they value the income that the children would generate more than the direct benefit of attending a school.

Since environment means the type of home and family from which the child comes, there are differences between it and every other environment. A child may come from a rich family and another from a poor family or one may have literate parents providing better learning environment at home and another child's parents may have illiterate parents providing poor learning environment. The two children will not compete. As Walters and Grant (1972, 31-32), says that while school training can take

place in a good sensible life, the teachers can only build on the foundations started at home.

Another observation by Todaro (1982) showed that recent evidence from a wide range of countries both developed and less developed had conclusively demonstrated that early childhood factors such as health and feeding of his mother during her pregnancy, the child's own health and nutritional status during his or her first few years of life, family income and living conditions could determine whether a child would perform well in school and in later life.

According to Banks (1976), poor family background extended an influence on school performance in several ways: malnutrition and poor living conditions were bound to have influence on a child's health directly or on ability to learn indirectly.

Family Size

In most rural areas since the incomes are irregular their children barely go with adequate necessities to school. Looking at the nature of their families, there are those polygamous ones in which case the head of the family may not be able to meet the requirements of the family members. This is because the resources are meager compared to those in need of them. Such homes find that their kids are victims of fees defaulting which in any case imply to missing lessons whose consequently affect their academic performance.

Banks (1968) noted that poor housing and overcrowding could not only impede the child's homework but could also take his opportunity for reading or constructive play. Encouragement from parents, teachers, friends as well as youth perception of a child's ability would act as mediating variables, hence, social economic status and ability on one hand, and aspiration the other.

Education Level of Parents

The education level of parents has a role to play in a child's attitude towards schooling. Whether the parents are learned or not has an impact on the educational level achieved by a child. It has been discovered that usually educated parents tend to do better at encouraging their children to attain highly at school. Ezewu (1983) noted that illiterate parents were indifferent to their children's education and to their dropping out of school. Musazi (1985, 70) on this matter noted that illiterate parents, "Waste a lot of meager resources on alcohol consumption, which they could have used to educate their children." On a similar note, Apolot (1984, 66) stated that some children of illiterate parents lacked study space at home and scholastic materials.

A parent who is illiterate is likely to deny a school going child such facilities due to lack of a personal experience and knowledge of the necessity of such materials. Bilton (1981, 112), agrees with this when he says that parents' education level or occupation will exert influence on the interests and inclinations of children. He further noted that a child would strive hard to maintain such a standard of living or to attain the same profession as the parents. On this matter still, Atkinson (1983, 34) throws more light on the situation while discussing the indirect benefits of education. He says:

There is a direct link between the education of Parents and the education of children...if the fathers' education extended to the age of 18 years or over, there was a 32% chance that the child would enter full time higher education. If the father had left school under 16: the child had only 2% chance of entering high school.

Atkinson (1983) called this the integration effect of education. Educated parents are able to assist their children at their homework. Atkinson also recognizes the influence of important factors like the nature of the home, social class, family size and intelligence.

Parents' Attitudes towards Education

Parents' attitude towards education is central to children's academic performance. Raphael (1994, 4), expressed the centrality of parents' attitudes in these terms:

I really miss my Dad's love. I actually do not talk to him at all even if he finds me awake, I still have no chance to talk to him, as he goes to rest at once! I even wonder if he cares to look at my progress reports, because he has never made any comments.

Similarly, Kasirye (1995, 11-13), had to share this: "We are born of polygamous families, broken homes, quarrelsome parents, in single roomed homes where we sleep under our parents' beds: Please give us a chance." Children in such situation feel neglected and become constricted; task-centered achievers who shut out experiences, which would contribute, to their emotional and intellectual development and their capabilities become constricted and distorted. Therefore, it is the duty of parents to encourage and improve on the child's environment so as to furnish a basis for good emotional development. As Kakande and Nalwadda, R. (1993) noted the life of a school child is influenced by many factors including motivational attitudes of parents and emotional aspects of the home environment.

In support of the views above, Durojaiye (1976, 28) found out that it is important for the home to cooperate with the school and establish a good functional relationship with teachers. To what extent the child's intellectual potentialities for

success in educative process can be realized depends initially upon how the parents who transmitted this potentiality can provide the environmental influences to nurture it. He further noted that many urban children frequent changes in the way they are handled. These children often have to learn to adjust to different housemaids. The effect on their school education is harmful and such children are often unable to receive encouragement and support for their educational effort.

Although there is a controversy between nature and nurture as to whether intellect is shaped by our genetic inheritance or whether it is due to environmental factors, it can be stimulated or inhibited. Askew and Carnell (1961, 72), said that we can not alter our genetic inheritance but a lot can be done to provide the child with stimulating environment, so that it can grow up to reach its full potential. Attitudes of parents do have an effect on the pupils' performance. For instance, the value the society attaches to education will determine how the pupils will perform. Illiterate parents are assumed to be indifferent or even happy when their children drop out of school. In other instance some parents may even be reluctant to send girls to school. Others may simply be taking their children late at school while some could be indifferent.

Most of the literature reviewed is from outside Uganda, and hence the need to find out whether some of the views/findings relate to the Uganda situation in general and Nsambya Parish, Kampala District in particular. Since there is no documentary evidence to show that a similar venture has ever been carried out in this area, that is Nsambya Parish, Kampala District, there is need to carry out a thorough and precise investigation into this problem for there might be other causes responsible for the poor performance other than those revealed by other researchers.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This chapter describes the methods and the procedures that were used in carrying out the field research. These include population definition, sampling methods, Selection of school and respondents, design of instrument, and research design. The researcher carried out a descriptive study.

