

**PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ACADEMIC  
PERFORMANCE IN MPIGI TOWN COUNCIL, MPIGI DISTRICT, UGANDA**

**BY  
WASSAACA YAHAYAH  
1161-07096-03362**

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to God Almighty, my strong pillar, my creator, my source of inspiration, wisdom, knowledge and understanding. I also dedicate it to my darling wife and children.

## **DECLARATION**

I, Wassaaka Yahayah do solemnly declare that this is my original work and has never been submitted to any university or institution of higher learning for any award.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVAL**

**I certify that I have supervised and read this research and that in my opinion; it is adequate** in scope and quality as a dissertation in partial fulfillment for the award of the Degree of Master of Educational Management and Administration of Kampala International University.

Supervisor: Dr. Kayindu Vincent

Signed .....

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study about parental involvement and secondary school students' academic performance in Mpigi Town Council, Mpigi district, Uganda was carried out to explore the extent of parental involvement in their children's education; to assess the academic performance of secondary school students in Mpigi town council, Mpigi district; and to examine the relationship between parental involvement and children's academic performance in secondary schools, Mpigi town council. Using universal sampling, all the ten secondary schools in Mpigi town council as well as the intact classes of students, Senior One to Senior Four (S.1-S.4) taking the seven compulsory subjects as per the Uganda National Examination Board guidelines were included in the study. Thus, 2,000 students participated in the study. Questionnaires with close -ended and structured items were used to collect data on parental involvement; and the end of term one results for December 2017, April, 2018 and August, 2018 were used for assessing students' academic performance. The findings were that parental involvement is low, students' academic performance is poor and the relationship between parental involvement and students; academic performance is significant. Conclusions were made that due to social, political, technological and economic changes in Uganda, in some parts of Uganda some parents have abandoned their roles towards their children; many of them do not adequately guide their children, help them financially and academically, and do not adequately collaborate with the head teachers and teachers of their children in secondary schools; that students in secondary schools in Mpigi district generally do not perform well academically; and that academic achievement of the learners depends on many factors. Parental involvement is among those factors. The higher the parental involvement, the higher the possibility of the learners getting good results, and vice-versa. The recommendations were that there is need for parents in Mpigi district to give enough time for their children, to get highly involved with them, monitor them, and support them financially and academically. Given the poor academic performance of the learners especially in science subjects, the students should put in more effort. They should also be guided by the teachers to stop perceiving science subjects as being hard. Also, since parental involvement influences the children's learning outcomes significantly, there is need for parents to get involved more in their children's education, highly monitor their children, guide them and support them financially and academically.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Parental involvement in the education of their children is a responsibility of every parent. This is enshrined not only in the 1995 supreme law (constitution) of Uganda but also in section 4 (1) of the Education (Pre-primary and Post primary) Act, 2008.

##### **1.1.1 Historical perspective**

Parental involvement in the education of their children is as old as human beings. Before the advent of formal education, there existed informal education whereby the parents and societal elders taught children all that they considered important in people's lives. Parents educated their children in the moral values of society, different types of work and other social, political and economic spheres of life, so parental involvement was highly encouraged.

In traditional African society, children were so much loved and cared for and their informal education was ensured. Though there were no specific places from where the children could be taught, parents always got suitable time and convenient places to teach their children, for example around fire places, in the gardens (for the farmers), in the bushes (for the cattle keepers, hunters and women who used to collect firewood), in houses, in courtyards, and anywhere or at any time as need arose. Parental involvement was meant to produce hard working children, responsible men and women, morally up-right children and responsible future leaders, husbands and wives (Ssekamwa, 1999).

With the advent of formal education in Africa, the situation of parental involvement in their children's education was widened; parents continued giving informal education to their children as well as being required to take up new responsibilities in offering formal education to their children. For example in the case of Uganda, though at first formal education was for a selected few-the sons and daughters of chiefs and was free, with time even the commoners' children were urged by the Christian missionaries to access schools, parents were required to pay fees for their children, buy scholastic materials for their children such as books, pens and pencils as well as to collaborate with teachers and school managers by for example attending meetings at school,

parents were also urged to ensure that their children attended church services on Sundays or else they could be sent back home on Mondays.

From 1925, the colonial government in Uganda took an active role in directing education in Uganda as originally it was in hands of the Christian missionaries. By getting involved, the government established different Commissions to study Uganda's education system, find the strengths and weaknesses and suggest solutions to the weaknesses. Many of these commissions however, recommended the need for the government to intervene more in education and give more funds, streamline the curricular, supervise, and register the schools. No specific mention was made of parental involvement. Such commissions included the 1924 Strokes Commission, the 1925 Phelps-Strokes Commission, the 1952 De-Bunsen Education Commission and the 1963 Castle Education Commission. It was the Uganda National Education Review Commission, 1989 under the chairmanship of Prof. Ssentenza Kajubi which stressed parental involvement and recommended among other things, that parents should contribute on their children's uniforms, meals and instructional materials where possible (the Uganda National Education Review Commissioner, 1989).

However, though the different earlier commissioners did not directly emphasize parental participation and children's academic excellence, parents were practically required to participate in a few things such as buying uniforms. Even the academic excellence of students was indirectly implied when the national examinations were introduced as was recommended by the Phelps-Strokes Commission of 1924.

Parental involvement in their children's education in Uganda accelerated from 1945 with the establishment of private schools. As some individual educated Ugandans perceived the foreign Christian missionaries and the foreign administrators to be oppressive to the Ugandans, they advocated for the establishment of private schools, thus Aggrey Memorial Secondary School came in existence. As private schools increased, parents were sensitized more on the value of educating their children and to help them complete the education cycle through paying fees, guiding them morally and interacting with the teachers of their children. However, since many parents were not educated then, there was a tendency for many parents to think that the schools had taken over the total responsibility of educating children. Thus in the aspect of assignments

given to student, the majority of parents could not sit with their children to do them (Ssekamwa, 1999).

### **1.1.2 Theoretical Perspective**

This study was based on the Decay theory and the Repressive theory, both of which were propounded by Sigmund Freud. According to the Decay theory, learning leaves a trace on the brain and if that trace is not actively utilized it can fade away with time. The implication is that if students are not guided properly by their parents, or not given enough material and economic support by their parents or guardians, they can be frustrated or be disturbed by actions which divert their attention from studying. Since examinations are usually done at the end of term or year, the learners can easily forget what they are taught and end up performing poorly in academics.

### **1.1.3 Conceptual perspective**

This study was based on two variables, namely parental involvement as the independent variable and students' academic performances as a dependent variable.

Parental involvement means the parents or guardians of children taking part in their children's education so that their children can access school, attend school and be retained at school until they finish a given level such as S.4 and S.6 and then continue with higher levels of education. In this study, the responsibilities of parents and guardians in the education of their children are rooted in the laws of Uganda, section 13 (2) of the education (pre primary, primary and post-primary) Act 2008, in which it is individual that parents and guardians have the responsibility of (a) registering their children of school going age at school; (b) providing parental guidance and psychosocial welfare to their children; (c ) providing food, clothing, shelter, medical care and transport; (d) promoting moral, spiritual and cultural growth of the children; (e) participating in the promotion of discipline of their children; (f) participating in community support to the school; and (g) participating in the development and review of the curriculum.

Thus based on that Ugandan law, the independent variable was conceptualized based on those aspects summarized into four areas namely: offering moral guidance to children; offering economic support to children; offering academic support to children: and parents collaborating with teachers and school managers offering moral guidance means informing and directing

children in the various ethical fibres of society, such as doing right and avoiding wrong. For example refrain from stealing, telling lies, being dishonest, being so cruel, being anti-social sexual immorality among others.

Offering economic support to children means paying for children and buying them what is necessary as paying fees, buying books and other scholastic materials, giving them pocket money and other necessities to enable them access education and be retained in school.

Offering academic support to children means guiding children in their academic career by for example helping them with home work, hiring resourceful persons to coach them/give them extra-lessons, asking respective teachers to teach them after classes etc.

Parents collaborating with teachers and head teachers means the extent to which parents and guardians take time to know what happens at school when their children go, and what the children do after reaching their, so parents can collaborate with those teaching his or her children and the head teacher by for example attending parents meetings at school, paying regular visits at school to find out how his or her child (run) behaves and performs, to seek advice from teachers on how his or her children can improve and to know the strengths and weaknesses of his/her child (run) as perceived by teachers or head teachers.

Academic performance means the way learners fare or do in various academic subjects. This is usually measured by the marks they score in the different subjects of study such as in history, geography, Islam, religious education, mathematics, physics, chemistry and others. In this study, learner's academic performance was measured basing on end of term results, April 2018. Those results were not considered not the Uganda national examinations board (UNEB) results basically UNEB exams are done at the end of S.4 and S.6 and after the exams the learners usually learn their respecting schools, yet the current study intended to assess the students currently in secondary schools and how their parent's involvement affects their performance.

#### **1.1.4 Contextual Perspective**

By the year 2016, Mpigi district had four governments aided secondary schools and 26 private secondary schools. Some of the private schools were started by business men who care less about parental involvement and good teaching for academic excellence; their priority is money. Some of them even cheat in the national examinations for their students to excel (Mukalazi,

2016). The increase in the number of private schools started by illiterate businessmen, some of whom do not pay teachers, as well as the public secondary schools where teacher-student ratio is very big, makes some teachers develop the “I don’t care” attitude on students, and the end result is students’ poor academic performance (Pamela and Patricia, 2001). Evidence from the annual reports series, *Are Our Children Learning?* (Uwezo Uganda, 2016) as well as the national examination results of S,4 and S.6 students in Mpigi district over the years (Mukalazi, 2016) seem to confirm this discouraging perspective of students’ academic performance in the district. This prompted the study.

### **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Whereas parents have a role to play in their children’s education, due to social, political and economic challenges, some of them do not pay much attention in the education of their children (Mukalazi, 2016). One of the end results is students’ poor academic performance. Since over the years students in secondary schools in Mpigi district do not perform well in the national examinations, the current study was carried out to assess how far parental involvement impacts on the academic achievement of secondary school students, S.1-S.4 in Mpigi Town Council, Mpigi district.

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to assess the relationship between parental involvement in their children’s education and the academic performance of those children in secondary schools of Mpigi town council, Mpigi district.

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

This study was carried out to:

1. Establish the extent of parental involvement in the education of their children in secondary schools in Mpigi town Council, Mpigi district.
2. To assess the academic performance of students in secondary schools, Mpigi town council, Mpigi district.
3. To assess the relationship between parental involvement in the education of their children and the academic performance of students in secondary schools, Mpigi town council, Mpigi district.



## **1.5 Research Questions**

This study was carried out to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent do parents get involved in the education of their children in secondary schools in Mpigi town Council, Mpigi district?
2. How do students in secondary schools, Mpigi town council, Mpigi district, perform academically?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the extent of parental involvement in the education of their children and the academic performance of students in secondary schools, Mpigi town council, Mpigi district?

## **1.6 Research Hypotheses**

It was hypothesized that: the relationship between the extent of parental involvement in the education of their children and the academic performance of students in secondary schools, Mpigi town council, Mpigi district is insignificant.

