Family Background and Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools in Lira City

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Declaration

I, Abor Richard, do declare that the dissertation titled "*Family Background and Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools in Lira City"*, is my own original work.

Signature…….. Date…08/09/2026……

Approval

This dissertation titled, "Family Background and Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools in Lira City", has been submitted for examination with our approval.

Signature……..Date…8/9/2026…..

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Signature……..Date…8/9/2026…..

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved parents, brothers and sisters, and my family members: Sylvia, Daniel, Emmanuel, Lydia, Loy, Racheal, Joshua, and Andrew. Their unwavering love, encouragement, and support have been a constant source of inspiration and strength throughout this academic journey. I am deeply grateful for their sacrifices, prayers, and belief in me. May the Almighty God bless them abundantly and reward them for their kindness and steadfast support.

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Abstract

The study explored how family background of students in Lira City, Lango region, Northern Uganda influenced their academic performance in secondary schools. Three objectives guided the study: Assessment of the extent to which Parents' educational level influences students' academic performance, examining the influence of family size on students' academic performance, and investigation on how parents' income level influences students' academic performance, in Secondary schools in Lira City. Quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to provide comprehensive understanding of the research questions and objectives. Convergent research design was used for the study. A simple random sampling and purposive techniques were used to select the respondents from three secondary schools in Lira City, who made up the sample size for the study. One hundred and eighty-six (186) responses were got from eighty (80) senior four students, sixty-four (64) parents, and forty- two (42) teachers/school administrators. Both questionnaire and interview guides were used to get information on how family background influences students' academic performance in secondary schools. The results revealed that parents with higher levels of education significantly influenced students' academic performance through enhanced motivation, effective academic guidance, and active engagement in school activities. Parents with higher levels of education set elevated expectations for their children and serve as crucial role models and sources of academic support to their children. Smaller family sizes were generally found to enhance better academic performance due to proper allocation of resources, emotional support, effective parent-child communication, and effective decision-making support. Smaller family sizes provide more individualized attention, resources, and supportive learning environment that significantly contribute to their children's academic success. Furthermore, analysis of findings revealed that a family with stable income was observed to have the capacity to pay school fees timely, support all academic school activities, and build a child's self-esteem that positively impacts on the child's academic performance in schools. Families with stable income levels have access to resources, opportunities, and support networks that promote academic achievements of their children. The study recommends providing financial assistance to low-income families, increasing school funding in rural areas, implementing community workshops for parents, encouraging peer study groups, and promoting family-friendly policies to support parents' involvement in their children's academic success. Based on the findings, the study concluded that family background had much influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools.

Chapter One
Introduction

1.0 Overview

All over the world, parents, guardians and other education stakeholders have historically blamed teachers and school administrators for students' subpar academic performance, and they have frequently been held accountable for students' poor academic performance in schools. According to Leonard et al. (2022), many people appear to be puzzled about what factors really influence students' academic performance in secondary schools. Ogunshola and Adewale (2012) posit that the fundamental academic success of students in secondary schools lies in the hands of the parents. This is because family background is the foundation for an individual to accomplish his/her desirable knowledge, skills and goals (Leonard et al., 2022). Providing essential support to students both at home and at school to improve on the academic performances of students at school, parents' involvement serves as a foundation for students' intellectual and emotional development (Jeynes, 2016). In light of this, the study aimed at determining whether or not students' family background such as parents' educational level, family size and parents' income level influences their academic performances in schools where they study.

This chapter, presents the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, scope and significance of the study.

1.1 Background to the Study

1.1.1 Historical Perspective

Historically, it has long been acknowledged that a connection between familial background and academic achievement shapes the educational outcomes of a student, per se. The relationship between family background and students' academic performance has been studied and

researched throughout history by academicians, researchers, and politicians who have

acknowledged the influence of many aspects within the family context (Coleman, 1966). Furthermore, Bourdieu (1986) contends that in the early 20th century, sociologists and educational psychologists started looking into how students' background affected their academic performance. The sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital was then one of the most well-known theories to emerge during this time. According to Bourdieu, factors such as parental education, cultural familiarity, and social standing have a big impact on how well students do in school. As argued in Coleman et al. (1966), the development of extensive educational surveys and longitudinal studies in the middle of the 20th century allowed academics to probe even deeper into the connection between familial history and student's academic achievement; this means that in the past, researchers had already seen the relevance of establishing the relationship between family background and academic performance of learners.

According to Dearing et al. (2006), parental support, encouragement, and participation in educational activities all have a favorable impact on children's academic performance worth noting. According to Moral- Garcia et al. (2020), parental support is one of the most powerful protective factors for the students to maintain academic excellence. This means that there is a great connection that lies between family background and academic performance, which has changed in recent years as a result of technological and social developments. Researchers have examined the impact of family history on students' success in virtual learning settings as a result of the growth of online learning and distance education. Therefore, since students are continuously being exposed to the use of technology in their learning and studies (eLearning), technological accessibility and internet connectivity, students from families who cannot access those facilities would be at a disadvantage, hence affecting their academic performance in their

respective schools.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, a correlation study conducted at Arba Minch University in South Ethiopia, the number of students applying for readmission due to poor academic performance was found to be high, and the trend of graduating students was not proportionate to the trend of enrolled students. The academic progress in sub-Saharan Africa was even found to be stagnant as the level of performance was very low. This was attributed to limitations of family resources; parents of poor families were unable to invest sufficiently to their children's education, which affected their academic performance inschools (Yigermal, 2017).

In Tanzania, it has been reported that public schools and some private schools in Dar-es Salaam, Morogoro and Kagera perform poorly in the national examinations due to how parental involvement in their children's education very much affects children's performance. For example, some parents were not supportive to their children's educational needs and would assume that teachers or the government would be in charge everything concerning their children's' education (Omary, Salum & Mapunda, 2021). They argued that parental involvement is related to building up self-esteem in their children. As observed, this is only the case with Tanzania; it was worth finding out the case of Uganda, using the context of Lira City.

Therefore, the historical view on the connection between family background and academic achievement demonstrated how studies and understanding, regarding these two phenomena, have changed through time. Therefore, through the historical trends, poor academic performance was linked to family background, in that a student from a struggling family may not be able to acquire all his/her educational requirement like course books, practical materials especially for science students. Due to a student's poor family background, we may also contend that he/she would find it hard to join relatively expensive schools whose academic performances were very high.

1.1.2. Theoretical Perspective

The study was underpinned by the Social Cognitive Theory of Bandura (1986) who noted the dynamic and reciprocal interaction between people or person with a set of learned experiences and cognitive processes (which included academic performance and critical thinking in class as well), environment (external social context), and behavior (responses to stimuli to achieve goals).

The interaction was demonstrated by the construct called reciprocal determinism, which stated that a person's behavior both influences and was influenced by personal factors and the social environment.

Environmental factors referred to external conditions and influences that affect student's behaviors such as models, social interactions (e.g., Instructions given to students), feedback and reinforcement given to students

Behavioral factors referred to individual overt acts and responses such as observational learning, motivations got from others/goal progress, and self-reinforcement.

Personal factors referred to individual characteristic such as self-efficacy, outcome expectations, goals and aspirations, and self-regulatory mechanisms (strategies and techniques an individual used to manage their thoughts, emotions and behaviors).