Area of Study

The study was carried out in Nsambya Parish, Kampala District and six primary schools out of the nine primary schools found in this parish were sampled for the exercise.

Sampling Procedure

A simple random sample was employed. This method was to imply that every member of the population has an equal chance of selection into the sample. In fact, randomness is an essential part guarded against bias, for the sample to be the representative of the population. A sample of fifteen pupils from classes three to seven (P.3-P7), fifteen parents, and five teachers from these schools were considered as respondents for this study. Using the available progressive class lists, the researcher targeted pupils who perform poorly in class, those who perform averagely and those who perform best. Five pupils represented each of the three categories from each

category and from whom the researcher randomly selected one pupil to represent the entire group.

Site Selection

Nsambya Parish is composed of nine government-aided primary schools. Random sampling was used to draw a sample of six schools in order to constitute a representative sample (67%) of the population under study.

The schools selected for the study include:

- St. Peter's Primary School Nsambya
- St. Joseph's Girls School Nsambya
- St. Paul Primary School
- Railway Children Primary School
- Police Children Primary School
- Katwe Primary School

Population and Sample Size

The target population included 530 pupils, 70 staff (teachers, headmasters) and 100 parents totaling 700 people (*Field notes*). A sample of 210 respondents (30%) was drawn from the population the population under study of which 90 pupils, 90 parents, and 30 teachers.

Instruments of the Study

Interviews

Interviews were used for data collection because of the advantage they have which are supplementary in nature. They provide the advantages of gathering a lot of data collected from real respondents. Furthermore, the method allowed covering all

groups including those who could not read and write, thus adding on qualitative data and getting informants understand the research topic and policy implications.

Therefore, the interviews focused on pupils from primary 3 to primary 7 in order to assess their performance in class, participation in extra curriculum activities, and their membership to peer groups and their behaviors in the respective groups. Some parents were also interviewed and this was complemented by observations in order to get deeper insights on the impact of home environment on pupils' activities, time allocated for homework, equipment and facilities provided to their children.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires were administered to the teachers and some parents because of their ability to read, interpret the questions correctly, and their knowledge about the issue at stake. The instruments consisted of both structured and unstructured questions in order to gather information on socio-economic status and attitude of parents towards their children's academic performance.

Observation

This method was used to supplement personal interviews, provided extra answers, and was acted as a check against invalid data collected. It provided the researcher with an opportunity to study the sample in some aspects whenever the respondents would be unaware, catch off guard hence not changing behavior to give a false picture. This was purely non-participant and categories were observed. Also the related indicators were laid down in the observation guide. Lastly, they were administered among teachers and students as well as parents.

Data Analysis

Data processing consisted of editing, coding and tabulation. On the aspect of the researcher checked the accuracy, the completeness and consistency of the answers given to the respondents and this was done on the spot while interviewing. Frequency tables and cross-tabulation were generated using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software application. This helped for grasping deeper insights and drawing sound generalizations pertaining to the research questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study about the effects of home environment on the academic performance of learners in primary schools. The study was conducted at the Nsambya Parish, Makindye Division, Kampala District.

The findings presented here are derived from an analysis from findings for the study. Both qualitative and quantitative findings are presented. Presentation of the results was done according to the responses of pupils, parents and teachers on the subject matter. Also presentation followed the research questions, study objectives and themes which were developed from the coding category. Frequency Tables presented the findings of this study (Appendix V). Cross-tabulation was used to assess the attitudes of the students and the parents based of their socio-economic statuses.

What are the Socio-economic Statuses of the Pupils' Parents?

Employment of the Parents

It was found that the majority of the pupils' parents (40%) were self employed, about 31.1% of parents were policemen/ women and 28.9% were employed by Uganda Railways Corporation (URC) (Fig 1).

Professions of the respondents

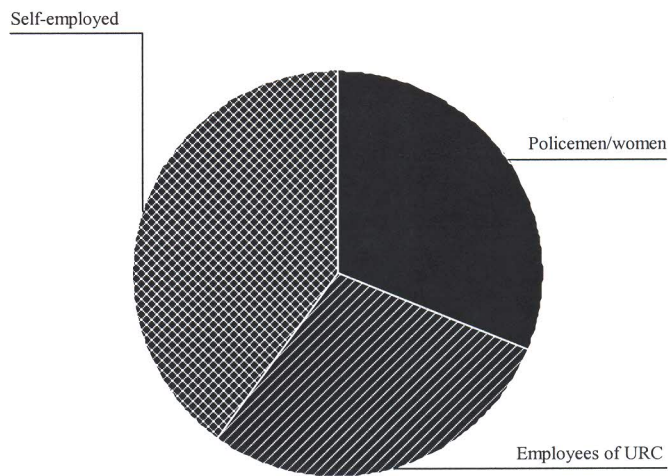


Fig. 1. Showing the professions of the parents

Family Size

The majority (40%) of the pupils belonged to medium family (6-9 members), 35% of them were members of larger families (greater than 10 members), and 15% came from smaller families (less than 5 members) (Fig 2).