## **1.7 Scope**

### **1.7.1 Geographical scope**

Geographically, the study was conducted in Mpigi Town Council. This town council has ten secondary schools. The area is peri-urban and the population is generally literate. There are a few civil servants in the area, many business men/women and farmers who grow on a small scale beans, matooke, maize, millet, ground nuts, and also do animal and poultry farming. This area was chosen because of its cosmopolitan nature, as well as having mushrooming secondary schools some of which have very poor infrastructure. With cosmopolitanism, all categories of people are found, which translates in schooling. Therefore, different categories of students from different backgrounds are found in the schools within Mpigi town council.

Content wise, the study was limited to the involvement of parents in their children's education and the academic performance of the learners, basing on the raw marks of O-Level students (S.1-S.4) of term 1, 2018.

### **1.8 Significance of the study**

This study has several significances. First, the research findings could provide insight into the extent of parental involvement in their children's education with a view of suggesting to parents and students the better way of doing it.

Secondly, this research outcome will help the secondary school administrators as well as the planners in government to identify critical factors that can help students perform very well. This is necessary since all the stakeholders in education inject a lot of money in education. Since academic excellence is desired by all the stakeholders, this study will shade light on that, to all the concerned parties.

Thirdly, the successful completion of this study will enable the researcher to get a Masters degree of Education in Early childhood education since it is one of the requirements.

To the future researchers, the findings of this study as well as the reviewed literature will be used as a point of reference to make an evaluation of how their findings are either similar to or different from those of this study, and why.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

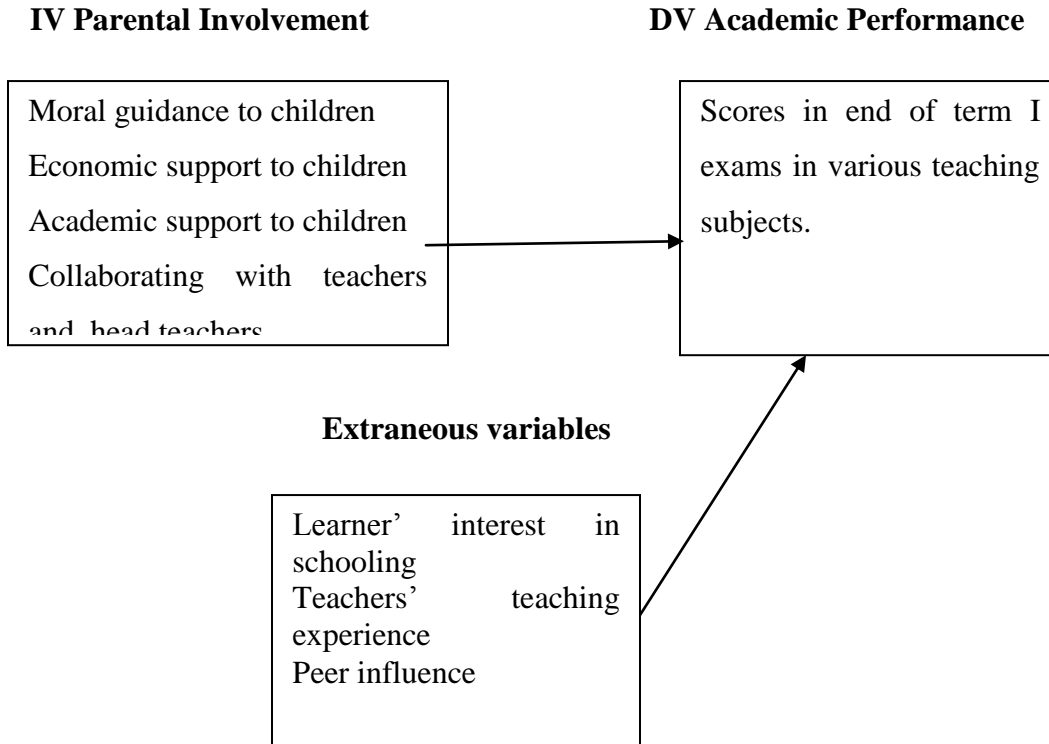
This chapter presents the theoretical review, conceptual framework, as well as the literature related to the variables of the study.

#### **2.1 Theoretical Review**

This study was based on the Decay theory and the Repressive theory, both of which were propounded by Sigmund Freud. According to the Decay theory, learning leaves a trace on the brain and if that trace is not actively utilized it can fade away with time (Blair, Stewart & Simpton, 1968). The implication in parental involvement and academic achievement is that if a parent does not from time to time involve his or her children in the good aspects he or she wants the children to acquire, such as waking them up early to go to school, urging them to read books when they are at home, among other things, the learners can forget what they study in class. The same is true with learning. If the learners fail to revise from time to time what they are taught, they can easily forget them. As for the Repressive theory, the factors within an individual such as anxiety and frustrations can cause a person to either deliberately not wanting to think of the past experience or to forget it totally. Thus as applied to parenting, the approach the parents usually use or the environment the learners are in can make them not wanting to remember the past events or what their parents told them, and in learning, the learners may fail to remember what they were taught by teachers due to factors such as frustrations or lack of interest.

## 2.2 Conceptual Framework

**Fig 2:1 showing the relationship between the independent variable (IV) and the dependent variable (DV).**



**Source:** Drawn based on Omstein, C.A (1982). *Strategies for effective teaching (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)*. Chicago: Brown and Benchmark publishers.

The conceptual framework reveals that the way learner's person in academics is an effect of among other factors, parental involvement. When parents get highly involved in their children's education by for example morally guiding their children, giving economic support to their children, supporting their children academically, as well as collaborating with teachers and head teachers can enable their children to perform well as academically.

However, honestly operating as George will (1990) affirms students academic achievement is explained by various factors including learners interest in schooling, teachers teaching

experience and the influence of friends (peers). The extraneous variables were however not addressed by the current study; the current study only addressed parental involvement.

Therefore, the conceptual framework assumes, as based on the views of authors like George will (1990) and Fontana (1995), the more the moral guidance to children the more the likelihood of good academic performance, the more the parents economic support to children, academic support to children as well as collaborating with teachers and head teachers, the more the likelihood of better student's academic achievement, and vice versa.

## **2.3 Related Literature**

### **2.3.1 Parental involvement**

Based on the laws of Uganda, parents have to be involved in the education of their children. According to, the Education (Board of Governors) regulations, 2008, for example, Section 3 (d) states that for every secondary school in Uganda there shall be a Board of Governors consisting of five members, two of whom must be representatives of parents of the school, elected at the annual general meeting. This reveals the importance the government attaches on parental involvement in the management of the schools their children are studying from. By getting in the management of the schools, different aspects in the school, such student's performance are addressed. It is however one thing for the law to state something and it is another thing for what the law states to be implemented.

This is corroborated by the findings of the study done in 2012 by Byamugisha in private secondary schools in Kampala district. The study revealed that many private secondary schools especially those founded by individuals and business partners, do not have functional Boards of Governors, that some purport to have them when they are actually not in place, so private schools are usually managed without the input of parents. Although head teachers and school founders are usually parents, their biological children tend to study from other schools, thus Byamugisha (2012)'s study affirms that parental involvement in the management of schools is lacking especially in Kampala district private schools save in the denominational schools. He gave examples of schools like Uganda Martyrs High school Rubaga, and Rubaga Girls Secondary school as having powerful, functional and efficient Boards of Governors with parents being involved. However, Byamugisha (2012) does not tell what is meant by the boards being

powerful, functional and efficient, neither did he give the parameters of how he measured them; probably he based on his personal perception.

Parental involvement in their children's well being including education is taken seriously by some parents. This is why today as Kayindu (2017) claims, some economically poor parents ask their relatives to help them educate their children. In that way, a child can go and stay at his or her aunt or uncle's home from where he or she goes to school. Unfortunately some of the male relatives commit incest with the girls they are looking after, an act which, according to section 149 (1) of the penal code Act, laws of Uganda, is criminal punishable by seven years of imprisonment. Therefore the point is that some parents and guardians fail to get involved in the education of their children in a morally upright way and instead get involved in a stupid way. Though getting involved in a stupid way is by law punishable, sometimes the culprits go unpunished due to failure to report such cases to the relevant authorities or due to lack of concrete evidence (Kayindu, 2017).

Parental involvement in their children's education is emphasized not only by the government, but also by religions. Though this study was not religious-inclined, the fact is that in the secondary schools of Mpigi and Uganda in general, different students believe mainly in either the Islamic or Christian faith, so this teaching is relevant as far as parental participation is concerned. After all, even section 2 of the Education (Pre-primary, primary and post-primary) Act, 2008 states that Religious Education will be part of Uganda's secondary school curriculum. Therefore, quoting religious teachings on different aspects of education is not irrelevant at all.

Accordingly, the second Vatican Council (Synod), in stressing the role of parents in their children's education declared thus,

“As it is the parents who have given life to their children, on them lies the gravest obligation of educating their family. They must therefore be recognized as being primarily and principally responsible for their education. The role of parents is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute... The task of imparting education belongs primarily to the family but it requires the help of society as a whole in accordance the principle of subsidiary when the efforts of parents and other organizations are inadequate it should itself

Undertake the duty of education, with due consideration, However for the wishes of the parents.”

The Synod also stressed that all men of whatever age, condition or race in virtue of their dignity as human persons, have a right to education. The education should be suitable to the particular destiny of the individuals to their ability, sex and national cultural traditions. That true education is directed towards the formation of the human person in view of his final end and the good of that society to which he belongs and in the duties of which he will, as an adult have a share. Children and young people to be helped to develop harmoniously their physical, moral and intellectual qualities. They should be trained to acquire gradually a more perfect sense of responsibility in the proper development of their own lives by constant effort and in the pursuit of liberty, overcoming obstacles with unwavering courage and perseverance. As they should receive a positive and prudent education in matters relating to sex.

The synod also affirmed that children and young people have a right to be stimulated to make sound moral judgments based on a well-formed conscience and to put them into practice with a sense of personal commitment, and to know and love God more perfectly, and in this regard, all those who are in charge of civil administration or in control of education were requested to make it their care to ensure that young people are never deprived of this second right, so all Christian churches agree that children have to be given moral education by the parents or any other persons.

The role of parents in the education of their children is stressed by the Roman Catholic Church Canon law. For example Canon 793 Paragraph 1 states, “Parents as well as those who take their place are obliged and enjoy the right to educate their offspring, Catholic parents also have the duty and the right to select those means and institutions through which they can provide more suitably for the Catholic education of the children according to local circumstances.”

Canon 792 Paragraph 2 states that parents also have the right to make use of those aids to be furnished by civil society which they need in order to obtain Catholic Education for their children.

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This implies that both the grave obligation to see to the formation of their children in the faith in the best way open to them, and the right to make determination, among the means or schools available of those which are most for their children. For this duty and right of selection to be meaningful, there must exist some options from which to make choices, so even the local church is held responsible to see to it that effective Catholic education is made genuinely available to the parents in their midst, taking into account their economic and social conditions.