According to the theory, one's oriental environment affected his/her cognitive processing. The assumption in the social cognitive theory was that a student's family background (environment) affects their academic achievement through a number of ways.

Students learned by observation and imitation of their parents' behaviors, a process known as observational learning or modeling (Bandura, 1977).

Children watched and picked up on their parents' behaviors, attitudes, and values regarding education in the context of their family background. Parents in this case act as role models for their children inside the households. Thus, children most likely would adopt these ideas and actions, which would favorably affect their academic achievement, if parents placed a high value on education, exhibited high educational expectations (anticipated good academic performance), and participated in learning-related activities. Children would likely internalize these habits and used them in their academic endeavors when their parents actively engage in learning, demonstrate problem-solving abilities, and have a good attitude toward education.

A child's Behavioral capability, defined by Bandura et al. (2001), as an individual's actual ability to execute a behavior using the essential knowledge and skills acquired from parents/family, can affect his/her academic performance in school.

In order to successfully perform a behavior and excel academically well in school, a child must know what to do and how to do it.

The Social Cognitive Theory acknowledged the significance of incentives and penalties (reinforcements) in influencing behavior (Skinner, 1953). The forms of reinforcement and feedback students received in relation to their academic performance were influenced by their family background. Parents who encouraged their children's academic success by giving them praise, acknowledgment, and material prizes fostered the academic performance of students in schools.

The Theory further acknowledged self-efficacy where, according to Bandura et al. (2001) referred to an individual's sense of self-worth and confidence in their capacity to achieve in a particular tasks or circumstances. Self-efficacy influences a person's specific capability and other individual factors, as well as by environmental factors (family environment). In other words, a student's self-efficacy viewed in relation to academic assignments were significantly

shaped by their family history (background/past experience), including parental encouragement, support, and faith in the child's talents. Higher self-efficacy students were more likely to establish challenging objectives, stick with them through difficulties, and do better in school.

The Theory, however, ignores emotional and temporal dynamics in relation to personality changes and individual characteristics.

Despite this gap, many scholars have used the theory in their research, including Bandura et al. (2001), Chen (2012) and Wang (2013). This was due to the theory's overwhelming power, as it was useful in examining how individual interacted with their surroundings and can be used to guide behavior change interventions. Even though Bandura's (1986) theory overlooked this gap (mentioned earlier) the study filled this gap by probing emotional and psychological related issues and their effects on students' academic performance.

In order to better understand how family background influences students' academic accomplishment, the researcher used the Social Cognitive Theory to the processes of observational learning, self-efficacy, modeling, and reinforcement. This theoretical framework aided in pinpointing the precise processes and mechanisms by which family background affected students' attitudes, convictions, and instructional strategies, ultimately influencing their academic performance.

1.1.3 Conceptual Perspective

The relationship between "family background and students' academic performance," as examined in Sirin (2005), refers to the impact of several familial characteristics on a student's educational accomplishments, including their grades, test results, and general academic success. McLoyd (1998), in his Socioeconomic disadvantage and child development postulated that the term "family background" described the assortment of socio-demographic traits, life

events, and circumstances that make up a family and affect a person's upbringing, morals, and possibilities. It included a variety of elements, including parents' educational level, family size, and parents' socioeconomic situation (especially parents' income level).

Banerjee (2016) argued that the academic performance of students in class referred to a student's level of development, success, and performance in their academic pursuits, including their grades, test scores, and overall academic achievements.

It also contained a variety of markers, such as understanding of a particular subject, the capacity for critical thought, the capacity for problem- solving and overall curricular mastery.

Therefore, students' academic performance was operationalized by Banerjee (2016), who explained that academic performance is a child's achievements in educational assessments that encompasses a student's excellence in not only the internal and inter-school exercises; but also involved the performance of students in their general national examinations.

The study looked at the term "family background" in terms of parents' educational level, family size, and parents' income level context in which a student was brought up. Family background influenced a student's experiences, outlook and opportunities, and can have a big influence on the child's behavior and personal development.

The term "academic performance" describes how well students perform in their studies, as measured by grades, test scores, assignments, projects, and other indicators of learning achievements. It reflects students' comprehensions of subject matter, application of knowledge, and overall effort in their educations.

Therefore, family background and students' academic performance was operationalized by the fact that there were characteristic family elements (parents' educational level, family size, and parents' income level) that influenced students' academic performance in school as measured

by beginning of term grades, end of term grades, and UCE grades. Good academic performance referred to a situation when students scored Division 1 and 2, and those who scored Division 3 upwards would have performed poorly academically.

Some variables such as family health problems, school leadership styles, and government policies had effects on students' academic performance in schools and they were controlled by use of sample homogeneity and standardized environment conditions where respondents were from the same location of Lira City and almost all shared the same culture.

1.1.4 Contextual Perspective

The study took place in secondary schools in Lira City. The reason was that there is little data on how family background affected academic success in certain settings, like Lira City in Uganda (Muwonge & Ssenyonga, 2018; Mugyenyi et al., 2023). The implementation of the Universal Secondary Education (USE) program in 2008 improved student enrollment in secondary schools, and funding for secondary education was given top priority (Kyambadde, & Khumalo, 2022). Although the program significantly increased the number of students enrolled in government secondary schools, particularly those from low-income households, not much had been done to boost students' academic achievement (Tweheyo & Mugarura, 2020) especially in Lira City as seen from the data below where two well- performing schools were considered for Uganda Certificate of Education (U.C.E) 2019. Mentor senior Secondary School was number 138 in the country, with 25.6% and 62.2% of the candidates in Division 1 and Division 2, while 12.2% were in Division 3. Dr. Obote College, Boroboro was number 157 in the country, with 29.0% and 54.2% of the candidates in Division 1 and Division 2, and 16.8% and 2.6% of the candidates in Division 3 and Division 4 (note that this statistical analysis is based on Admissions.co.ug (2023). As can be seen, the performance was poor as compared to the performance of schools in other regions (especially central region) of the county. The

study therefore, examined the influence of family background attributes such as parents' educational level, family size, and parents' income level on students' academic performance in terms of beginning of term grades, end of term grades, and U.C.E. grades; in secondary schools in Lira City.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Ideally, all students enrolled in secondary schools are expected to perform well in their academic and educational undertakings. To achieve this, governments, schools, parents, and other education stakeholders have put in place various interventions such as recruitment of qualified teachers, provision of instructional materials, guidance and counselling services, and curriculum supervision. In addition, parents are encouraged to provide scholastic materials, school fees, and moral support to enhance students' learning and academic achievements.

However, despite these efforts and interventions, students' academic performance in many secondary schools remain poor. This poor performance has been associated with factors such as low parental level of education, large family size, and low levels of parent income. The problem is reflected in the low number of students attaining Division One and Division Two, grades that indicate excellent mastery of subject content and competent performance that meets expected academic standards (Mwesigye & Barungi, 2019).

Although several factors affect students' academic performance in secondary schools, the persistence of poor results despite the existing educational interventions creates a gap that requires investigation. Therefore, this study examined the impact of family background on students' academic performance.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of family background on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Lira City.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

i. Assessing the extent to which parents' educational level influences students' academic performance in secondary schools in Lira City

ii. Examining the impact of family size on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Lira City

iii. Investigating how parents' income level influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in Lira City

1.5 Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

i. How does parents' education level influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in Lira City?

ii. How does family size influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in Lira City?

iii. What is the impact of parents' income level on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Lira City?