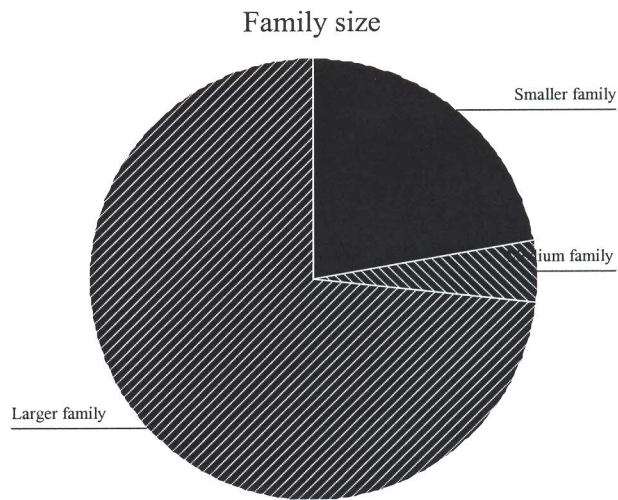


Fig. 2. Showing the family size of the parents

Educational Level of the Parents

The results revealed that most parents (33.3%) had attended ordinary level, about 32.2 % of them had primary education, 20% of the respondent had no education, and few attended technical schools (14.4%) (Fig. 3).

Educational Level

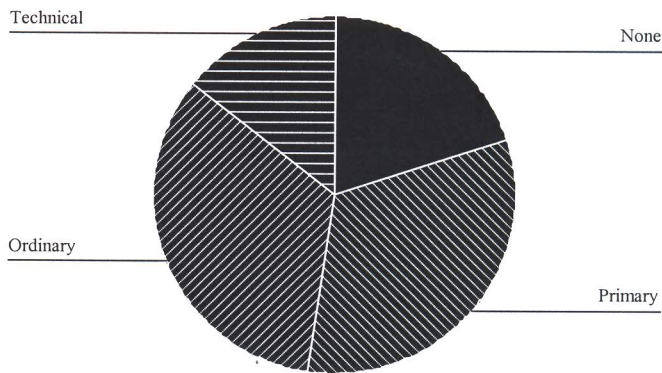


Fig. 3. Showing the educational levels of the parents

Residence of the Respondents

The results of the study indicated that about half of the pupils (40%) reside in the slum areas surrounding Nsambya Police Barracks and Uganda Railways Corporation. About 31.1 % of them live in Nsambya Police Barracks, and 28.9% inhabit Nsambya Railway Quarters (Fig. 4)

Residence of pupils

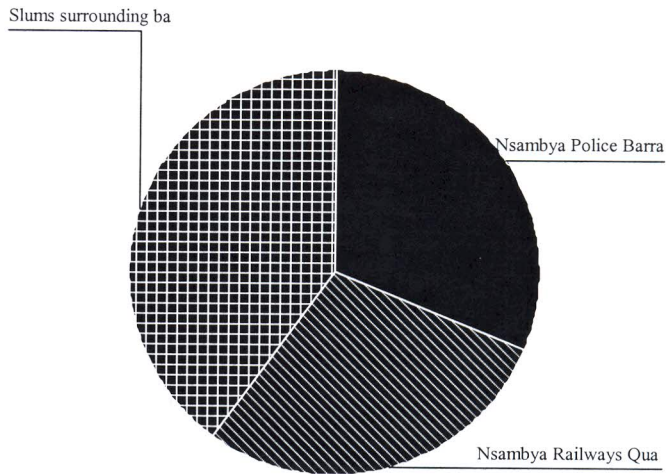


Fig. 4. Showing the residence of pupils.

Tasks the Parents Assign to their Children after School

Several parents prefer to assign business (46.7%) and household activities to their children after school (45.6%). Very few of them (7.8%) use them for fetching water (fig. 5).

Tasks assigned to children after school

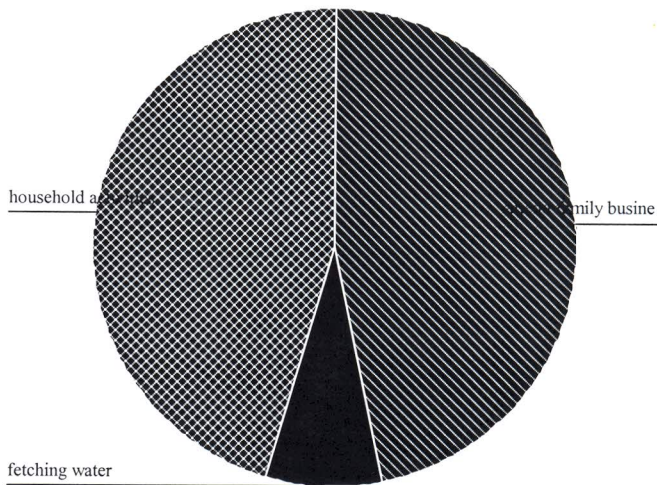


Fig. 5. Showing the tasks assigned to children after school

The ability to clear the school fees of the children was used as an indirect measure of the parents' income because most of them were not willing to reveal their earnings. The results revealed that the majority of the parents (60%) experienced problems in paying school fees of their children implying that 40% of them had enough income to meet their children's educational needs (Fig.6).

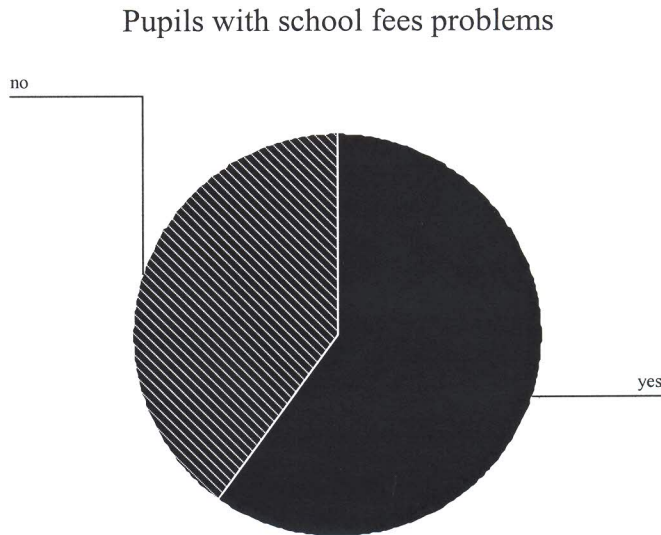


Fig. 6. Showing Pupils with school fees problems.