Canon 795 states, “Since a true education must strive for the integral formation of the human person a formation which looks toward the person’s final end, and at the same time common good of societies, children and young people are to be so reared that they can develop harmoniously their physical, moral and intellectual talents, that they acquire a more perfect sense of responsibility and a correct use of freedom and that they be educated for active participation in social life”. The summary given in this Canon stresses four elements of education. These are: holistic. It seeks the integral formation of the whole person and concerns itself with the development of physical, moral and intellectual endowments, developmental — conscious of the changes and growth which children and young people are experiencing. It fosters a sense of gradual formation, an evolution of a high sense of responsibility and use of freedom Social — far from an individualistic orientation, it aims at the common good of society, and it insists on a refined sense of responsibility and right use of freedom for active participation in the life of the human community. Personal — It strives for the formation of a human person, fully endowed with responsibility and freedom, and directed toward that person’s final destiny — life with God. The Canon and its source document both merit the educator’s frequent reflection.

Canon 796 Paragraph 1 states, “Among educational means the Christian faithful should greatly value schools, which are of principle assistance to parents in fulfilling their educational tasks.”. Relatedly, paragraph 2 states, “It is incumbent upon parents to cooperate closely with the school teachers to whom they “trust their children to be educated; in fulfilling their duty teachers are to collaborate closely with parents who are to be willingly heard and for whom associations or meetings to be inaugurated and held in great esteem,” In this paragraph, both parents and teachers are admonished to work as partners in the educational process. Parents are urged to cooperate with the school teachers and the teachers to collaborate with the parents, listen to them and start associations for them. The mutual collaboration can bring rich rewards for the students.

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In a nutshell, the Catholic Church strongly argues parents to educate their children in a morally accepted manner. Children have to be instructed and guided by parents. They should be strongly involved in their children's education, without leaving it to teachers. In the researcher's view, this is relevant for all parents, whether Christians or not. However, with some people's religious intolerance, there is a wrong assumption that what is taught by the church is relevant for only Christians, and that what is taught by Islam is relevant for only Muslims. Others do not even want to hear the word Christianity and Islam mentioned in Academics. This is wrong, after all these are independently taught topics and subjects in secondary schools of Uganda, so their relevance in the education field should not be ignored.

Related views are held in the Islamic faith. Islam lays great emphasis on the duty of parents to educate their children. In the education of children in the family, Islam grants mother greater privilege than that is due to the father. She carries the baby till delivery, she cleans and washes it after delivery; for this reason, her right over the child than that of the father is- much more emphasized in Islam. The Holy Qur'an says, "And we have commended unto man kindness toward parents. His mother beareth him with reluctance and bringeth him forth with reluctance and the bearing him and the weaning of him is thirty months (46:15). Parents should seek to develop in the children a deep sense of reasonable awareness of God and keen desire to observe His moral religious code. Parents should be extremely mindful about the proper upbringing of their children lest they be led astray by evil temptations. The Holy Qur'an says: 'O you who believe! Save yourselves and your families from the hell fire'" (66:6). This is relevant for parents to guide their children in that way. The researcher believes that the children moulded in that line can be disciplined, and are hence more likely to concentrate on academics.

It is unlawful in Islam to take great interest in the upbringing of the males and neglect the welfare and training of the females. Prophet Mohammed said, "Anyone who has a daughter or a sister and he treats her well and looks after her welfare and training and marries her at the right place, Allah will reward him with paradise" (Hakim). The background of prophet Muhammad's teaching about the education and fair treatment of girls rests on the fact that during the "Jahiliyya" period (the period of "Ignorance" before the advent of Islam in Arabia), Arabs used to prefer sons to daughters, whom they considered an unbearable social financial burdens as well as a source of disgrace. When one produced a daughter it was regarded as sad news, which

brought about grief feelings (Al—Nahl 16:58\_59). With the advent of Islam therefore, a totally positive feeling for daughters is stressed. Muslims are strongly urged to treat girls as fairly as they treat boys. Much as it is a right for children to be morally educated by parents in families, it is the duty of the children to obey their parents.

### **2.3.2 Academic Performance**

Given the huge amounts of money parents and government inject in education, the academic performance of students is considered very vital. Academic performance of students is usually a function of various factors such as home environment, school environment, students' interest in schooling, learning styles, among other factors. Students' academic performance has been an area of interest for educational institutions. For example, studies have been carried out to explore factors that affecting university students' academic performance. Hanson (2000) reported that Student performance is affected by different factors such as learning abilities, gender and race. Simmons, et al. (2005) concluded that family income level, attending full time, receiving grant aid and completing advanced level classes in high school having statistically significant effects on college persistence among first generation college students Garton et al. (2000) carried out a study with freshmen college students to evaluate the efficiency of student learning style and other university admission variable in predicting student academic performance and retention. Act composite score, high school class rank, high school core GPA, and learning style were used as predictors. Results showed that core GPA and Act score were best predictors for predicting academic performance of first year of college. McKenzie and Schweitzer (2001) conducted a prospective study to explore the psychosocial, cognitive, and demographic predictors of academic performance of first year Australian university students. Results demonstrate that previous academic performance was identified most significant predictors of university performance. Integration into university, self efficacy, and employment responsibilities were also predictors of university performance. Hijazi and Naqvi (2006) conducted a study to find out the factors which affecting college students' performance. In this study researcher mainly focus to explore the factors that associated with performance of students in intermediate examination. This study conclude that attitude towards attendance in classes, time allocation for studies, parents level of income, mother's age and mother's education were main factors that affect performance of students of private colleges. Although these studies were on university students,

not secondary school students, they are relevant. However, since the environments they were carried out from are far different from Mpigi district where the current study was carried out from, there is a possibility of getting different results. Even if results are the same, it necessitates a deeper argument of why they are similar yet they were carried out at different times and from different perspectives.

There are numerous factors which affect the academic performance and retention of students in higher education institutions. In Brazil, a study among 70 families of first-grade children showed that school achievement and social competence at school are mediated by family support and child resources in the home environment (Marturano, de Cássia Trivellato and D'Avila Bacarji, 2005). The study used the Home Environment Resources Scale a Brazilian scale that measures aspects of support for school achievement, made available to the child at home. Focusing on books and reading, results from a study by Cornell et al. (1988) showed that children pointing while reading picture books did not correlate with their power of recall but proved to be an effective tool in teaching the content.

In Slovenia, four to six year-old children who were exposed to two selected books per week showed significant competencies in language development compared to children exposed only to the national curriculum, demonstrating that quality of education at home is related to language development and storytelling skills (Umek, et al. 2003). Another investigation examined the relation between features of the home environment (HOME scale) and domains of development (Griffiths scale) in 6 month-olds. The sample consisted of 155 families from diverse backgrounds, analysis of the data showed that more favorable eye-hand development was associated with more availability of appropriate play materials. The interaction of appropriate play material and maternal involvement was related to both social and hearing-speech development (Parks & Bradley, 1991).

Some studies used a range of specific indicators to measure how “stimulating” the home environments of the children are. For example, Williams & Rask (2003) in their research, set out to identify factors that enable children to improve their literacy by looking at family environment and functioning in a deeper way. They used the presence and utilization of rhyming and phonic games, letter and alphabet jigsaws, informal games that become a part of family rituals, play inspired by stories or poetry and parental planning for imaginary play. The findings showed the

significance of preschool home influences on the emergence of literacy. It underlined the importance of phonemic awareness, acquired through frequently playing games and hearing nursery rhymes, which led to their early success with reading. It also suggested a relationship between children's ability to plan their imaginative play and their ability to learn aspects of literacy on entering school

In a study exploring the interrelations among attachment, home stimulation and language development in 58 toddlers, 2-yrs of age, results indicated that mothers who had established secure relationships and provided stimulating home environments had children with the highest language scores (Murray & Yingling, 2000).

In a longitudinal study with 130 children, Gottfried, Fleming and Gottfried (1998) revealed that children whose homes had a greater emphasis on learning opportunities and activities were more academically intrinsically motivated. The effects of home environment were significant beyond and over SES. One of the most critical components of a supportive environment is the practice of parents reading aloud to children from very early ages. As the child grows, the parents should start interacting with children using the pictures in the books or magazines. Research has determined that the nature of the interaction is much more critical than the content of the book or magazine (Klass, Needleman and Zuckerman, 2003). This raises the interesting possibility that even the illiterate mothers can engage in this activity, by using their imagination and story-telling skills, if provided with culturally-appropriate picture books.

Several studies in the USA have revealed that almost all children who know how to read prior to entering school, are read to frequently by parents or older siblings (Cornell et al, 1988; Clark, 1976; Teale, 1978). Teale (1981) summarized the main findings of his research as follows: children being read to at home is positively correlated with their language development, growth of vocabulary, eagerness to read, and success in beginning reading in school.

In a study relating parents knowledge of storybooks and children's language skills (Senechal, 1996), the findings show that variance in children's vocabulary scores could be explained by parent's knowledge of storybooks while controlling for children's analytic intelligence, parents exposure to adult reading material and parents education. A 6-year longitudinal study involving 67 mothers and their children 5 to 6-years old, which examined the relationship between

maternal behavior and children's cognitive development found that maternal measures taken during preschool years (expectations of child's achievement, performance on a referential communication task, strategies for controlling child's behavior, affective tone of mother-child interaction) predicted at significant levels both school readiness and performance at grade 6 (Hess, 1984). It has also been argued that, reading to children is likely to have significant and lasting long-term effects, even if the effects look small in the short-term (Lonigan, 1994).

Another study conducted with 137 first-grade students in five schools, in poor neighborhoods of Lima, Peru found that parents who have higher expectations of success for their children have their children scoring significantly higher on picture vocabulary, verbal analogies, letter-word identification and reading comprehension tests (Castro, et. al. 2002). The same study also found that parental expectations and consistent reading to children at home are significantly related.

Just having books and having them read aloud to the children is only part of the story. Many researchers argued that the style of reading and interaction between the child and the parent during the reading makes a big difference. For example, Masahiko (1999) argues that one important reason that Japanese-American children differ in their reading skills from home to school is due to the 3-part sequence (mother questions-child responds-mother provides feedback) adopted by the Japanese mothers during book reading.

According to UNSECO journal of 2003:9 'challenges of goals of education' school environment should be enabling and conducive for all. It mentions infrastructure such as buildings, compound, seats, water and sanitation as part of school environment that stimulates learning and that such play a vital role in child's education and academic performance.

(Chaube et al, 1998) views unsuitable learning materials such as unattractive, school building, poor sitting facilities, unsuitable and inadequate sanitation facilities as factors within a school setting that lowers school academic performance .He says that such factors scare way children.

Effective schools exhibit characters such as leadership, teachers participation in decision making, an orderly but non oppressive atmosphere, high expectation and monitoring students' performance and cooperative learning experience where students work together in groups rather

than competing as individuals can improve not only social relations, but also academic performance (Linnely and Seidman, 1989).