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study was carried out in Lira City in the Lango Sub-Region, Northern Uganda.

The study focused on three secondary schools; one mixed private secondary school, and two government-aided single sex secondary schools. The goal of the study was to determine whether family background element contributes to poor academic performance of students.

This study focused on the influence of parents' educational level, family size and parents' income level on students' academic performance as indicated by beginning of term grades, end of term grades, and final U.C.E. grades in these selected secondary schools in Lira City.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The study may provide a benchmark for responsible government agencies such as the Ministry of Education and Sports as policy makers, to introduce policies that would enhance students' academic performance in secondary schools in Lira City and Uganda as a whole, relating to the familial history/background of the students.

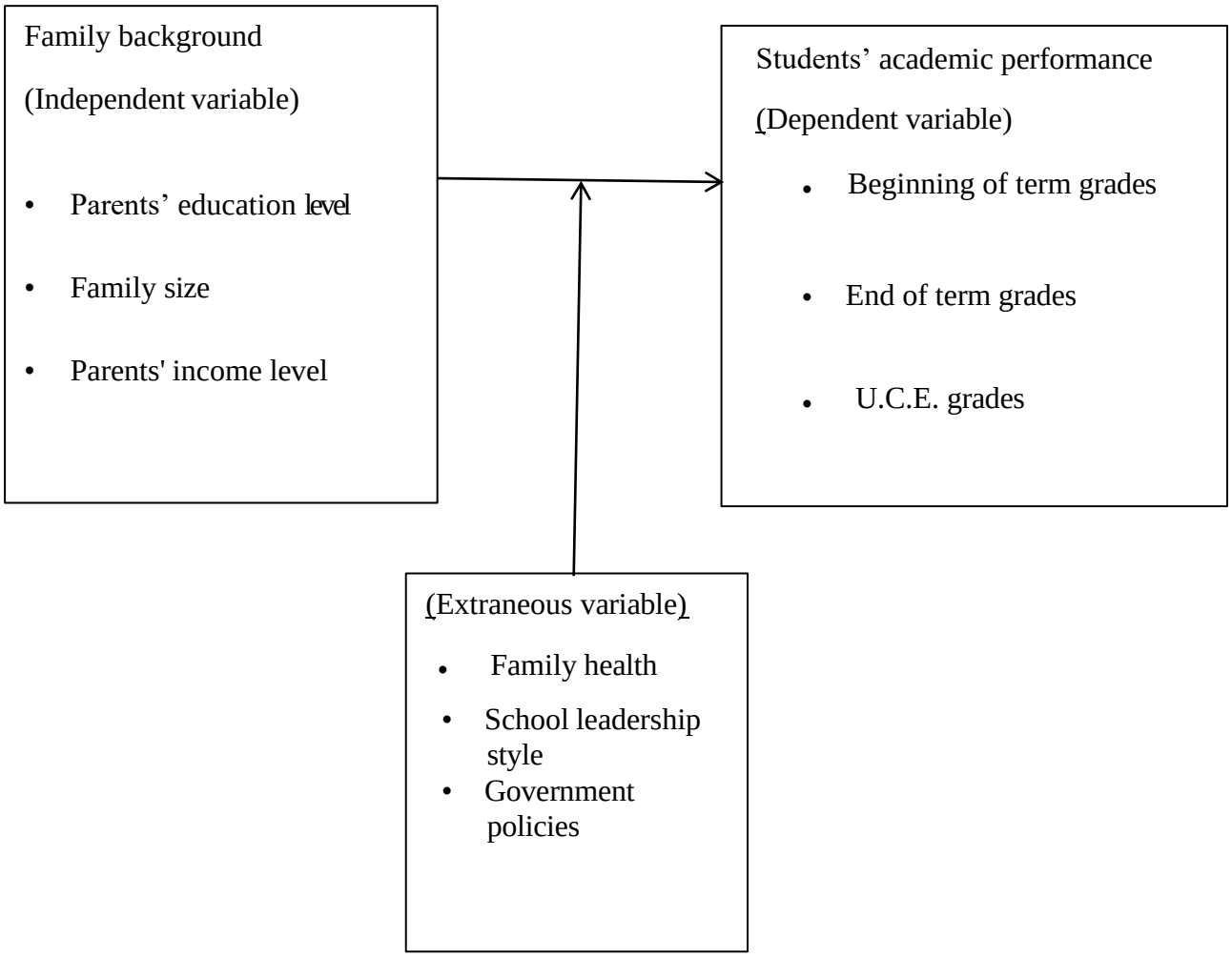
In addition, parents being part of policy makers would see the relevance of their involvement in schools where their children study. This would help parents involved in their children's education to benefit from knowing how family circumstances affected academic performance of their children. The study findings may assist parents in realizing their influence on the academic performance of their students and inspire them to offer the support, direction, and tools required.

Studying the link between family background and academic performance would foster empathy and understanding among students. This could help breakdown stereotypes and created a more inclusive learning environment where every student felt valued and supported.

The findings of the study may be of importance to future researchers in areas related to family

background and students' academic performance. Education officers in Lira City and school administrators/teachers who participated in the research may use the findings to strengthen students 'academic performance, as they would be enlightened on the important factors on students' family background and paid more attention to those factors that affected adversely students' academic performance as policy implementers. Policy makers may find relevant ideas on the management of students' academic performance via family involvement and active participation.

Figure 1: A conceptual Framework of the Study Showing Relationship Between Family Background and Students' Academic Performance.



Source: Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura,1986); How Children Learn Behaviors and Attitudes from Parents and Home Environment.

Parents' education level impacted students' academic performance through knowledge of good and reputable schools they enrolled their children in, the inspiration of values, aspirations and motivations given to children that make them concentrate and remain focused on their academic careers hence enhancing their academic performance.

From another perspective, a moderate or highly educated parent most likely maintained the trend and level of education in his family as it would be in his/her best interest to do so.

Depending on the number of children in the household, family size influenced how resources can be shared. When compared to a small family, a large family has a higher cost of schooling, which has an impact on academic success. Some of these family variables may include parental resource allocation and interest of the children, and time allocation as far as child guidance is concerned.

In order to provide the financial means to support a student's academic and learning activities both at home and in school, a parent's income, including earnings and salaries, self-employment revenue, and investment income, was vital. Parents can give their children the necessary learning tools, experiences, and resources that support their academic growth when they have the financial means to do so. This meant students most likely progress academically at a slow rate when parents are not financially stable.

Chapter Two
Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviewed relevant literature based on the research objectives, focusing on how parents' educational level, family size and parents' income level affected academic performance of students, and helped the researcher to have a better insight into understanding the problem of poor academic performance in secondary schools in Lira City.

2.1 Assessing the Influence of Parents' Educational Level on Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools.

Globally, family background and academic performance has been an issue, and the impact of parents' educational backgrounds on their children's academic achievement has attracted attention in the field of education research. One important aspect that has the potential to have a big impact on how well students learn is the educational level of their parents.