Socio-economic Statuses of the Parents Children's Academic Performance?

The Effect of Parents' Profession

Results of this study indicated that the profession of the parents had an impact on their children. Most of those children had developed negative attitude towards academic work implying poor performance at school (Fig 7). This could partly be explained by precarious lives they lead as a result of low income level of their parents (fig 6). Fig 7 showed that a great negative impact of the parents' profession was the highest among children of self-employed parents. This contrast could be attributable

to the fact that self-employed parents do not depend on salary from the government as they engaged in various economic activities in order to sustain their lives (*Field notes*). For instance, most of the children from self-employed parents were involved in business activities as compared to those children whose parents depend on salary (Fig 9). Parents themselves had revealed that the types of their professions negatively affected the academic performance of their children (Fig 8). Majority of the parents were engaged in small-scale businesses where rooms occupied served as both shops and bedrooms. Most women in the area of study are engaged in the business of brewing local beer (Malwa), which they sold from their houses and at times throughout the night (*Field notes*).

The researcher established that some of the primary school children were involved in simple household tasks like fetching water, cleaning and cooking. This did not seem to destruct their schoolwork. The majority of the teachers agreed that encouragement given at home was important for school achievement (*Field notes*). This confirmed further what Ezewu (1983, 59) discovered that “.... moderate encouragement caused school success”.

The researcher also observed that for those who operated bars, such an operation lasted to around midnight. This left the children with sleepless nights and this affected their concentration in the classrooms and consequently affected their academic performance.

Considering the importance of enough rest, it was necessary to establish the time when the pupils retired to bed. Many of the pupils retired to bed between 11.00 p.m. and midnight (*Field notes*). Very few retired before 10.00 p.m. This meant that most of the pupils didn't obtain enough rest. This indicated that the pupils spent some

of their time in these activities and they experienced problems of loud noise, which made it hard for them to revise. Very few lived in residential environment.

The researcher found that majority of the pupils had a poor socio-economic background which resulted into fees defaulting and were always sent home for non-payments or delayed payments. This concurred with Ezewu (1983) when he said that people's economic and social background has a relationship with the means and opportunity of sending their offspring to school. They missed lessons for several days and had to remain at home. This is in line with observations made by Todaro (1982), poor income levels of many families in Uganda are affecting academic performance of Children. The absence of enough resources for effective children upbringing affects their academic performance negatively. This was in agreement with Dennisorf (1982,102) when they stated, "Children had certain advantages like television, Radios, good lighting, decent food and comfortable housing conditions which left room for good performance at school." This reflected further what Lester Smith (1965) stated that the environment in which children resided has a bearing on their educational achievement.

According to Bilton (1981), poor children did not have enough time for their studies because they had to spare their time for casual employment. This was in agreement with Wallace and Grant (1972) who stated that some children dropped out of school because they were needed to help at home. Walters and Grant (1972) on this issue also explained that, "children of the poor very frequently drop out of school early and for reasons quite other than incapacity to learn..... their labor is needed at home."

The majority of parents agreed that children involved in parents' business transaction had a tendency not to perform well at class work. Teachers further confirmed that pupils from police barracks and Uganda Railways Corporation

quarters, a majority are poor performers because during lessons they sleep because some do not take breakfast and this affects their concentration and consequently poor performance at the end. The poor performances in low classes have in turn discouraged pupils from keeping in school which has led to high dropouts of pupils from such homes. A discussion with the teachers revealed that those pupils performed poorly at school (*Field notes*).