Another aspect of school environment is the teacher and his relation with the pupils. (Aggarwal, 1995) states that teachers play a vital role in education. He continues to say that pupils' academic performance is dependent on the teacher (Farrant, 1993) holds the opinion that people have diverse reasons and concepts on teaching, he views a successive teacher as one who regards teaching as a call . On his part (Ezewu, 2000) sees a good teacher as one who is driven by intrinsic other than extrinsic values.

According to Albert Estelline, an effective teacher is who awakens "joy" in creative expression and knowledge in his student. He sees a teacher as a person who makes two ideals grow where only one grew before. Myra and Sadker(1998 ) quotes Gail Godwin as one who summarized the role of effective teacher when he stated that, an effective teacher is one who is one fourth prepared and three fourth theatrical. Ralph Waldo Emerson states that an effective teacher is one who makes hard things simple and easy.

Ginolt (1976) says in his work, *Teacher and child*, I have come to a conclusion that I am decisive element in the classroom as a teacher, I possess the tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous, I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration . I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations it is my response that decides whether crisis will be escalated or des-escalated and whether a child is humanized or dehumanized. He therefore sees a teacher as an influence to the characters of a pupil through acting as a care giver, role model and serving as an ethical mentor. He concludes by stating that.

Children appreciate and take pleasure in being treated with care and warmth. Their prime source of happiness is being treated in this way. It is from being supported and valued that they learn and enjoy treating people animals and in animate objects civilized way (Ginolt, 1976). The school environment can therefore boost or lower the morale of a pupil which is a key to learning and performing.

Banks (1990) points out that school cannot and doesn't completely take over children from the family. Conducive home environment ensures smooth progress of a child. A child from a troubled home will find it hard to cope with classroom learning. The reverse is true. Banks opinion is shared by one John. Hansgate whose letter to Buffalo News (Sept 1998) suggested that the school system cannot make up for the family failure.

He saw the total education of the children to be a co-operative effort requiring home solidarity. He says that a pathetic parent who foster permissive home environment creates a problem to everyone. This view is supported by Carnegie in his report Foundation for advancement of teaching. His survey touched on 22,000 public school teacher. 90% said that children who perform lowly in academic are from homes where the environment was not favorable and that who lacked parental and siblings support. 89% attributed low academic performance to children abuse and neglect.

According to Freiberg (1999), most children fail to volunteer at school in answering questions or participating in class discussion due to fear instilled in them right from home. This mostly happen with children arising from homes where the environment is not conducive. Maynard (1967) states that children from poor background where radio, television, magazines, Newspapers and books are rare, find themselves disadvantaged when compared to their counterparts from well to do home environment.

Heiss (1996) states in his research on, *Effects of family on school attitude and performance* that, variations of families have great influence on their children academic performance. From his research it was evident that children whose parents had attained ordinary level of education tended perform better in their academic work than their counterparts whose parent education background was poor. Parents with some higher education background were discovered to have offered equal opportunities to both girls and boys. This was in contrast to parents whose educational background was poor who in most cases emphasized on boy child education against the girl child's.

According to Lareau (1987) the rate of exposure to wider world, leads to children's success in school. He continues to state that home is the first class for a child. He concludes by saying that Children do well in schools because their families provide good preparation in traditional class. Others do poorly because they are not assisted in their education right from home Study habits of students may be relevant to the prediction of grades because it is possible that student's grades may be related to their study habits. That is, students with poor study habits may obtain lower grades than those students with better study habits. The importance of the relationship between grades, instructor ratings and study habits has not been determined [Middleton (1979)].

Study skills and learning approaches include, for example, time management, using information resources, taking class notes, communicating with teachers, preparing for and taking examination, and several other learning strategies. The research shows a significant correlation between such learning behavior and approaches and academic achievement in higher education [Soares, et al. (2009)]. Students who create their own study aids are spending time making them, whereas those who use others' study aids or not. It may also be that the process of creating study aids helps the learner gain more meaningful knowledge through the process of synthesizing disparate pieces of information into new knowledge, as has been shown with note taking. We wondered if students who used study aids made by others rather than making their own might be missing out on the benefits of time-on-task and concept mapping [Sleight and Mavis (2006)].

Estes and Richards (1985) developed a survey of study habits for use with high school and college students. Their study skills index measured three factors for both homework and test situations. Distractibility items assess the degree to which students report being unable to maintain their attention or concentrate on their task. Inquisitiveness items measure how well students try to make sense of the material they are studying- do they look for essential concepts or deeper meaning? Compulsiveness items assess the degree to which students attend to details and try to remember facts.

Recent research has considered student behavior and learning to be important factors in student's academic success and retention. Hattie, et al. (1996) conclude that if we aim to increase student's academic success in higher education institutions, we must focus on interventions directed towards learning strategies, a fact which suggests the need to develop programs of this kind [Soares, et al. (2009)]. The influence of learning strategies on academic achievement, on the



other hand, has been much less widely investigated, in spite of its theoretical importance and prevalence in international reports [Martin, et al. (2008)]. In 1998, Jere Brophy demonstrated that increased time spent on learning activities yields increased learning, provided that the teacher was competent and that the learning activities were effectively designed and implemented. Another theory that guided us was concept mapping. Concept mapping is a method in which the learner links new knowledge to a framework of relevant concepts that the learner already knows. Ausubel (1963) maintained that this linking of new with existing knowledge was a key factor in successful learning and that it was the difference between meaningful learning and rote learning [Sleight and Mavis(2006)].

### **2.3.3 Relationship between Parental Involvement and Students' Academic Performance**

Parental involvement influences the children's psychological, emotional, social and economic state. In the view of Ajila and Olutola (2007), the state of the home affects the individual since the parents are the first socializing agents in an individual's life. This is because the family background and context of a child affect his reaction to life situations and his level of performance.

Baesd on the various studies carried out in various parts of Uganda especially in primary schools, it has been found that in areas where parents are highly involved in their children's education, such as in paying fees, visiting schools where their children are studying from to interact with the teachers of their children, and supporting their children morally, spiritually and economically, such learners tend to perform better than their counterparts whose parents do not care (Uwezo Uganda, 2011; Uwezo Uganda, 2016). However, these studies were carried out in primary schools where many children are below the age of 13, unlike in secondary schools where many children are teenagers and adolescents.

Ichado (1998) stated that parents' constant disagreement affects children emotionally and this could lead to poor academic performance. Taylor, et al. (1995) showed that parenting style (nature and control) and parental involvement significantly predicted academic outcomes. In Saudi Arabia, Kritam, et al. (2004), reported that the family financial support, encouragement and following up have positive impact on students' performance as measured by their GPA.

For example, Mee and Gan (1998) found that, reading aloud to children happens only in one third of Singaporean homes. Another source of data on parents reading to their preschool-aged children is found in the IEA PIRLS databases. The following chart shows the percentage of families who have responded “Never” or “Almost Never” to the question, “Before your child began primary school, how often did you or someone else in your home read books with him or her?”

Parents playing with their children is an important indicator for parental attitudes and behavior towards child development. The cross-country data on this issue is quite difficult to summarize. One of the problems arises from the definition of “play”. The open-ended question “did you play with your child today?” can generate different responses from different caregivers, based on their understanding of what “play” is. Similarly, almost none of the studies concentrate on the “duration” of the play activity, so a very brief encounter with the child can be coded the same way as an interactive play activity that lasts two to three hours.

All these complexities aside, available data on play from various studies indicate that playing with children, especially in early ages is much more common than reading, singing or telling stories to the child. For example, 86% of the caregivers from Uganda report that they regularly play with their children. In comparison, this number is 82% in Japan and 81% in Malawi.

In some of the studies, caregivers were asked if they have played with their child during the previous week. The following are some additional results from research in other countries. In Turkmenistan, 71% of the caregivers were reported that they play with their child on a regular basis. In Tajikistan 41% of the mothers reported that they have played with the child the day before the interviews. In Serbia and Montenegro, 69% of the mothers reported that they do play with their child on a daily basis. In Georgia, 63% of the caregivers report that they play with their 0-3 year-old children on a regular basis. This number drops to 50% for ages 3-6. In Azerbaijani 69 % of the caregivers play with the children. 70% play on a daily basis. 80% of the caregivers play regularly with children aged 0-3. At ages 3-6 drops to 60% (Source: UNICEF, 2005).

Research on college students suggests that activities like advising could increase students' involvement in their college experiences. Colleges and universities could use strategic planning

to design advising programs based on relationships of shared responsibility and focused on students' success. Research on positive outcomes of college and on the diverse needs of students making up today's student population suggests that a new look at advising is needed. Findings link academic advising directly and indirectly to contact between faculty and students and persistence in college. For example, involvement influences learning and defines effective institutions as those having the capacity to involve students [Astin (1984)]. Research also indicates that frequent and meaningful contact with faculty members, especially contact focusing on intellectual or career-related issues, seems to increase students' involvement and motivation [Astin (1984); Pascarella (1980, 1985); Terenzini, Pascarella, and Lorang (1982); Tinto (1987)]. These results can be important to advisers, for they have the capacity to increase meaningful contact with students and to encourage them to persist in college. When a broad base of the college community plans for, implements, and evaluates advising services, advising can become a systematic enterprise of the institution that enhances the educational outcomes of college. Another very important factor in establishing high retention rates at a college is the degree to which students establish close and supportive personal and professional relationships with faculty and other significant people on campus (Tinto, 1987).

A recent one-year long study examined the nature of joint (parent-child) pre-school activities (play, shared reading, craft activities etc.) at home and their relationship to 4-yr olds early reading skills. The findings showed that the frequency of these activities had an impact on reading attainment, vocabulary, memory and aspects of phonological awareness. The importance of shared storybook reading for later independent reading ability was reiterated by this study (Wood, 2002).

A study based on the Vygotskian model was conducted with 120 families, 60 of which included a communicatively handicapped child (CH) and 60 of which included a non-communicatively handicapped child (NCH). The results showed that low-level strategies (e.g., use statements, lower cognitive demand strategies, and nonverbal direction) were related to the IQ scores of the CH children, whereas the high-level strategies (e.g., use high cognitive demand strategies) were more effective with the NCH children (Pellegrini, Brody and Sigel, 1985).

In a study conducted with 53 families in Northern Thailand, Tulananda (1999) found that there were significant associations between parental involvement in play and discipline and children's

social skills in preschool. One of the more comprehensive studies that looked at the relationship of parental involvement variables and physical and cognitive child outcomes is conducted in Moldova. The study included a nationally representative sample of 1,184 households with children under seven year of age (42.5% urban and 57.5% rural). Two sets of tools were administered – a questionnaire for the main caregiver (which usually is the mother) and a set of tests/measurements for the child coupled with age specific questionnaires for older children. The results demonstrated the importance of having educational and developmental resources in the home as well as the importance of parents talking to, playing with and reading to their children.

Especially, for young children aged one to three, availability of toys and play materials in the home was a good predictor of a high developmental score. For example, the mean score for children between one and two years old in homes with age-appropriate toys was 72 (out of 100) while it was 57 in the homes with no toys. Similarly, having pencils, paint, crayons and drawing paper was equally important for the same age group. 2 to 3 year-old children who have these resources in the home performed significantly better (mean = 62 vs. 46) than the ones who have no access to such resources.