Based on the concept of parents' educational level and academic achievement, studies found that student's academic performance was influenced by their parents' level of education (Haider et al, 2024). Parents with higher levels of education showed greater interest in and dedication to their children's education, enabling them to provide excellent guidance for their future academic endeavors. In addition, they offered conducive learning environment for their children, and occasionally they even educate them while at home. The excellent education of their parents also served as a source of motivation for students, who work harder to earn better grades in their studies. When compared to students whose parents have low levels of education, the children of parents with higher levels of education were more committed, confident, and ingenious. This made them perform academically well in schools than children whose parents have low academic background. This study was carried out in Pakistan on

Higher Secondary School Students, and the data was collected through interviews, direct observations, questionnaires and Google forms. The current study looked at the case of Ordinary Level ('O' level) students in secondary schools in Lira City, and the data collection method was through interviews and questionnaires.

Hafeez et al. (2020), found out that one could draw the conclusion that parents with better educational standing have a significant and positive association with the academic accomplishment of their children. Children of highly educated parents fared significantly better than children of less educated parents in academics. Since educated parents have already gone through the educational process and were aware of the highs and lows of educational choices, they shared educational life experiences with children, and encouraged them in their academic activities that made it very effective at inspiring them to pursue their studies.

Additionally, parents with advanced degrees have a good and considerable impact on the subject choices of their children. This highlighted the relevance of parents' educational level in decision-making (e.g., subject selection). These parent-child interactions have a beneficial psychological impact on children, decrease children's hesitancy, and further boosted children's self-assurance and faith in their parents.

However, due to the lack of a psychological component, illiterate parents were unable to help their children and have less of an impact on their children as parents than educated parents. This study was carried out in Pakistan and it did not take care of the current context (Lira City secondary schools) under investigation; hence, since this study does not take care of the present research setting under investigation, it was interesting to find out what happened with secondary schools in Lira City.

Darko-Asumadu and Sika-Bright (2021) found out that children who had parents with formal education did better on end of term examinations than those whose parents did not have formal

education. Well educated parents could help their children with the homework, but illiterate parents had little interests and influence in their children's education system due to their inability to help with homework, reading, and learning. Further, the parents' lack of education prevented them from attending Parent- Teachers' Association meetings to learn more about their children's academic progress. Due to this, they have less opportunity to mentor and guide their children's academic growth in schools, which increases the risk of low literacy and hence poor academic performance among their children. This study was conducted in Ghana and it was worth noting what happened with students from Lira City in northern Uganda.

According to Capuno et al. (2019), when children were at home, they viewed their parents as second teachers. Parents who have attained some level of education and have knowledge about school tasks could assist their children with any school assignments that were given to them at school. This fostered their academic performances in schools. Parents, who did not know much about school work due to their low levels of education, would be unable to help their children hence affecting their academic performance in schools. The study was carried out in Philippines and on students' performances in Mathematics, but the current study looked at students' performances in all the subjects in secondary schools in Lira City.

Kapur (2018) established that when compared to parents with less education, the performance of the children of highly educated parents was shown to be good. Haris and Goodall (cited in Kapur, 2018) found in their studies of highly educated parents, they focused on creating a text-rich environment at home. Additionally, they have vast experience with student life, so they were aware of the issues and the proper remedies. Their parental guidance and inspiration have a favorable impact on their children's academic success. Kapur's (2018) study only focused on the context of India, and his finding over relied on the quantitative approach; the current study looked at the context of Uganda, using Lira City secondary schools as the target population. It

also adopted both qualitative and quantitative approach to understand and determine the influence of parents' level of education on students' academic performances.

Lv et al. (2016) noted that in order to strengthen the link between academic success and wellbeing in China, frequent parent-teacher communications enhanced child learning, taking care of both parents and teachers' academic expectations. Additionally, by participating in their children's education at the school level, parents could learn a great deal about their children's academic environments, giving them a better understanding of how to adjust their behavior. While the literature focused on the responsibilities Chinese parents played in their children's academic success, this study examined the impact of family background on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Lira City, Northern Uganda.

Wang et al. (2020), observed that parental education has an impact on the non-cognitive outcomes of children. They further noted that higher levels of self-esteem, greater social skills, and fewer instances of negative behaviors in children were all related to parents' educational attainment. This suggested that how educated parents were, influenced how their children develop socially and emotionally. This study took place in China and used a longitudinal survey design to collect information on family and individual socioeconomic status, but the current study focused on secondary schools in Lira City and used convergent design to get information from the target population.

According to Hoque et al. (2017), mothers who achieved a desirable level of education have a great level of influence on their children's education. An educated mother can provide her child with valuable knowledge, resources, and support. She can help with homework, explain complex concepts, and encourage intellectual curiosity. Since research showed that parents who have high educational aspirations for their children positively influence their academic achievement, an educated mother set high expectations for her child's educational attainment

and encouraged them to strive for excellence (Hoque et al., 2017). Clearly, this revelation did not give an account of the female (mothers) parents of Lira City secondary schools as this study was conducted in Bangladesh and analyzed the academic performance of school age children whose mothers were employed in various profession. It was worth finding out the case of all the parents, both male and female, whose children were studying in secondary schools in Lira City.

A study done by Mahuro and Hungi (2016) explained that every individual was traced back to a family and therefore parental involvement in any stage of an individual's growth was inseparable. It was worth noting that parental involvement in the development of an individual varied within cultures and societies. Parental involvement takes many forms such as good parenting at home, provision of basic necessities, positive behavior molding, instilling positive social values and good citizenry and above all, enhancing educational aspirations. Parental involvement in their children's academic performance included activities such as helping the child in reading, supervising their homework, offering coaching and presenting learning activities outside schools. While this study was conducted in the districts of Iganga and Mayuge, it was worthwhile to find out what happen in Lira City, Northern Uganda.

2.2 Examining How Family Size Affects Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools.

Large families have a detrimental effect on students' performances in schools (Olagundoye & Adebile, 2019). It was presumed that the large families may result in parents not giving their children the attention they needed in terms of providing the resources for learning, properly supervising their schoolwork, and paying their school fees on time. This was supported by Unugo (2020), who noted that there was a positive correlation between students' performance in social studies and family size, where academic performance tends to drop as family size

grows. He further found that students from larger families frequently faced financial pressures that lead them to work outside the home to support the family, which diverted them from their studies and causes them to perform poorly academically in schools. Conversely, students from smaller families typically have better access to resources and parental attention which fostered better academic engagement and performance. The studies looked at performances in Literature in English and Social studies subjects only in Nigeria but the current study looked at all the subjects in the school curriculum in secondary schools in Lira City.

According to Adongo et al. (2022), family size features affect the academic performance of high school students. It was further explained that the family size determined the educational quality and perceived influence on academic performance. A small family's basic needs were met with a smaller portion of the family's income as compared to a large family. While the study focused on Ghanaian high school students, the current study looked at the case of secondary school students in Lira City in northern Uganda.

As explained in Kapur (2018) a small family Size was typically thought of as a nuclear family, consisting of the parents (generally, the husband, wife) and children; accordingly, a family was seen to be small if there were only one or two children. As a result, parents would therefore find that their employment responsibilities were manageable when there were only one or two children in the home. They were able to provide resources and control their children's learning, progress, and development in a manageable method. The general belief among people was that having fewer children would result in lower expenses and allowed them to better provide for their offspring (Ogunsola et al. cited in Kapur, 2018). Kapur added that parents were the first and foremost people, whom children approach, when they experienced any kind of challenges relating to academics, and this may be easily dealt with if the family size was small.

When parents work or were employed full-time, they also struggled to find time for interaction

with their children or to attend to their wants and expectations when they were many. While Kapur's study was carried out in India using quantitative approach, it was better to use a different context with a different population, which was the Lira City in Northern Uganda where both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used.