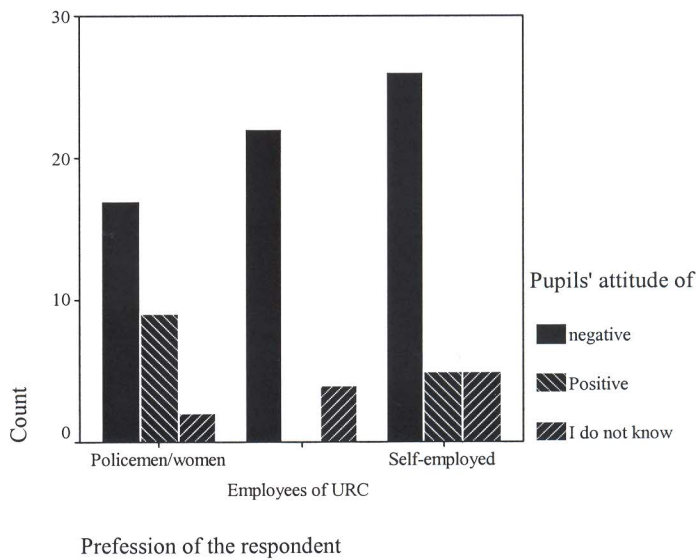


Fig. 7. Showing pupils' attitude about the profession of the respondents

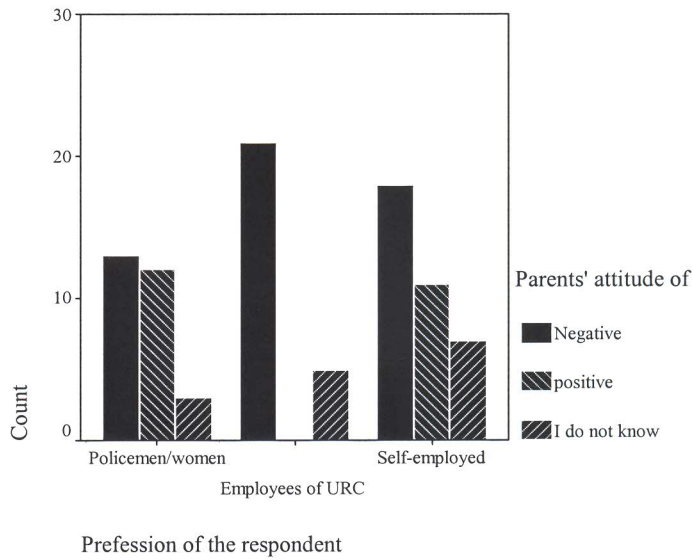


Fig. 8. Showing parents' attitude about the profession of the respondents

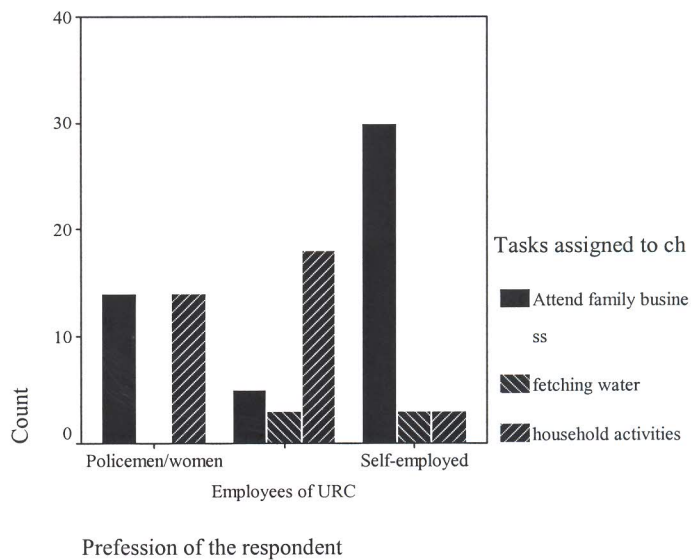


Fig. 9. Tasks assigned to children and the Profession of the Respondents

The Effect of Family Size

Most of parents and heads of the larger families (>10 members) indicated that their family size had negatively impacted their children's academic

performance (Fig 9). The majority of the pupils had pointed out that family sizes had negatively affected their educational performance. The most affected were children members of larger families (Fig 10). Majority of pupils from big sized families have problems with concentration on their academic work, which affects their performance. This was found to be a serious setback in concentration, which has been identified by both parents and teachers as well. This agrees with Banks (1968) that overcrowding in homes is a serious setback in academic performance. The study established that majority of the parents in the area of study are workers of the Uganda Railways Corporation and Uganda Police where their families are overcrowded in small houses, resulting in inadequate study areas for their children's revision of schoolwork and study. The houses where the policemen are staying were designed for one person. They are single rooms which do not offer privacy and they serve all purposes as the kitchen, dinning room, bedroom, reading room and visitors' room, the same thing applies to majority of the railways workers' houses (*Field notes*).

The size of the family affects the aspirations of the students who consider the life led by their parents as most appropriate. Teachers also confirmed the poor performance of their students' low inputs as a result of the children's failure to revise their work and do their homework (*Field notes*). This concurs with the findings of Wallace (1975), that congested home environment is a major negative factor working against teachers' inputs. Wallace further argues that congested homes not only affect the student by denying him/her a suitable place to study. Sometimes children experience sleepless nights as some of their homes are used as work places.