The results were consistent regardless of the SES. Families in different SES categories who do and do not have art-related materials in the home. Children in homes that have paper, crayons and paint consistently scored better in each SES category, when compared to the children from homes that lack these resources. Reading to children on a regular basis was also a very important predictor of the developmental score. For example, children in families who has the practice of reading stories to their children during bedtime performed much better in the developmental tests, compared to children who do not go through such a ritual (ANOVA,  $F=11.4$ ,  $p<.001$ ). One of the most critical questions that were asked to the mothers was if they were engaged in talking, discussing and explaining the pictures and stories in the books while they are reading to their children. The ones who do this regularly, had the children with highest developmental scores (ANOVA,  $F= 58.4$ ,  $p<.001$ ) (UNICEF, 2005).

Studies show that, wide-scale availability of books and especially picture books within the home is a major problem in many countries. For example, a study done in Pemba (Mozambique) revealed that 92% of the homes in the bottom quartile of SES group families do not have any children's books in the home. This number drops only to 81% in the highest quartile of SES.

Availability of books for the adults however, presents a different picture. In the bottom SES quartile, 96% of the homes have some adult books in the home. The same study conducted in Nepal produced very similar findings. In Nepal, based on SES, homes that have children's books range from 7% (bottom SES quartile) to 30% (top SES quartile). Interestingly in some countries, there seems to be more children's books than there are adult reading materials. For example in Uganda 62% of the homes have child reading materials, while other books are available in only 43% of the homes. The same study showed that availability of newspapers and magazines in Ugandan homes are just 22%. Similarly in Malawi, child books are available in 58% of the homes while other (adult) books are available only in 38%. Only 22% of the homes in Malawi have newspapers (Source: Baseline data from Uganda NECD Project 2002. Ages 3 to 7. Data from household surveys in 75 parishes.N-5000 households).

The situation in countries that were part of the former Soviet Union, are somewhat better. These countries used to have a culture and tradition of printing books, and some study results reflect this. For example in *Turkmenistan*, only 6.7% of the homes have no books, and three quarter of them have-child reading materials (UNICEF, 2005).

Studies from two other countries in the Caucasus region show that in this region, less than half of all the homes have children's books available. For example, in Georgia 59% of homes have any type of books and 40% have newspapers or magazines. Homes that have children's books are 44%.<sup>14</sup> In Azerbaijan, 48% of homes have books, 40% have newspapers and magazines and 40% have children's books.<sup>15</sup> The only exception to this pattern is Tajikistan, one of the poorest countries in the region. In Tajikistan, 38% of the homes have adult reading materials, but 98% have no children's books for children under three years old. In comparison, in a country like Moldova, the percentage of households with no child books for children under three is 55% (UNICEF, 2005).

These findings sharply contrast with conditions in counties who are richer and more developed. In Mexico, children's books are available in 88% of the homes and 58% have newspapers and magazines, and in an industrialized country such as Japan, 95.6% of the homes with children 18-months-old have picture books available (UNICEF, 2004).

The comparison of four countries Mexico, Serbia and Montenegro, Georgia and Azerbaijanian terms of availability of art and drawing supplies for the children in the home. Availability of toys within the home is closely related to the economic conditions within the country. A study from Azerbaijan shows 73% of the homes in Azerbaijan have manufactured toys. Studies from Pemba (Mozambique) and Nepal show that the differences between SES groups are not as wide as in the case of books. Following figures compare for SES groups in Pemba and Nepal in terms of the number of toys that are found in the home.

In countries where caring families cannot afford store-bought toys, they compensate by making home-made toys for their children. For example in Malawi, while only 0.3% of homes have store-bought toys, the number of homes with homemade toys is 38%. Similarly in Uganda, 6.5% of the homes have manufactured toys, and 14.5% of the homes have hand-made toys. Another issue is how early parents start providing their children with toys. For example, research in Senegal showed 80% of the children are not given a toy before they are six months old.

Data regarding the very important indicator of parents reading to children is quite limited for developing countries. Somewhat limited data reveals that the practice of reading to children, especially before the ages of 5 or 6 is quite uncommon. *Figure 11* presents data from 13 country studies regarding parents reading to their children on a regular basis.

Ogwu (2004) states that a family which has a high level of income, education and good paying occupation are often more successful in preparing their children for school. He continues to observe that low economic status parents are challenged when it comes to providing care and education to their children. He concludes by indicating that there is a strong relationship between S.E.S of a family and the general academic performance of a child. Children from high S.E.S are exposed early to educational facilities such as electronic and print media. This opens their mind early enough and therefore are ready to cope with education demands at any given level in the future. World Bank, observed that poverty stricken children spend more time contributing directly or indirectly to household income generating than their counterparts from well to do families. As a result they spend less time on school work (World Bank, 2000)

(Ogwal 2005) states that children from low socio-economic status (S.E.S) families lack provision of even the most basic educational materials needed at school, In many cases, they forego classes to attend to other family's needs. Like digging and other domestic duties. This chronic absenteeism lead to poor academic performance. The coverage of the syllabus in all level by such learners is inadequate.

Naturally lower placed S.E.S families are large and parents are unable to give individual attention to each child's needs. This is in contrast to highly S.E.S families where children are generally few and have time and space for remedial tuition. Those from low S.E.S. families may have time and space but lack lighting system at their home. They rarely attend to their homework's (World Bank, 2000). Thus, parental involvement in their children's education has an impact on children's academic performance. None of these studies however addressed Mpigi district secondary schools, hence the proposed study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

What is embedded in this chapter includes the research design, research population, sample size, sampling procedure, validity and reliability of the research instruments, the research instruments and data gathering procedures that will be used in this study.

#### **3.1 Research design**

This study employed a cross-sectional survey design, using the quantitative and qualitative approaches. It was a survey design because the study involved a large sample of respondents (2000) students. It was cross-sectional since the data was collected once at a time, not repeatedly. The study also used the descriptive correlation design to establish what kind of relationship exists between the parental participation and students' academic performance in Mpigi town Council, Mpigi district.

#### **3.2 Research population**

The target population of this study was 2,000 Ordinary-level students (S.1-S.4) offering the seven compulsory subjects. According to the regulations of the Uganda National Examinations Board, an O-level student has to sit for a minimum of eight subjects and a maximum of ten subjects in S.4. Of these, seven subjects are compulsory, namely Mathematics, English, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, History and Geography. The students were from Mpigi Town Council, one of four sub countries which make Mpigi District. The rest of the sub counties are namely Muduuma, Musa, Kamengo and Kiringente. The researcher purposively carried out this research in ten secondary schools. From those schools the children exposed to different forms and levels of parental involvement were expected to be found.

#### **3.3 Sample size**

There was no sampling of students. All the 2,000 respondents (students of S.1-S.4) from ten secondary schools participated in the study. This was because the researcher analysed the performance of 2000 students of O-level, using the files of class teachers of three terms, December, 2017, April, 2018 and August, 2018. The intact classes, S.1-S.4 were given questionnaires, with the help of the respective class teachers. Advanced level (S.5-S.6) students



were not considered in the study since they usually do different subjects; it is only General Paper (G.P) which is compulsory for them. This is recommended for future studies.

### **3.4 Sampling Procedure**

Given the limited number of secondary schools in the area, all the ten secondary schools (one public and nine private) were selected to participate in the study using universal sampling. Even the 2,000 students of Ordinary level (S.1-S.4) were all involved in the study. As Amin (2005) asserts, it is very good to use universal sampling where possible so as to make a very accurate generalizability of the findings to the population under study. Even in the researcher's view, leaving out some prospective respondents can cause valuable data to be left out.

### **3.5 Data collection Instruments:**

#### **Questionnaire:**

The data about parental involvement was collected using a researcher-designed questionnaire. This questionnaire was designed through the literature reviewed about parental involvement, first of all as stipulated in the Education (Pre-primary, Primary and Post-primary) Act, 2008. This instrument was composed of three sections, A, B and C. Section A sought data concerning the demographic characteristics of the respondents that is, their gender, and age. Section B had open-ended items on parental involvement, and section C had structured items on parental involvement, requiring the learners to describe and explain in details. The 4-Likert scale grading of 1=strongly disagree; 2-Agree; 3-Disagree; and 4=strongly agree was used.

The data about students' academic performance was collected using documentary review, by analyzing the raw marks of students of term one, 2018, all of which were marked out of 100 (as the maximum marks students could score in each subject). In analyzing this data, the marks were grouped as: 80-100 (very good performance; 70-79 (good performance); 50-69 (Fair performance); and 00-49 (poor performance). The Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB), a body responsible for the national examinations, usually uses that related grading.

### **3.6 Validity and Reliability of the research instruments**

The test-retest technique was used to determine the reliability of the research instruments to 16 qualified respondents from four primary schools (at least four pupils from each school) but who were not included in the actual study.

The content validity was ensured by submitting the questionnaire to an expert to give his or her judgment as to whether the instruments are valid or not, and then the content validity index (CVI) was calculated basing on the judgment.

$$CV1 = \frac{\text{Relevant items by expert}}{\text{number of items}}$$

$$cv1 = \frac{34}{39}$$

$$cv1 = 0.8721$$

Since the Content validity index was above 0.7, then the instrument was perceived to be valid.

### **3.7 Data gathering procedures**

#### **Before the administration of the questionnaires:**

1. Before administration of the questionnaires, the researcher produced more than enough questionnaires for distribution.
2. Before going to the field the researcher obtained an introductory letter (transmittal letter) from the College of Education, Open and Distance e-learning, Kampala International University, which was taken to the respective schools and other relevant offices requesting for approval to conduct the study in the primary schools.
3. Having been approved, the researcher selected five research assistants who assisted him in data collection. The research assistants were oriented in order to be consistent in administering the questionnaires.

#### **During the administration of the questionnaires**

1. The researcher requested the respondents to answer honestly all the items in the questionnaire and not to leave any part of the questionnaires unanswered.
2. The researcher and research assistants told the pupils that the questionnaires were to be filled there and then. In this way, the pupils in each school were gathered in a room from where they filled the questionnaires, after which the researcher and research assistants collected the filled questionnaires.

### **After the administrative of the questionnaires**

After collecting all the filled questionnaires, the quantitative data gathered was entered in the computer and was statistically treated using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS)

### **3.8 Data Analysis**

After the researcher sorted out the valid questionnaires and coding accomplished, to derive useful meaning from the data, the data were analyzed as follows.

1. The Arithmetic Mean was used to establish the extent of parental involvement in their children's education, using the following mean ranges and interpretation.

<b>Mean range</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Monde</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
3.26-4.0	strongly	Agree	very large extent of parental involvement
2.51-3.25	Agree		large extent of parental involvement
1.76-2.50	Disagree		Small extent of parental involvement
1.00-1.75	Strongly	Disagree	Very small extent of parental involvement

2. To assess the academic performance of students, the percentage distribution was used, using the researcher-designed ranges as follows.