Egunsola and Isani (2014) found that factors such as marital status and family size significantly affected students' academic performance in Agricultural sciences. In comparison to children from polygamous homes, where huge family sizes were typical, they maintained that children from nuclear families were more likely to receive prompt attention in terms of prompt availability of educational supplies. Accordingly, the monogamous family promoted learning by fostering a more favorable learning environment; conflicts were also resolved more easily in monogamous families than in polygamous families, and students from polygamous families were more likely to experience psychological disturbances and issues than their counterparts from monogamous families. This invariably has an impact on students' academic performance in school.

Peaceful home environments (which may be characterized by a small size monogamous family) created emotional stability in the child at home and subsequently throughout his school life, and with this stability a student can concentrate and perform academically well in school (Egunsola & Isani, 2014). Nevertheless, Egunsola and Isani's (2014) study considered the context of Nigeria, particularly Adamawa state, and examined family structure in relation to one subject only (i.e., agricultural sciences). With the current study, the study found out how family size affected the general performance of students in secondary schools in all the subjects in Lira City.

2.3 Investigating the Impact of Parents' Income Level on Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools.

Numerous research studies have continuously emphasized the close connection between academic performance and socioeconomic status. When compared to children from lower income families, those from higher-income families frequently performed better academically. According to Ngangi et al. (2022), children from low-income parents performed poorly academically since these parents do not make sufficient educational investments. The low incomes of parents have a detrimental impact on students' performance since it can lead to late payments for school fees, uniforms, and necessary supplies. Students sent home frequently to collect school fees miss a lot of instructional time implying they do not adequately cover the syllabi, hence affecting their academic performance in schools. Further, these students could not have access to adequate housing, food, or healthcare, which could impair their ability to concentrate during class work and result in poor academic performance. This study was done in public secondary schools in Kangundo Sub- County in Kenya; it was worth noting the case of secondary schools in Lira City, in northern Uganda.

Machebe et al. (2017) study demonstrated a positive relationship between parents' level of income and their children's academic achievements. The study found that children from higher income families performed better academically than children whose income level background was low, since their parents offered them with all educational resources in addition to financial assistance and moral guidance. Whereas the study was carried out in Japan and involved only students, the current study sought opinions from not only the students, but also parents and teachers/school administrators from secondary schools in Lira City on how family background influences students' academic performance.

Furthermore, Duncan and Murnane (2011) explained that parents' income level was directly

related to educational opportunities. They argued that educational options that were available to children were influenced by their parent's income level. Higher-income households can afford to give their children access to resources that can improve their academic performance, including extracurricular activities, instructional materials, and private tutoring. Children from more affluent homes may succeed at higher levels thanks to this advantage. This also agreed with Magnuson and Duncan (2016), who posit that parents' income level created academic gap in the performance of children in mathematics and reading. They also added that it helped in shaping educational opportunities and outcomes for children. This means that choosing a good school, private coaching services, instructional materials, etc., was all guided and controlled by parents' income level. Children from such a stable family, as regards the income level, were most likely to have part-time learning services and extracurricular activities which were very vital for their personal development, both academically and in terms of scientific knowledge transfer in real-life situations. Nevertheless, their study was carried out in United States, and only focused on the performance of Early childhood in mathematics and reading, but this study was interested in looking at the influence of family background (which does not preclude parents' level of income) on the general academic performance of secondary schools' students, not primary or nursery school children.

Reardon and Portillia (2016) advanced that the academic performance differences between learners from various income levels were referred to as the "income-related achievement gap." Research has repeatedly demonstrated that children from low-income families have more difficulties succeeding academically than their peers from higher-income families. In-depth research on income-related achievement gaps in the US was done by Reardon (2011), who discovered significant differences between socioeconomic groups. This informed the study on how parental income influences the level of academic performance among students. However, their study looked at the case of kindergarten learners in the US, using majorly descriptive

design. Therefore, while this study looked at the case of kindergarten learners in the US, it was interesting to look at the case of secondary schools in the Lira City of Uganda using both the quantitative and qualitative approaches to examine the study variable.

It was also argued that parental support of educational systems and their important involvement in the school learning situation was determined by their level of income (Hill & Tyson, 2021). They explained that parental involvement, which was determined by financial level, was a crucial component in students' academic achievement. Higher-income parents frequently have more time and money to devote to their children's education, which included participating in extracurricular activities, offering academic help, and fostering a positive learning environment at home. The academic drive, self-esteem, and overall success of the learners were all favorably impacted by this involvement. Clearly, Hill et al. (cited in Hill & Tyson, 2021) described parental involvement as interactions with schools and with their children to promote academic success. The participation entailed two situations: meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, which was a little bit broader than this. This was quite informative, but their study did not mention the case of secondary schools in Lira City, prompting the researcher to carry out the study.

Nieto and Ramos (2015) explained that results from the performance of students from the UK and the Netherlands, and Tunisia (Sub-Saharan Africa) showed variation in academic performance. It was such results (from Tunisia) that explained how low-income world would affect the academic performance of their students who may not perform like those in the first world countries.

This was informative with respect to the specific context of the present study. However, it did not take care of the case of Uganda, prompting the researcher to carry out the study to find out how parental income level influences the level of academic performance in selected Uganda

secondary schools in Lira City.

Accordingly, Shamsudin et al. (2019), as explained in Tan et al. (2021) argued that cost-related issues were a factor that influences students' decision-making in their learning environment.

In this respect, Satici and Can (2016) (cited in Tan et al., 2021), explained that parents' financial status brings an impact on student's educational opportunities, and parents' earning abilities indirectly determined the immediate home environment that they can provide to their children for their cognitive/intellectual development. Influence of parents' income and engagement in the academic self-efficacy and achievement supported the construct that parental income effectively influences students' academic performance in secondary schools (Tan et al., 2021).

Nevertheless, there was also a possibility that high parental income negatively influences children's academic success; for example, the expectation from high income parents on their children to follow in their footsteps might conversely cause their children to develop depression (Tan et al., 2021) resulting in poor academic performance. That said, their study revealed the case of Asia, but Lira City secondary schools in Northern Uganda was the target area of the study.

In summary, many studies have presented different revelations regarding family background and academic performance of students in schools. For example, Reardon (2011), which looked at family background and academic performance of kindergarten pupils; Kapur (2018) which looked at it from the context of India, although his study grossly relied on quantitative approach. Hoque et al. (2017) looked at how effectively mothers contribute to the performance of their children in schools. As can be observed, it was worth commending these studies for their different findings; however, their studies did not consider the context of secondary schools in Lira City. The current study therefore found out how family background affected the

performance of students in Lira City, using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. This enabled us obtain holistic information regarding the research problem.

Chapter Three
Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology that was used in the study. It consisted of the research approaches and design, study population and sampling, data collection methods and instruments, reliability and validity of instruments, data analysis methods and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Approaches

The study took mixed-method research approach that used both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of research questions and objectives. The study approach was predominantly quantitative over the qualitative. It was mixed at two stages: conceptualization and analysis. The justification that all approaches have limitations and that effective body of research should include more than one approach to establish research credibility (Agerfalk, 2013). The quantitative approach enabled the researcher to numerically establish the correlations and variations between the study variable. Qualitative approach, by using the interview guide administered to parents, and teachers/school administrators, enabled the researcher to explore in-depth the influence of family background on students' academic performance in selected secondary schools in Lira City.