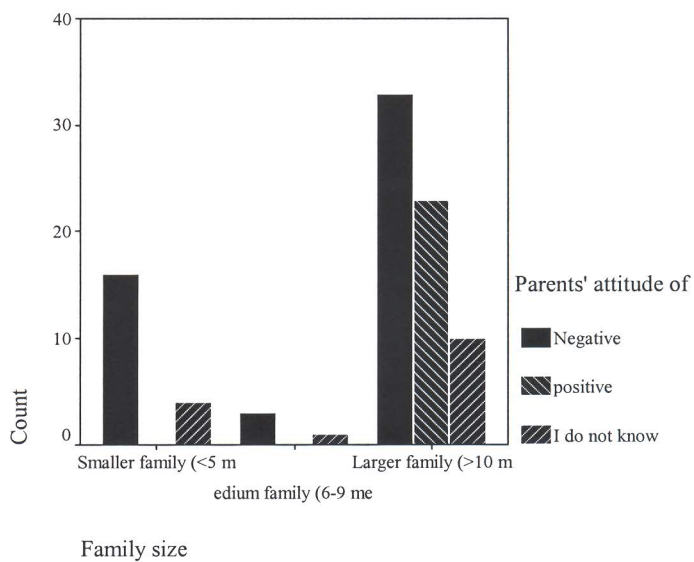


Fig. 10. Showing the parents' attitude about the family size of the respondents

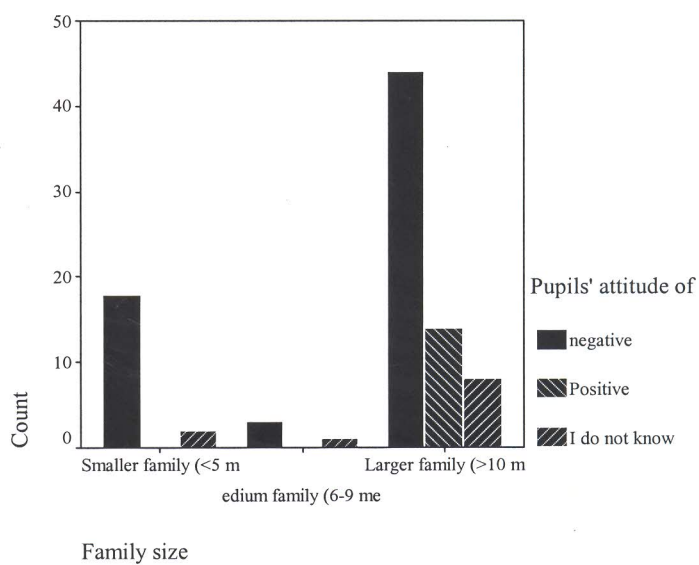


Fig. 11. Showing the pupils' attitude about the family size of the respondents

The Effect of Educational Level

The majority of parents have claimed that their educational levels had negative impact on the academic performance of their children. However, degree of that impact was much experienced among those of primary and ordinary level (Fig 13).

Similarly, many pupils claimed that most of their parents were not able to provide the assistance they needed in order to perform well their academic activities such as home works, debates to name but few. Much weight of this impact was observed from pupils whose parents had primary and ordinary level (Fig 12).

Children from families or of the parents who were learned reported not having problems with studies despite other handicaps such as financial problems. The education level of parents provided an inspiration to the pupils and this indirectly affects their performance. Children often make efforts to attain the same standard or even better than those of their parents, sisters and brothers.

The researcher established that the study that most schooled parents advise their children on matters concerning education, unlike the uneducated. They guided their children on their future careers and this helped them to concentrate on their academic performance, hence, good performance. This concurred with Askew and Carnell (1961) who assessed the importance of parental interest and encouragement on academic performance regardless of children's high ability (intelligence) and high socio-economic status. This was also confirmed by Ezewu (1983), who found out that children from families with a high socio-economic background and learned parents, give enough motivation to their children. Parents who are highly educated put much emphasis on the education of their children which results into ranking of the school fees first on the expenditure list. This explains why their children are really sent away

from school for school fees and this is not necessary that these parents have sufficient money.

Parents who are educated availed enough time for resting to their children. This enabled their children fully concentration on class work and consequent better performance. Parents reported the level of education as being a major factor that influenced the age at which parents sent their children to school. Educated parents sent their children to nursery schools which the uneducated consider a waste of resources. In other words, being educated parents understand and value education. This agrees with the findings of Musazi (1985) that while uneducated fathers waste their meagre resources on alcohol whereas educated parents invest their money in their children education.

Literate parents were discovered to provide a good background to their children's education because they acted as models for them to imitate. This agrees with Bilton (1981) who stated that the education level of parents makes the student strive to maintain such a standard or attain the same profession.

Teachers' respondents reported having problems with illiterate parents. Most of them are rude and uncooperative in educating their children and this has greatly affected the performance of pupils because teachers have failed to work alone on improving their academic performances, hence, teachers have very little interest in such children. This was in agreement with Durojaiye (1981) when he stated that, "it is important for the home to cooperate with the school and establish a good functional relationship with teachers."

Teachers also reported that pupils from poor families and of illiterate parents have a problem of inferiority complex and this affected their concentration and subsequent performance. This was in agreement with Apolot (1984) who stated that

some children of illiterate parents lacked study space at home. Educated parents were found to be a source of encouragement to their children at schoolwork. The parents' educational level influenced the child's career inclination. The researcher also established that follow-up on pupils' schoolwork by parents was very necessary for them to achieve highly thus better academic performance.

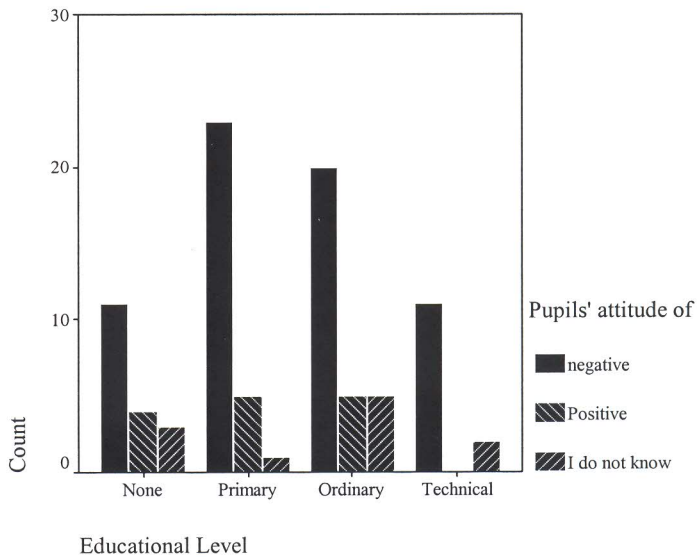


Fig. 12. Showing pupils' attitude about the educational level of the respondents

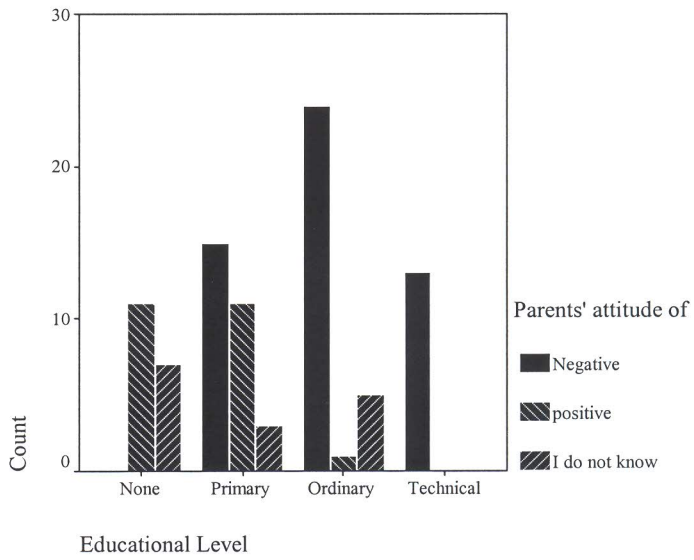


Fig 13 Showing parents' attitude about the educational level of the respondents

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This study was an attempt to research factors affecting home environment on the academic performance of children in Nsambya Parish primary schools. Therefore, this chapter presents the interpretation and discussion of the findings. The chapter also includes the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