<b>Raw Marks per subject (out of 100)</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
80-100	Very good performance
70- 79	Good performance
50- 69	Fair performance
00-49	Poor performance

3. To establish whether or not the students' academic performance is significantly correlated with their parents' involvement, the Pearson's linear correlation coefficient was used.

### **3.10 Ethical considerations**

This involved:

1. Seeking permission from the heads of the respective primary schools to conduct the study from their respective schools and to use pupils as respondents.
2. The respondents were assured of confidentiality of their information given.
3. The respondents were neither required to disclose their names nor the names of their parents, as some mediocre parents do not want their children to reveal that mediocrity to strangers.

### **3.11 Limitations of the study**

The following were the limitations to this study.

- 1) Though the researcher and his assistants requested the respondents to be honest in answering the questions, what the respondents filled cannot be guaranteed as being 100% correct due to human nature and the stubbornness of some learners. This could have led to making conclusions which are not actually 100% true.
- 2) The teachers in some schools were rushing the pupils who were filling the questionnaires so as to finish and then do normal routine school activities. With that rushing, some pupils may have given biased responses.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter makes a presentation of the bio data of the respondents, presentation of the findings, their analysis and interpretation as per the study objectives.

In this study, 2000 respondents who participated in the study are described according to age and gender. In each case, respondents were asked to declare their respective profile information in order to enable the researcher classify them accordingly. Close ended questionnaires were employed by the researcher in ascertaining information about their personal profiles and their responses were analyzed using frequencies and percentage distributions as summarized in table 4. 1 below.

**Table 4.1: Profile of Respondents**

Category	Frequency	Percent
<b>Age</b>		
12-14	980	49
15-17	820	41
18 and above	200	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	1240	62
Female	760	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>100</b>

Results from Table 4.1 indicate that, most of the respondents were male (62%); and girls were 38%. This shows that though there is still gender imbalance in students' access to secondary school education in Mpigi district. However, the gender disparity is not big; it is a difference of only 24%. Seemingly, parents have been highly sensitized on the importance of educating both boys and girls,

Regarding age, most of the respondents (49%) were in the age bracket of 12-14. Other students, 41% were in the age bracket of 15-17, and very few, 10% were aged 18 years and above. This implies that the majority of the learners in secondary schools in Mpigi town Council are teenagers.

#### 4.1 Findings

##### Extent of parental involvement in the education of their children

On this research objective, the finding was that the parents were involved in the education of their children, to a small extent, as shown in table 4.1.1 and table 4.1.1

**Table 4.1.1 showing the extent of parental involvement in their children's education**

<b>Parental involvement</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<b>1. Moral guidance to children</b>		
<b>My parents/guardians</b>		
Advice me to concentrate on studies	2.70	High
Advise me to avoid bad peer groups	2.62	High
Advise me to avoid sexual immorality	2.55	High
Talk to me about HIV/AIDS	2.54	High
Advise me to avoid drugs like marijuana	2.49	Low
Advise me not to take alcohol	2.48	Low
Advise me to come back home before 7.00pm	2.44	Low
Talk to me about dangers of getting pregnant/impregnating girls for	2.37	Low
Tell me the benefits of studying and the dangers of dropping out of school.	2.33	Low
<b>Average Mean</b>	<b>2.50</b>	<b>Low</b>
<b>2. Economic support to children</b>		
<b>My parents/guardians:</b>		
Pay my fees/tuition in time	2.32	Low
Provide medical care to me	2.24	Low
Put in place for me an income generating prefect	2.24	Low
Give me pocket money	2.32	Prefect
Give me money to buy luxuries	1.14	Very low
Give me money for leisure activities	1.10	Very low
<b>Average Mean</b>	<b><u>1.89</u></b>	<b>Low</b>

<p><b>3. Academic support to children</b></p> <p><b>My parents/guardians:</b></p> <p>Brought me here and registered me to study</p> <p>Asked me to look for a school and be registered</p> <p>Buy me text books and pamphlets</p> <p>Hire resourceful persons to coach me</p> <p>Do home work with me</p> <p>Give me money for seminars</p> <p>Allow me to hold academic discussions with colleagues</p> <p>Check my books regularly</p> <p>Provide me with means of transport to and from school</p> <p>Buy me uniforms</p> <p><b>Average Mean</b></p>	<p><u>2.32</u></p> <p><u>2.24</u></p> <p><u>2.24</u></p> <p><u>2.47</u></p> <p><u>2.43</u></p> <p><u>2.36</u></p> <p><u>2.31</u></p>	
<p><b>4. Collaborating with teachers and head teachers</b></p> <p><b>My parents/guardians</b></p> <p>Attend parents’ meetings at school</p> <p>Pay regular visits at school</p> <p>Seek advice from teachers on how I can perform better</p> <p>Ask teachers my strengths and loop holes/ weaknesses</p> <p>Attend sports activities at school</p> <p>Participate in fundraising for school projects</p> <p>Advise the head teacher on how to get resourceful persons for the</p>	<p><u>2.45</u></p> <p><u>2.37</u></p> <p><u>2.33</u></p> <p><u>2.28</u></p> <p><u>2.23</u></p> <p><u>2.10</u></p> <p><u>2.03</u></p>	

school.		
<b>Average mean</b>	<b><u>2.26</u></b>	
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b><u>2.26</u></b>	

**Table 4.1. 1: Summary of Parental involvement in their children’s education**

<b>Items</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std.</b>
Moral guidance to children	2.50	.995
Economic support to children	1.89	1.017
Academic support to children	2.39	1.081
Collaborating with teachers	2.26	1.069
<b>Average mean</b>	<b>2.26</b>	<b>.78129</b>

Table 4.1.2 reveals that the parents in Mpigi Town Council involve themselves little in the education of their children at secondary school level specifically in the areas of moral guidance to children, economic and academic support to children, as well as collaborating with teachers and head teachers.

In all the four concepts of parental involvement as per this study, there was none where the involvement was high or very high. This implies that though parents gave birth to their children, and though they seemingly love their children as evidence in enrolling them in schools, the parents wrongly assume that their children are mature enough to avoid bad peer groups, to concentrate on studies, to avoid alcohol, to know the danger of early pregnancy, among others. This is a mistaken belief or assumption. The fact is that learning is a gradual process; children need to be guided from time to time.



However, on the aspect of parental guidance of children, it is realized that on all the nine parameters of moral guidance to children as per this study, there was no score of 00, which means that parents do not totally ignore to guide their children in those different ways. They guide them but to a small extent, save in the aspects of HIV, sexual immorality and avoiding bad peer groups where children are guided much (highly).

As for the element of giving economic support to children, the mean score of 1.89 implies that the parental involvement in economically supporting their children is low. Though they take children to school, those who pay school fees in time are few (Mean,2.32), meaning that many parents pay school dues in the middle of the term or towards the end of the term and probably in installments. Very few parents give children money for buying luxuries and for leisure activities (Mean, 1.14 and 1.10 respectively). This shows that many parents with children in secondary schools in Mpigi Town Council, are either not rich or they do not care much about those aspects, probably they think the children can get spoilt when such are given to them in abundance.

As for academic support to children, though it is generally done to a small extent (Mean, 2.39), parents/guardians generally try to play their part though they do not play it much. For example, some hire resourceful persons to coach their children, do home work with their children, give the money for seminars, and allow them hold academic discussions with colleagues, among others. It is not done much probably due to social, physiological and economic challenges, but they try. This shows that the parents of this area are not very green in academic affairs, they also seemingly have interest in their children's schooling and future lives.

Regarding the element of collaborating with teachers and head teachers, a related trend occurs as that of other aspects of parental involvement. The parents do not totally avoid interacting with the teachers and head teachers of their children. They are doing it to a small extent (Mean 2.26), probably that they are limited by psycho-social factors. There is seemingly over trusting of the school system, that even if parents do not collaborate much with teachers and head teachers, the teachers and head teachers are able to do their work effectively.

### Other forms of parental involvement as summarized from qualitative responses

The qualitative data collected on this aspect highlighted that there are other forms of parental involvement in their children's education, used by parents and guardians of Mpigi Town Council, as summarized in table 4.1.3.

**Table 4.1.3 showing other forms of parental involvement**

No	item	No	%
1	Use of herbal medicines as brain boosters	35	1.75
2	Applying protective medicine on children's bodies through cuts	32	1.6
3	Urging children to find a way of survival/surviving	8	0.4
4	Causing children to be in possession of religious objects e.g rosaries, amulets, bones of particular animals, and pieces of sticks from particular plants to send away evil spirits which could otherwise disrupt their education.	28	1.4
5	Causing children to pray to God when they are going to do an examination so that they can pass well.	390	19.5
6	Causing particular schools to organize prayers for all S.4 candidates who are about to sit for national examinations.	560	28

Table 4.1.3 shows the qualitative data as summarized from the structured items of the questionnaire. It shows that different parents are involved in their children's education not only in the formal ways but also in informal ways which they believe can cause their children to succeed academically. For example, 28% of the respondents stated that their parents urge head teachers to organize prayers for the S.4 candidates when they are about to sit for their national examinations. They reiterated that during those functions, religious leaders are the ones who lead the prayers for the candidates. The idea is to ask God to bless the candidates. This shows the value some parents and schools attach on putting God first in what they do. It also reveals that religion has roots in Mpigi district. This is related to the assertion of 19.5 of the respondents who reported that their parents urge them to pray to God when they are in the examination room before the paper is done so that the students can be guided by the spirit of God. This also reveals

people's locus of control, believing that one's life, success and failure are controlled by a certain force or being which is invisible, that even if one works so hard, one needs the blessings of that invisible force in order to succeed. In other words, the perception is that mere hardworking, such as reading hard is not enough; one needs the blessings of the invisible divine being.

The fore mentioned points related to the 1.8% of the respondents who reported that their parents and guardians cause them to possess religious objects, such as the rosaries, amulets, pieces of bones of particular animals and pieces of sticks from particular plants to send away evil spirits which could otherwise disrupt their education. Examples were given, such as the pieces of bones of pork which allegedly send away jinns (evil spirits). This implies that some parents in Mpigi district hold a belief that failure is at times caused by invisible natural forces (spiritual powers).

Incidentally, other respondents raised other issues which do not differ much from the fore-mentioned. For example, 1.75% of the respondents indicated that their parents/guardians cause them (the children) to use herbal medicine as brain boosters. They gave an example of a herb locally called olumanyo which is crushed and mixed with food or tea, that when one takes a concoction of that, one can hardly forget what he/she studies or revises. They indicated that it is a tool to enable their children get good academic grades. The responses from qualitative data, though not raised by many students point to the role of faith or religion in education. It also shows how religious the people of Mpigi are: Christians, Muslims and traditionalists. The people believe that faith/religion has to go hand in hand with education. Uganda being a religious pluralistic society, different elements of religion are indirectly included in children's education in Mpigi.

Based on the researcher's casual observations of the socio-economic status of the parents in Mpigi Town Council, as well as the standard of the schools in the area, stunted growth was realized despite Mpigi town being only 30 miles away from Kampala City. Probably the traditional practices as implied in the students' responses account for that, which finally translates into limited responsible official parental involvement in their children's education.