3.2 Research Design

In the study, the researcher used a convergent research design which according to Creswell (2014) involves collecting quantitative (numerical) and qualitative data concurrently and the findings integrated during interpretation.

The design provided a comprehensive understanding of the research problem since both numerical and participants' experiences were captured.

3.3 Target Population

The target population was 250, consisting of 100 Ordinary level students (especially senior four students), 100 parents (including single parents) whose children were studying in these schools, and 50 teachers/school administrators of these schools. 'O'Level was considered in this study because it is a critical stage in the education system, marking the transition from secondary to higher education system, and studying factors that influence academic achievement at this stage provided valuable insights. The level also has a standardized examination system that allowed for comparison across regions and the researcher used 'O' Level results as a measure of academic performance.

3.4 Sample Size

A sample size of 204 respondents; in these category 80 students, 44 teachers/school administrators, and 80 parents were selected from three secondary schools with the school types as one mixed boarding secondary school, two single sex boarding secondary schools using Krejcie and Morgan table (Appendix 1).

Purposive sampling was also used to select key informants such as the parents and the teachers/school administrators. These were people who directly influenced the education and students' academics in schools. The choice of this sampling technique was based on the fact that the researcher has experience and knowledge of the group selected and the method gave in-depth insights which were needed from the parents, and teachers/school administrators. Furthermore, the researcher used the simple random sampling technique to select senior four students who formed the respondents for the study. The researcher anticipated that for the years that they have spent at school, these students, unlike students in other classes, have gauged their academic performance as influenced by their parents' educational level, family size and parents' income level. Hence, the researcher randomly selected respondents from this target

class to ensure that they all stand the chance to participate in the study and avoid biasness.

Table 1: Sample Size Determination

Category	Target Population	Sample Size	Sampling Technique
Students	100	80	Simple Random Sampling
Teachers/School Administrators	50	44	Purposive
Parents	100	80	Purposive
Total	250	204	

Source: Krejcie and Morgan Table (1970)

3.5 Sources of Data

The study used primary sources of data in order to realize empirical findings. According to Sekaran (2003) the primary source refers to the first-hand information got from the target population. The researcher's primary source of data was got from students, parents and teachers in the different category.

3.6 Data Collection Methods

The study used both the questionnaires and interview guides to get information on how family background influences students' academic performance in schools.

A questionnaire was used to gather data on demographic information, such as the age, the gender and parents' level of education, of the respondents. Both closed-ended and opened-ended questionnaires was used to collect data from students, parents, and teachers/school administrators on the impact of family background on students' academic performance in secondary schools. According to Babbie (2016), closed-ended questions enhance uniformity of responses, while open-ended questions allow respondents to elaborate on their experiences and feelings. Therefore, closed-ended questionnaires were conclusive as their designs allowed for

measurable and statistically significant data, hence facilitated easy analysis and comparison across large samples. It was also consistent, easier and quicker for the respondents to answer questions. Opened-ended questionnaires provided the researcher with an opportunity to gain insight on all the opinions of the parents, and teachers/school administrators on the topic under study. The method was chosen as it was simple and cheap to use, and was administered to many persons simultaneously. This enhanced effective description of the type of participants used during the study.

Qualitative data was collected using interviews, where semi- structured interview guide, consisting of predetermined and open-ended questions was used to capture the necessary pieces of information.

Answers to the questions were recorded by writing them down either during the interview itself or immediately after the interview. Both questions and answers given were conducted in the language best understood by the respondents, and later translated to English for analysis.

Interviews allowed respondents to convey their thoughts, feelings, and beliefs, and was a quick and successful tool for acquiring data. This allowed the researcher to delve deeply into delicate and personal themes, and with this method, the interviewer was able to repeat and rephrase questions on issues relating to the influence of family background and students' academic performance in the selected secondary schools. This allowed for an interactive expression of their real voices, emotions, feelings and beliefs to paint a picture about the family background and its influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Lira City.

3.7 Reliability and Validity of The Instruments

Validity is the degree of research instrument to measure what it is intended to measure (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019).

Content validity Index (CVI) was used for quantitative data for quality control for ensuring the validity of the instruments to be used.

$$\text{CVI} = \frac{\text{Total number of relevant items in the questionnaire}}{\text{Total number of items in the questionnaire}}$$

$$= \frac{35}{40}$$

$$= 0.875, \approx 0.88.$$

Results provided quantitative evidence that the content of an instrument was representative of the construct it was intended to measure.

Reliability refers to the consistency, stability and dependability of the research instrument in measuring variables overtime (Creswell, 2018)

Internal consistency and reliability of the instruments was measured using Cronbach's Alpha to establish causality of Students' Academic Performance. It provides quantitative evidence that the items in the instrument are measuring the same underlying construct, and higher values indicate greater internal consistency of the instrument.

Trustworthiness was focused on research credibility, conformability, dependability and transferability in the research process and outcomes that was achieved through pre-testing the instrument.

3.8 Data Analysis

Data was gathered from study participants and then aggregated, sorted, and numerically and descriptively analyzed. Microsoft Excel was used by the researcher to create the frequency tables and percentages for quantitative data that was used to present the study's findings.

Descriptive statistics was used to explore quantitative data obtained for objectives one, two and three. The researcher analyzed the participants' responses using quantitative data analysis to make sure they were explicitly clear. Additionally, participant responses from the interviews and elicitation activities were converted into frequency sums and percentages, then condensed and tabulated for simple presentation, analysis, and justification.

Furthermore, qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis, organizing data into key themes and sub-themes derived from respondents. The discussions reviewed from the available relevant pieces of literature was also involved as part of the qualitative data analysis which was used to compare or contrast and analyze the results.

3.9 Research Procedures

The researcher obtained an introductory letter from the Faculty of Education and Humanities, which was given to authorities and participants as a means of encouraging ethical behavior. A pre-visit of the schools where the data were to be collected was done by the researcher. A brief meeting was held with the research assistants to guide them on the ethical considerations to be followed, and explain the contents of the data collection tools. Finally, the instruments: the interview question guide and the questionnaire guide were given by the researcher to the respondents in order to collect data. A dissertation was created from all of this.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The researcher ensured the respondents' anonymity with regard to their contacts, names, and any other private information they offered after obtaining their agreement. To do this, the researcher coded the respondents' personal information.

However, to engage the participants, their consent was sought, and their decision regarding their participation in the exercise was respected. The respondents were given serial numbers as an alternative identification means to conceal their identity.

The respondents were interviewed under a conducive and free environment to ensure that they were not physically and mentally affected. Further, the selection of the respondents was not based on a particular gender, as female and male, participants were free to participate in the study. The study did not ask any sensitive questions that was taken by the respondents as a tool for marginalization.

Chapter Four
Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation of Results

4.0 Introduction

This chapter covers the presentation, analysis and interpretation of findings from the data collected from the respondents. The presentation, analysis and interpretation were done on the basis of achieving the research objectives.

4.1 Background Characteristics of the Respondents

This section describes the background information of the respondents, and it includes information such as gender, age, occupation and educational background of parents. The demographic information was deemed to reflect respondents' opinions as regards this study. The researcher in an attempt to collect data relevant to the study, gave out 204 copies of questionnaires, but out of these 186 were returned. As a result, the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the study was based on the 186 copies returned.