Socio-economic Statuses of the Pupils' Parents?

The majority of the pupils lived in poor housing conditions, in slums and quarters of low-income employees. This accommodation was mainly single rooms, which obviously had to be shared with other family members. Yet, most of those pupils belonged to medium and larger families. The houses lacked space and insufficient lighting facilities. About a quarter of the pupils who stayed in senior quarters had reading space and good lighting. Most pupils did not have reading facilities. The two main activities in places where pupils stayed were petty trading, vending of food items and bar operation.

Socio-economic Statuses of the Parents Children's Academic Performance

The type of parents' employment was significantly associated with the academic level of their children. Most children did not perform well at school due to incapacity of their parents to provide them with the basic necessities of life and educational needs. Children from these families pursued their studies without minimum requirements such as mathematical sets, revision materials and textbooks.

Although parents were earning salary/wage, it was found insufficient to operate their homes and meet their children's educational needs. A few parents accepted they were not able to meet the educational obligations of their children due to socio circumstances such as finances to mention but a few. This implied poor academic performance for pupils because most parents could not purchase books for reading, revision materials, and additions.

Parents confirmed their inability to provide the necessities of effective children upbringing. Parents reported financial handicaps and the big number of dependents as the major reason for shortage of sufficient education materials. This was reflected in the statement made by one mother, a parent of three pupils, "We are aware of the need and we are willing to provide the necessities but we don't have the capacity to provide. This has forced our children to borrow books from children of well to do families."

This implied that their poor socio-economic background is the main cause of inadequate support to their children, which in turn affected their academic Excellencies. This has been the cause of perpetual viscous cycle of poverty. The majority of teachers agreed that the looming poverty in homes of policemen/women and railways workers is the major cause of the children's poor academic performance. They argued that pupils did not get enough support from their parents in terms of basic requirements for physical growth, academic development and excellence.

Teachers further reported that they are tired of dealing with such kind of parents whom they claimed did not offer 'incentives' to teachers. Pupils from medium and larger families flooded the school, and therefore caused problems of classroom management and reduction of pupils' concentration. The children from high socio-economic background achieved highly at school due to the favorable economic state of their homes. Those from poor homes did not do well at school. Source of income for the family was a big determinant for school achievement for most children.

The nature of accommodation used by the family was an important factor in school achievement of primary school children. Some homes were spacious for study purposes while others were inadequate.

Recommendations

From the research study and conclusions made, the following are the recommendations to support the education and performance of children.

1. Parents should create a favorable environment for their children to study and concentrate on their academics. This should involve giving them sufficient time to rest. Parents should make efforts to save financially in order to have good living conditions and better learning atmosphere for their children. Then there is the need to provide their children with learning/reading facilities feed them properly, shelter them well and to consider adequate living conditions which will motivate their interests to learn.

2. Teachers should be given proper training to develop effective study habits in children. They should know how to treat children from different environments and be able to counsel and guide them accordingly.
3. Efforts should be made by parents to establish extra income generating projects which will enable them to educate their children. This should be done to avoid financial inadequacies in homes which are characterized by frequent failures to pay school fees.
4. Parents should be sensitized on the importance of education and how it can be achieved by organizing seminars and workshops to enlighten them on how they can be involved in improving their children's' academic performance.
5. Teachers should take their responsibility of guiding and counseling and modeling children from illiterate homes where parents do not offer such inspirations. This should be done because children act innocently as it is not their making.
6. Lastly, authorities should set up a system of dealing with parents who do not mind about their children's education. This can be done by creating clear communication procedures and building health relationships so as to support effective pupil learning.
7. Equally so, the authorities should extend bursaries to such pupils whose parents cannot generally afford educating their children. The school authorities may work in collaboration with the Government to have these bursaries to support the needy children.

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APPENDIX I

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS

I am a student at Nairobi evangelical School of Theology taking Master of Arts in Christian Education. I am researching of the effects of home environment on the academic performance of a child at school in Nsambya Parish, Kampala District. Please help by answering these questions below. Responses will be kept confidential and for research and academic purposes only. Confidentiality and privacy of the respondent are guaranteed.

Personal Information on Pupils.