### **Students' Academic Performance**

On this objective only seven subjects were considered since they are the very compulsory subjects according to the UNEB regulations. They are therefore offered by all students of S.1-S4

throughout Uganda. The results as presented in table 4.3 shows that student's performance was poor as shown in table 4. 3.

**Table 4.3 showing students' performance**

**n=2000**

Subject	No of stds	V.good %	No of stds	Good %	No of stds	Fair %	No of stds	Poor %	Mean
Mathematics	90	4.5	400	20	520	26	990	49.5	2.88
English	97	4.85	203	10.15	500	25	1200	60	2.55
Biology	100	5	200	10	700	35	1000	50	2.51
Physics	150	7.5	250	12.5	500	25	1100	55	2.47
Chemistry	90	4.5	110	5.5	600	30	1200	60	2.30
History	160	8	480	24	790	39.5	870	28.5	2.66
Geography	120	6	500	25	780	39	600	30	2.27

Table 4.3 reveals that on average, the secondary school students in Mpigi central perform poorly it is shown that out of the seven subjects, five of them were performed poorly for example 60% of the students performed poorly in chemistry, followed by 55% of the students who performed poorly in physics. 50% performed poorly in biology, 660 % performed poorly in English, and 49.5% of the students performed poorly in mathematics. It was only in history and geography where the majority of students did not perform poorly. Even then, in those two subjects students did not perform very well for example 39.5% of the students performed fairly in history and 39% performed fairly in geography. The implication from this is that the students are academically weak as proved by their performance in those seven compulsory subjects. It also implies that students either have a negative attitude towards science` subjects or science teachers tend to harden the subjects when teaching them

Interestingly, though students generally performed poorly, there was no subject among the seven in which students totally failed to score marks above 80%. For example in Mathematics 4.5%; English 4.9%; Biology, 5%; Physics, 7.5%; Chemistry, 4.5%, History 8%; and Geography, 6%. This shows that though the majority of students are weak academically, some are bright though the bright ones are few.

The best done subjects were two, Geography and History in which 25% and 24% of the students respectively scored good marks (70-79 %). Six percent and 8% scored very good marks (80-100%) in Geography and History respectively. This shows that many students prefer art subjects to science subjects.

A relatively large number of students preferred fairly in all the seven subjects. They scored between 50-69%. Actually as observed in table 4.3 there were no marked differences in the fair performance in the seven subjects for example 26% performed fairly in Mathematics, 2.5% in English, 35% in Biology, 25% in Physics, 30% in Chemistry, 39.5% in History, and 39% in Geography. This means that although the students did not perform well, their performance is not too poor.

### **Relationship between parental involvement and their children's academic performance**

On this research objective, it was found that there is a significant relationship between parental involvement and students' academic performance in Mpigi town council, as shown in tables 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7

**Table 4.4: Relationship between moral guidance to children and students' performance**

<b>Variables correlated</b>	<b>r-value</b>	<b>Sig</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Decision on Ho</b>
Moral guidance to children Vs Students' performance	.395	.000	Significant correlation	Rejected

**Source: Primary data, 2018**

**Table 4.5: Relationship between economic support to children and students' performance**

<b>Variables correlated</b>	<b>r-value</b>	<b>Sig</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Decision on Ho</b>
Economic support to children Vs Students' performance	.278	.000	Significant correlation	Rejected

**Source: Primary Data, 2018**

**Table 4.6: Relationship between academic support to children and students' performance**

<b>Variables correlated</b>	<b>r-value</b>	<b>Sig</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Decision on Ho</b>
Academic support to children Vs Students' performance	.529	.000	Significant correlation	Rejected

**Source: Primary Data, 2018**

**Table 4.7: Relationship between collaborating with teachers and students' performance**

<b>Variables correlated</b>	<b>r-value</b>	<b>Sig</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Decision on Ho</b>
Collaborating with teachers  Vs  Students' performance	.633	.000	Significant correlation	Rejected

**Source: Primary Data, 2018**

The results in table 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7 reveal that there is a significant relationship between parental involvement and students' academic performance in Mpigi town council.

Close analysis reveals that on all the four concepts of parental involvement, namely, moral guidance to students, economic support to students, academic support to children students and collaboration between parents and head teachers/teacher, all of them had positive (r) revalues, that is. 0.393, 0.278, 0.529 and 0.633. This means that if parents put in more effort and get more involved in these four aspects, their children can perform better, that is, their academic performance can become better than what it is now.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Discussion

##### 5.1.1 Parental involvement

The grand mean of 2.6 implies that parental involvement in the education of their children is low. This means that parents of secondary school students in Mpigi town council, though they send their children to school, they ignore many aspects of involvement in their children's education. They participate in those aspects (moral guidance, economic support, academic support and collaborating with teachers and head teachers, to a small extent.

Based on qualitative data gathered from the structured items, the reasons cited for this low parental involvement were the assumption parents have, that secondary school students are mature, the assumption that teachers do everything: teaching and giving moral guidance to learners; some parents are shy to discuss some moral issues with their children, some parents are so busy in work and have limited or no time to discuss with their children; some parents are not educated so they do not do much in giving academic support to children, as well as in collaborating with teachers and head teachers. Some parents also fear to entrust their children especially daughters with male resourceful persons to coach them for fear of sexual harassment. All this is in consonance with Musinguzi (2013) who reiterated that many parents think that educating a child is mere paying of school fees and buying uniforms. It is also in agreement with Kayindu (2017)'s assertions about work in contemporary society, that it (work) has not only divided some families but has also made some parents leave almost the whole responsibility of moulding their children to teachers, as some parents even spend several days without sitting down with their children to hold a meaningful discussion with them. This is not only absurd, but is also dangerous, as psychologists opine (Baron, Byrne, Bary and Kantautitz, 1980; Good and Brophy, 1982).

A relatively large number of students claimed that their parents do not provide means of transport to them to and from school, so they usually walk on foot. Though in the Ugandan village setting this can, to some extent be perceived as being good so that the children are not brought up in a very soft way, but are instead brought up in a way which can enable them to



cope up with the challenges of life as Kirwana-Ssozi (2000) claims, it can lead to disastrous effects on the side of the adolescent female students as some of them can be given free ride by boda boda (motorcycle) riders and they can end up in bed with them. Although even some of the girls who are given enough economic support by their parents/guardians can also go to bed with men, those with less or no financial support from parents or guardians are more likely to be blindfolded/misled by men than their counterparts who are well supported financially by their parents, as implied in the submissions of Hallan (1978) and Gord (1982). By implication therefore, it is dangerous for parents to ignore or fail to get involved financially, materially and morally, in the education of their children.

### **5.1.2 Academic Performance**

Limited resources such as relevant text books were cited by many students as being one of the major causes of student's poor academic performance. This finding rhymes with Adedeji (1998) who, taking the case of vocational secondary schools in Osun State, Nigeria, observed that there was a casual relationship between the availability of teaching resources and academic performance of learners, adding that imbalances in the allocation of tutors and other resources to schools would lead to academic performance gaps in the institutions. In addition, in affirming the relationship between the availability of resources and the academic performance of learners, there is agreement with Oloyede (2003) in his contention that inadequate expenditure on teaching resources in vocational education institutions will impinge on students' academic performance. But, even if schools had resources, it would not necessarily guarantee their good academic performance. Indeed, resource availability is not a guarantee for good academic performance unless when the resources are optimally used as affirmed by Owolabi (1993) who reports that streamlined, utilization of teaching resources improved the quality of pedagogy at the university college of Winneba, Ghana. The same view is held by Oloyee (2003) who observes that effective utilization of school resources significantly impacts on the level of student's attainment.

The findings indicated that students mainly performed poorly in science subjects such as Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology. This relates to Okurut (2008)'s study carried out in two high performing schools and two low performing schools in Uganda. Using thematic analysis, he found that the teaching methods used by teachers of Mathematics in high performing

schools and those in low performing schools varied significantly. For example, the teaching practices used in high performing schools included student centered approach, working collaboratively, using group work and inviting students to make contributions. Teachers in the low performing schools on the other hand generally used teacher-centered approach; whole class teaching and the teachers explained nearly everything. Thus teaching practices contribute to good or poor academic performance of students. This seemingly affirms the observation of Brophy (1999) that students learn better when most of the available time is assigned to curriculum-focused activities and their classroom climate is encouraging.

Further, the majority of students (2.8%) attributed their poor performance to un experienced teachers, teachers who teach poorly, poor marking and teachers being part-timers, hence lacking time to help students outside classes.

Surprisingly, only five students indicated/mentioned student factor (students being lousy, not serious at all) as a factor. This affirms Amin (2005)'s submission that self report questionnaires are at times biased. Actually based on two day schools, some students were too untidy, seemed to be so confrontational and in disciplined, hence unlikely to be serious with academics. Therefore the poor academic performance of the learners was not accidental. Although decency of appearance does not necessarily predict good performance and vice-versa, the fact is that lousy and indiscipline students are more likely to be poor performers as Lefton (1985) asserts.

Surprisingly, three students, in giving detailed responses about academic performance, raised the issue of unemployment and having many universities in Uganda, that even if somebody performs so well and gets a degree, he or she can fail to get a job, and that universities are now very many, that even if one does not over stain him/herself studying, one can raise the two Principal Passes (an equivalent of only four points) at Advanced Level (S.6) required to join a university, thus justifying some students' lack of seriousness in academics. Indeed universities are now very many and are competing for the few students from S.6. However, such surprising comments from students seemingly imply lack of or limited career guidance from teachers. Competitive courses in public universities such as human medicine, engineering, pharmacy etc, exist and jobs are available, a student can only be admitted for such courses when he/she has passed highly (National Council for Higher Education, 2010).

On the question of the teaching methods teachers usually use, students mentioned the following methods: integrated approach, exposure to experiences and individual discovery. In one school students mentioned that their history teachers involve them in debates and video shows. It was reported that the method makes the lesson(s) enjoyable and develop other aspects like critical thinking, judgment and analysis, which are very important in human life.

### **5.1.3 Relationship between parental involvement and students' performance**

The results of the current study indicated that secondary school students' academic performance is related to parental involvement, that is, since the parents are less involved in their children's education, their children are performing poorly. This rhyme well with the observations of Hallan (1978) that parental neglect of their duties towards their children is dangerous. He reiterated that despite the individual differences in personality such that some people are introverts yet others are extroverts, such introvert and extrovert parents need not ignore play in their part in child rearing and education.

Mpigi district despite being only 30 miles away from Kampala the capital city of Uganda has people, who, based on the researcher's casual observations, still have strong roots in their traditional values and customs as evidenced in the presence of ancestral shrines in the area and the witchdoctors. As Kizza (1995) and Mbiti (1978) assert, some African peoples despite the influence of Western education and the new religions still have love for their traditions. In Africa, child rearing, guidance and counseling of children is emphasized. The issue of culture could therefore be determining as far as parental involvement is concerned.. This is in line with the research which has un-covered that culture plays a role in the relationship between parenting styles and adolescent achievement. For example, Leung *et al.* (1998) examined the influence of parenting styles on children's academic achievement in four countries (United States, Hong Kong, China, and Australia). To measure parenting styles, Leung et al. adapted the survey items used to measure parenting styles by Dornusch and his colleagues (1987). They found that authoritarian parenting was negatively related to academic achievement in all countries except Hong Kong. There, authoritarian parenting was related positively to academic achievement. The researchers also found differences in the relationship between authoritarian parenting and adolescent academic achievement for parents with little education. Specifically, for low educated

parents in the United States and Australia, authoritarian parenting was positively related to academic achievement.