Analysis of findings revealed the following pieces of information regarding the gender, age, occupation and educational background of parents from the respondents.

Table 2: Demographic Information of the Respondents

Item	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Gender (n = 186)		
Male	88	47.3
Female	98	52.7
Respondents' Age Bracket (n =186)		
14 – 26	94	50.5
27 – 38	34	18.3
39 – 50	45	24.2
51 – 60	13	7.0
Respondents' Designation (n =186)		
Students	80	43.0
Teachers/school Administrators	42	22.6
Parents	64	34.4
Parents' Level of Education (n = 64)		
Tertiary	45	71.1
Secondary	14	21.1
Primary	5	7.8
No Education	0	0

Source: Primary Data, 2024

As can be seen in Table 2 above, the female respondents were the majority, represented by 98(52.7%), compared to male 88(47.3%). The finding revealed a notable gender difference in the study of family background and students' academic performance, with female respondents forming the majority compared to male respondents. This gender disparity may suggest that family background influences male and female students differently, possibly highlighting

varying gender roles, expectations, or support systems within families. For example, females may experience different levels of parental involvement or societal expectations related to academic success than males, which could affect their academic performance in distinct ways. The predominance of female respondents could also point to gender differences in academic engagement or participation in research studies, which may influence the study's outcomes. Therefore, the gender variation was crucial, as it could provide insights into how family background impacts academic performance differently for male and female students, highlighting potential gender-specific challenges or advantages within educational contexts.

Most female respondents emphasized that mother's education level often have a positive influence on academic performance due to better awareness of the importance of education; but sometimes girls would be expected to help in household chores that could limit their study time and hence affected their academic performances.

Male respondents, on the other hand, said most male students experienced parental pressure especially from fathers who expected boys to excel academically well to fulfill traditional gender roles as future breadwinners. Further, the affirmative action on girls greatly affected studies and level of concentration as girls are favored, creating a conducive learning ground for girls hence excelling academically better than boys.

The findings regarding the respondents' ages as reflected in Table 2, showed that the majority of respondents, 94 individuals (50.5%), were in the younger age bracket of 14-26. This indicated that over half of the sample consisted of younger individuals, likely students or early-career adults. This was followed by 45 respondents (24.2%) that fell within the 39-50 age range, representing a significant portion of mature adults. Additionally, 34 respondents (18.3%) fell in the 27-38 age group, while only 13 respondents (7.0%) were in the oldest bracket of 51-60. This suggested that a smaller portion of the sample were slightly older, possibly in mid-career

or post- education stages. This age distribution implied a diverse range of life stages, with most respondents concentrated in the younger age groups.

The findings from Table 2 further showed that the majority of respondents were students, 80 (43.0%), followed by parents, 64 (34.4%) and teachers/school administrators, 42 (22.6%). This distribution suggested that the study's focus on how family background affects academic performance was largely shaped by students' perspectives, providing direct insights into how they perceived the impact of their family situations on their education. However, the inclusion of parents and teachers brought additional, broader viewpoints, helping to validate and contextualize students' experiences. This balance between the perspectives of students, parents, and teachers ensured that the study captured a well-round understanding of how family background influences academic performance from both personal and external standpoints.

Students observed that parents with lower educational background always failed to understand the academic challenges that their children might be going through and lacked proper guidance method, which demotivates the children, hence affecting both their levels of concentrations in school and academic performance.

Teachers submitted that large family sizes limited time for academic work as children are expected to take on household duties, or care for the siblings. A good communication between parents and teachers helped to address academic or behavioral issues of the child early, leading to better outcomes for the student.

Students who were under too much pressure from their families to perform academically well always experienced anxiety, stress, and even burnt out which negatively impacted on their academic performances.

Parents reported that the low level of education of some parents made them less equipped

academically to help their children with homework due to technicalities in some subjects, or lack of knowledge in the subjects.

Parents further noted that working class had challenge in their commitments with children on academic issues due to limited time for interactions.

However, all the respondents had the following in common.

Active parental involvement through support with homework, encouragement, and close relations with teachers positively impacted on student's academic performance as it motivated students to concentrate on their class work.

Providing emotional support, e.g., making the child feel loved and supported beyond just academic encouragement helped children stay focused and confident in school; though balancing financial needs with emotional support can sometimes be challenging that can affect a child's level of concentration in the class.

Financial stability in a family allowed for access to learning materials such as private coaching outside class hours, and conducive learning environment at home as compared to low-income families where children lack learning materials such as text books, and study space at home which greatly affected their academic performance in school.

Parents were asked about their level of education; and as can be observed in Table 2, analysis of data revealed that the majority, 45 (70.3%) of the parents reached the tertiary level of education; 14(21.9%) of the parents stopped at the secondary school level; while 5(7.8%) parents stopped at the primary level of education. Results from parents' questionnaire did not reveal cases of parents who did not have any basic education. Notably, these parents were representatives of the students used during the study. While some parents have their children in these schools, others were concerned parents affiliated with the schools. Students were also

asked similar questions. Accordingly, results from the students revealed that approximately 75% of female parents did not reach the tertiary level of education compared to the male parents who attended tertiary education.

4.2 The Influence of Parents' Educational Level on Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools.

The researcher, using the questionnaire guide and interviews probed respondents' knowledge regarding how parents' level of education influences students' academic performance. Accordingly, the study respondents indicated and discussed various issues relating to the effect of parents' education on students' academic performance in secondary school.

Table 3: Parents' Level of Education and Students' Academic Performance

Item	Responses	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Students' Academic Success (n =186)			
	Agreed	173	93.0
	Disagreed	13	7.0
Motivation to students (n =42)			
	Agreed	37	88.1
	Disagreed	5	11.9
Offering Academic Guidance (n =186)			
	Agreed	165	88.7
	Disagreed	21	11.3
Parents-School Engagement (n =186)			
	Attending School Meetings	117	62.9
	Communication with Teachers	30	16.1
	Engagement in Disciplinary Issues	39	21.0
Making Academic Choices (n =186)			
	Choice of Subjects	76	40.9
	Choice of Schools	98	52.7
	Choice of Learning Materials	12	6.4

Source: Primary data, 2024

As indicated in Table 3, the results of 173 (93.0%) respondents showed that parents' level of education can influence the academic success of students, while 13 (7.0%) of the respondents did not agree that parents' level of education influences students' academic success.

Considering the responses above, it can be concluded that parents' level of education greatly influenced students' academic performance in schools.

Specifically, teachers were asked in their questionnaire to indicate whether or not motivation as associated with parents' level of education can influence students' academic achievement.

As a result, out of 42 responses in this category, 37 (88.1%) agreed that parents' education level can act as a motivation for students, while 5 (11.9%) of the respondents did not agree to this assumption.

The 88.1% agreement indicated that parental level of motivation to the children depended a lot on their levels of education and this can influence a lot on students' academic achievements.

Respondents were asked to assess if they believed that parents' educational attainment positively correlates with their ability to offer effective academic guidance to their children while at home. An impressive 165 respondents, representing 88.7%, affirmed this correlation, while 21(11.3%) respondents disagreed with this correlation. The 88.7% agreement suggested a strong belief that educated parents were better equipped to assist their children in navigating academic challenges through academic guidance offered at homes, ultimately leading to improved performance.