1. Sex: _____

1. Age: _____

2. Class: _____

3. No. in Family: _____

Male: _____

Female: _____

Position in Family?: _____

4. Tick where applicable:

Has both parents ()

Has one parent ()

No parent at all ()

5. Parent's employment status

Government employed ()

Privately ()

Self ()

Not any ()

6. The person you stay with:

Mother and Father ()

Brother ()

Other (Specify) _____

7. What learning facilities have been provided to you by your parents or any other?

Books (both text books and exercise books) specify _____

Pens _____

Uniform _____

Time and space on homework _____

8. Does your parent assist you whenever you are given homework? Yes or no.

9. How often does your parent check your exercise books? _____

10. A. Does your parent/guardian advise you about future career?

Yes or no. _____

If yes, state what kind career they advise you? _____

12. Do you get lunch at school?

If no, why? _____

How many meals do you get a day while at home? _____

13. Do you take breakfast before coming to school? Yes or no

If no, why? _____

14. What are some of the problems you face while at School that affect your academic performance? _____

15. What are some of the problems you face while at home that affect your academic performance? _____

16. Are you satisfied with your academic performance? Yes or no.

Please give your comments? _____

APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS

1. What are the effects of home environment on the academic performance of Children?

- a. How does the social-economic background of the parents affect the children's academic performance?

- b. How does the size of the family affect the child's academic performance?

- c. How can the education level of parents be related to their children's performance in schools?

2. What are the factors affecting performance of a child at school?

APPENDIX III

SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRIMARY TEACHERS

Introduction

I am a student researching of the effects of home environment on the academic performance of a child at school in Nsambya Parish, Kampala District. Please help by answering these questions below. Responses will be kept confidential and for research and academic purposes only. Confidentiality and privacy of the respondent are guaranteed.

Personal Information

Name _____

Registration No. _____

Teaching experience _____

Name of the School _____

1. When did you qualify as a teacher? _____

2. In how many schools have you taught since you qualified? _____

1. If you have taught in more than one school, how do you compare the academic standards of your previous school with the present one? _____

2. Have you at one time ever passed more than 20 pupils in division one in Primary Leaving Examination (P.LE)? Yes or no _____

3. If no, Why. _____

4. How many pupils do you have in your class? _____

5. Can you generally comment on the academic performance of your School?

6. What do you think are some of the factors that contribute to poor performance of Children?

7. How do parents in your school value education of their children?

APPENDIX 1V

OBSERVATION GUIDE FOR DIFFERENT FAMILIES

Observation Indicators

Dressing, appearance, way of talking to children, child interaction.

Environment

Size of rooms, number of children accommodated, number of rooms, number of beds in the room, bedding, washing facilities, sanitary equipment, waste disposal.

Meals

Type of food served, quality and quantity, where it is served, eating habits, hygiene involved.

Location

Easily accessible, environment free of hazards, surroundings.

APPENDIX V

FREQUENCY TABLES

Profession of the respondent

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Policemen/women	28	31.1	31.1	31.1
	Employees of URC	26	28.9	28.9	60.0
	Self-employed	36	40.0	40.0	100.0
	Total	90	100.0	100.0	

Family size

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Smaller family (<5 members)	20	22.2	22.2	22.2
	Medium family (6-9 members)	4	4.4	4.4	26.7
	Larger family (>10 members)	66	73.3	73.3	100.0
	Total	90	100.0	100.0	

Educational Level

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	None	18	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Primary	29	32.2	32.2	52.2
	Ordinary	30	33.3	33.3	85.6
	Technical	13	14.4	14.4	100.0
	Total	90	100.0	100.0	

Residence of pupils

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Nsambya Police Barracks	28	31.1	31.1	31.1
Nsambya Railways Quarters	26	28.9	28.9	60.0
Slums surrounding barracks and railway quarters	36	40.0	40.0	100.0
Total	90	100.0	100.0	

Tasks assigned to children after school

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Attend family business	42	46.7	46.7	46.7
fetching water	7	7.8	7.8	54.4
household activities	41	45.6	45.6	100.0
Total	90	100.0	100.0	

Pupils with school fees problems

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	54	60.0	60.0	60.0
no	36	40.0	40.0	100.0
Total	90	100.0	100.0	

Pupils' attitude of the effects of family size on academic performance

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid negative effects	39	43.3	43.3	43.3
Positive effects	34	37.8	37.8	81.1
I do not know	17	18.9	18.9	100.0
Total	90	100.0	100.0	

Parents' attitude of the effects of family size on academic performance

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Negative effects	52	57.8	57.8	57.8
positive effects	23	25.6	25.6	83.3
I do not know	15	16.7	16.7	100.0
Total	90	100.0	100.0	

APPENDIX VI

AUTHORITY TO PERFORM RESEARCH



Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology

P.O. Box 24686 - 00502 Karen, NAIROBI, KENYA

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1st November, 2004

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RESEARCH WORK

The bearer of this letter, Rev. Onesmaus Tayebwa is a student at Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (NEGST) and is doing research towards the completion of the Master of Arts in Christian Education Degree. The research is on "**The Effects of Home Environment on the Academic Performance of Children in Nsambya Parish Primary Schools, Kampala District.**"

Any assistance that you can give to Rev. Tayebwa will be much appreciated.

Sincerely,


George L. Huttar, PhD
Ag. Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs

VITA

Personal Data

Name: Onesmus Tayebwa
Address: Ankole Diocese, Box 14, Mbarara, Uganda
Gender: Male
Nationality: Ugandan
Marital Status: Married With Three Children

Educational Institutions Attended

Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology	2003-2005
African Bible College	1993-1997
Bp Macalister Theological College	1990-1992
Sheema Primary Teachers College	1987-1989
Kabwohe Divinity College	1984-1986
Mbarara High School	1980-1983

Academic Qualifications

Certificate in Theology
Provincial Certificate in Theology
Primary Teachers College Certificate
Bachelor of Arts Degree in Biblical Studies
Master of Arts Degree in Christian Education

Professional Experience

Teacher/Chaplain at Kyamate Secondary School	1992-1993
Principal Rutooma Divinity	1998-2000
Diocesan Youth Coordinator/ Bishop's Chaplain	2001-2003