The findings of the current study have revealed that parental involvement is significantly related to children's academic achievement. This relates to previous research which has suggested that some of the parenting behaviors can improve or exacerbate children's behavior problems. Studies have reported a significant relationship between high levels of parental warmth and lower levels of externalizing behavior problems in children (Garber, Robinson, & Valentiner, 1997). Research also suggests that a lack of involvement, as well as poor monitoring and supervision of children's activities, strongly predicts anti social behavior and poor children's performance in various aspects (Loeber & Stouthamer-Loeber 1986). Parents of children with anti social behavior are likely to be less positive, more permissive and inconsistent, and use more violent and critical discipline (Reid, Webster-Stratton & Baydar 2004). In an influential review Rutter, Giller & Hagell (1998) concluded that antisocial behavior and poor child performance are associated with hostile, critical, punitive and coercive parenting.

The findings of this study are in line with the previous researchers' findings. For example, studies have found a positive relationship between authoritative parenting styles and student achievement (e.g., Baumrind, 1967; Dornbusch *et al.*, 1987; Lamborn *et al.*, 1991; Steinberg *et al.*, 1989; Steinberg *et al.*, 1991). One of the first studies to report this relationship was conducted by Baumrind (1967). Following a longitudinal sample of children from preschool through adolescence, Baumrind found that preschool children of authoritative parents were more mature, independent, prosocial, active, and achievement-oriented than children of non-authoritative parents. On the other hand, preschool children of permissive parents scored lowest on measures of self-reliance, self-control, and competence. To examine whether these findings were stable across time, Baumrind again examined the relationship between parenting styles and school achievement during adolescence. She found that parenting styles and their relationship to school outcomes was consistent with the earlier preschool findings (Baumrind, 1989).

Following Baumrind's early work, Dornbusch, Steinberg, and their colleagues conducted a series of studies to explore the influence of parenting styles on adolescent achievement. These studies used data from large-scale surveys of over 6000 adolescents in Wisconsin and California. One of the first studies in this series found that parents who displayed higher levels of authoritative

parenting by providing their children with warmth, autonomy, and high maturity demands had children with higher achievement levels (Steinberg *et al.*, 1989). In another study, Steinberg *et al.* (1992) found that authoritative parenting was related to adolescent grade point average (GPA) and school engagement.

These findings have led researchers to ask why authoritative parenting styles are associated with positive school outcomes. In a review of these findings, Durkin (1995) cites three reasons why authoritative parenting might be related to positive child outcomes. First, he suggests that authoritative parents provide a high level of emotional security that provides their children with a sense of comfort and independence and helps them succeed in school. Second, he suggests that authoritative parents provide their children with explanations for their actions. Explanations provide children with a sense of awareness and understanding of their parents' values, morals, and goals. The transmission of these goals and values equips these students with the tools needed to perform well in school. Third, he suggests that authoritative parents engage in bidirectional communication with their children. This communication style nurtures skills in interpersonal relations and produces better adjusted and more popular children. These interpersonal skills, he suggests, helps children succeed in school, both socially and academically.

In response to the literature suggesting that parenting styles are related to varied school-related outcomes in children, depending on the particular culture and context in which the family resides, Darling and Steinberg (1993) proposed the contextual model of parenting. The contextual model of parenting suggests that the socialization goals parents hold for their

Children (e.g., to attend college) lead to different types of parenting practices (e.g., parents helping with homework, parents monitoring after-school activities), which in turn facilitate adaptive adolescent school outcomes (e.g., high levels of school motivation, grade point average). For example, the model contends that parents who have aspirations for their children to perform well in school are more likely than parents who do not have these aspirations to monitor their children's after-school activities and get involved with their children's educational experiences. Furthermore, the model advocates viewing parenting style as a context (i.e., emotional climate) in which parental socialization goals are emphasized and parenting practices are exhibited. Therefore, the model suggests that parenting styles moderate the relationship

between parenting practices and adolescent outcomes such that parents exhibiting a warm versus critical style while doing homework with their child would yield different outcomes.

There are at least three ways that the contextual model of parenting can be used as a framework to generate hypotheses about why authoritative parenting has not been related to high levels of adolescent academic achievement across all families. The first possibility is that parents of different ethnicities hold unique educational aspirations, goals, and values for their children, and therefore enact distinct parenting practices. A second possibility is that socioeconomic status (SES) moderates the relationship between parental socialization goals for their children and parental practices. For example, low SES parents, who might have similar school-related goals, aspirations, and values for their children as high SES parents, might lack the educational resources and the time (i.e., due to long work hours and higher prevalence of single parent families) to get involved with and monitor their child's school-related activities and progress. If so, parental practices would affect adolescent outcomes differentially as a function of SES. A third possibility is that parenting styles serve as a moderator between parenting practices and adolescent outcomes, resulting in distinct outcomes depending upon the combinations of parenting styles and practices. A review of the empirical research to support each of these potential mechanisms for explaining the discrepancies in the literature is presented below.

The contextual model of parenting uses parental socialization goals and values as the point of departure in the parental socialization system (Darling and Steinberg, 1993). A key tenet of the contextual model is that parents' socialization goals influence their parenting practices. This tenet suggests, for example, that parents who prioritize their children's school achievement are more likely to enact practices (e.g., helping with homework, attending parent-teacher conferences) that correspond to this socialization goal than parents who do not prioritize their children's school achievement. Should this tenet hold true, parents with the same parenting style but different socialization goals will enact unique parenting practices that yield distinct outcomes in their children. As a result, this tenet could provide a possible explanation for the discrepant findings in the parenting styles and adolescent achievement literature.

If variations in parental socialization goals provide an explanation for the discrepancies in the literature, an important next step is to determine the parental and family characteristics associated with different socialization goals. Ogbu (1981) suggests that parental socialization

goals might vary due to different societal demands faced by families. Specifically, he contends that parents define competence and socialize their children differently depending on the culture in which the family resides. Similarly, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1989) suggests that the larger cultural context, which he calls the macro system, influences the interface of the adolescent's family and school contexts (i.e., mesosystem). Should particular characteristics such as family ethnicity play a role in the formation of parental socialization goals, or play a role elsewhere in the model, the contextual model of parenting would benefit from expanding its notion of context to include the larger cultural context.

A review of the research on parental socialization goals with respect to academic achievement, however, suggests that these goals do not vary dramatically by ethnicity (De La Rosa and Maw, 1990; Muller and Kerbow, 1993; Stevenson *et al.*, 1990; Spera and Wentzel, in press; Wentzel, 1998). For example, Stevenson *et al.* (1990) found that both nonminority and minority parents highly value school and have high aspirations for their children. In fact, Wentzel (1998) found that African American parents reported stronger achievement values and educational aspirations for their children than Caucasian parents. These findings do not support a hypothesis that parental socialization goals vary by ethnicity (cited in Webb, 2006).

## **5.2 Conclusions**

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made.

1. Due to social, political, technological and economic changes in Uganda, some parents in Mpigi Town Council have abandoned their roles towards their children; many of them do not adequately guide their children, help them financially and academically, and do not adequately collaborate with the headteachers and teachers of their children in secondary schools.
2. Students in secondary schools in Mpigi district generally do not perform well academically.
3. Academic achievement of the learners depends on many factors. Parental involvement is among those factors. The higher the parental involvement, the higher the possibility of the learners getting good results, and vice-versa.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

The researcher recommends the following based on what was found out.

1. There is need for parents in Mpigi district to give enough time for their children, to get highly involved with them, monitor them, and support them financially and academically.
2. Given the poor academic performance of the learners especially in science subjects, the students should put in more effort. They should also be guided by the teachers to stop perceiving science subjects as being hard.
3. Since parental involvement influences the children's learning outcomes significantly, there is need for parents to get involved more in their children's education, highly monitor their children, guide them and support them financially and academically.



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**APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS**

**Introduction**

You are kindly asked to participate in this study by filling this questionnaire. This study is for academic purposes only, and the information provided will be kept confidential. Please do not write your name on the questionnaire.

**Section A. Profile of respondents**

Your gender .....

Your age .....

**Section B:**

Read the statements below and tick 4, 3, 2, or 1, whereby 1 means that you strongly agree with the statement; 3 means that you agree with the statement; 2 means that you disagree with the statement; and 1 means that you strongly disagree with the statement.

<b>1. Moral guidance to children</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>My parents/guardians</b>				
Advise me to concentrate on studies				
Advise me to avoid bad peer groups				
Advise me to avoid sexual immorality				
Talk to me about HIV/AIDS				
Advise me to avoid drugs like marijuana				
Advise me not to take alcohol				
Advise me to come back home before 7.00pm				
Talk to me about dangers of getting pregnant/impregnating girls for				
Tell me the benefits of studying and the dangers of dropping out of school.				

<p><b>2. Economic support to children</b></p> <p><b>My parents/guardians:</b></p> <p>Pay my fees/tuition in time  Provide medical care to me  Put in place for me an income generating prefect  Give me pocket money  Give me money to buy luxuries  Give me money for leisure activities</p>	<p><b>4, 3, 2, 1</b></p>
<p><b>3. Academic support to children</b></p> <p><b>My parents/guardians:</b></p> <p>Brought me here and registered me to study  Asked me to look for a school and be registered  Buy me text books and pamphlets  Hire resourceful persons to coach me  Do home work with me  Give me money for seminars  Allow me to hold academic discussions with colleagues  Check my books regularly  Provide me with means of transport to and from school  Buy me uniforms</p>	<p><b>4, 3, 2, 1</b></p>
<p><b>4. Collaborating with teachers and head teachers</b></p> <p><b>My parents/guardians</b></p> <p>Attend parents' meetings at school</p>	<p><b>4, 3, 2, 1</b></p>

Pay regular visits at school

Seek advice from teachers on how I can perform better

Ask teachers my strengths and loop holes/ weaknesses

Attend sports activities at school

Participate in fundraising for school projects

Advise the head teacher on how to get resourceful persons for the school.

**SECTION C**

Kindly give a detailed description and explanations on the following. Be honest on all the items

**1. Parental involvement**

Do you appreciate your parents’/guardians’ efforts in:

- (i) guiding you morally?
- (ii) Supporting you economically?
- (iii) Supporting you academically?
- (iv) Collaborating with your head teacher and classroom teachers?

If yes, why?

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If no, why?

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**2. Performance**

I. Which subject do you like most and which one don't you like at all? Why?

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II. Do you perform better in some subjects than in others? Why?

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III. What teaching methods/approaches do your teachers usually use?

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