Crucially, when asked whether or not parents' level of education enhanced their engagement in schools in areas such as attending meetings, communicating with teachers and handling discipline of the children, the following realizations were observed, as indicated in Table 3 above:

According to the data presented in Table 3 above, 117 (62.9%) of the respondents indicated that educated parents were willing to engage in school meetings pertaining the welfare and the academics of their children, while 30(16.1%) responses showed that the educated parents engaged in active communication with the teachers that teach their children. Furthermore, 39(21.0%) of the respondents presented that educated parents, based on discipline issues raised by the school about their children, actively participated in carrying out disciplinary action on the children.

Table 3 further revealed three responses in regards to educated parents being able to make better academic choices for their children; these were in terms of choice of subjects, choice of schools and choice of appropriate learning materials.

Analysis of results from the study responses indicated that 76(40.9%) of the respondents agreed that educated parents make better choices when it comes to choosing of subjects in 'O' Level.

Additionally, results indicated that 98(52.7%) of the respondents considered that parents' education level was directly linked to the choice they make when choosing schools for their children.

Lastly, regarding the choice of learning materials, results reflected that 12(6.4%) of the respondents argued that parents who have received a good education have easy access to academic materials for their children.

In conclusion, the findings from the respondents clearly demonstrated that parents' level of education significantly influences students' academic performance. Parents who have reached tertiary level of education contribute more to their children's success through enhanced motivation, informed decision-making regarding educational choices, effective academic guidance, easier access to valuable resources, and active engagement in the school activities. This multifaceted support underscores the critical role that parental education plays in shaping positive educational outcomes for students.

4.3 The Influence of Family Size on Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools.

In the second objective of the study, the participants were assessed on issues regarding the impact of small family size and big family size on students' academic performance, and analysis of results shows that the size of the family can indeed affect the academic performance of students

in school. Specifically, the respondents were asked to indicate whether family size affects students' academic performance, and the assessment of respondents' opinions on family size and academic performance revealed specific factors which were as presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Family Size and Students' Academic Performance

Item	Responses	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Family size affects students' academic performance (n =186)			
	Agreed	96	51.6
	Disagreed	76	40.9
	No Answer	14	7.5
Allocation of Resources (n =186)			
	Resource Allocation through Proper Budgeting	19	10.2
	Resource Allocation through Savings	66	35.5
	Resource Allocation for Buying Scholastic Materials	101	54.3
Giving Emotional Support (n=42), (Teachers' views)			
	Agreed	31	73.8
	Disagreed	11	26.2
Decision Making (n =186)			
	Quick Decision Making	46	24.7
	Viable Decision Making	11	6.0
	Easy Home Management	115	61.8
	Time Allocation for Children	14	7.5

Source: Primary Data, 2024

The data presented indicated the distribution of responses to the fact that family size determines or influences students' academic performance among the respondents, with a total of 186 responses. Of these, 96 respondents (51.6%) agreed with the statement, while 76 respondents, representing 40.9%, disagreed. Additionally, 14 respondents, accounting for 7.5%, did not provide an answer; this means that they were not sure whether it was the case that family size affects the academic performance of students. Hence, this breakdown illustrated the varied

opinions held by the respondents regarding the statement in question. But generally, it can be concluded that family size determines or influences students' academic performance in secondary school.

Findings from respondents' essays revealed three major elements: proper budgeting, savings and buying scholastic materials, which have been summarized under the allocation of resources in Table 4.

As can been seen in Table 4, 19(10.2%) respondents argued that a small family size always has a proper budgeting compared to a large family where budgeting tends to overlap; for the case of savings, 66(35.5%) respondents observed that a small family size saves a lot of money, which can be used for academics and personal development of school going children. And out of the total number of respondents, 101(54.3%) mentioned that children from a small family size was most likely to have access to all the scholastic materials compared to those from large family size where children face competition from other siblings.

In the teachers' questionnaire, teachers were asked to rate the assumption that children from a small family size were more likely to receive emotional support which also enhanced their concentration in class, thus contributing to their performance.

As observed in Table 4, 31(73.8%) teachers agreed that children from families with small size received more emotional care than those from a large family, and this has a positive correlation with their academic performance; however, 11(26.2%) teachers did not agree with the assumption that children from a small size family received better emotional care which would also impact on their academic performance in school.

Furthermore, analysis of results from the field revealed decision making, time allocation and easy home management as key factors associated with family size and academic performance

of students. The respondents argued that children who come from large families face the crisis of poor decisions compared to those from the small families, which in turn interfered with home management, hence affecting a child's level of concentration in class.

Notably, Table 4 showed that 46(24.7%) responses had to do with making quick decision in small size family, which favors a child's learning; making viable academic decisions in a small size family was mentioned by 11(6.0%); 115(61.8%) respondents mentioned that management of academic engagement of school going children in a small family was very easy compared to the situation in a very large family where there would be so many conflicts and disagreements to handle, making parents shift their focus from children academic engagement when they are at home. Lastly, 14(7.5%) of the responses showed how parents allocate their time for the child's learning at home.

When the respondents were engaged in a discussion during an interview, they submitted that there was likely to be effective parent-child communication that can enhance their teaching and learning at home and school. In contrast, the respondents observed that children from large families, say like in polygamous families, do not experience effective communication based on very many things e.g., bad relationships with guidance, limited time of interaction with the children, and lack of basic materials. The respondents also observed that it was impossible to communicate effectively with all the children in a very large family. Respondents noted that effective parent- child communication played a crucial role in enhancing teaching and learning, both at home and in school settings.

Overall, smaller family sizes generally correlate with better academic performance among secondary school students due to enhanced allocation of resources, emotional support, effective parent-child communication, and more targeted decision-making support.

4.4 The Impact of Parents' Income Level on Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools.

In the third objective of the study, respondents were asked whether they agreed with the assumption that children who come from families whose parents' income level was stable perform well as compared to those who come from low-income families. Approximately 90% of the respondents agreed with this state of affairs while 10% of the respondents did not consider that family economic status enhances the academic performance of students at school. This particular response may mean that these respondents knew that even students who were from poor families can perform well; however, from the consensus, the study noted that the economic status, as determined by the parents' level of income affects performance in one way or the other. The assessment of respondents' opinions on parents' income level and academic performance revealed specific factors which were as presented below.

Table 5: Showing How Parents' Income Level has Impact on Students' Academic Performance

Item	Responses	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Timely Payment of School Fees (n =186)			
	Agreed	169	90.9
	Disagreed	17	9.1
Support to School and Co-curricular Activities (n =186)			
	Supporting School Activities	102	54.8
	Supporting Co- curricular Activities	84	45.2
Access to Basic Needs (n =186)			
	Basic School Requirements	138	74.2
	Medical Attention	22	11.8
	Pocket Money	26	14.0

Source: Primary Data, 2024

The respondents were asked to rate the proposition that children from economically stable

families always have a timely payment of school fees which enhanced their performance.

The findings presented in Table 5 revealed a significant consensus among the respondents regarding parents' income level on children's educational outcomes, with an overwhelming number of 169(90.9%) asserting that children from economically stable families benefit from having their fees paid in advance, thereby enhancing their academic performance in school; and17(9.1%) disagreed that it was not the timely payment of fees that do contribute to students' academic performance in a school.

Table 5 further summarized respondents' views into two perspectives: children from economically stable families being facilitated in co-curricular activities and also their parents supporting other school activities. Facilitation in co-curricular activities, represented by 84(45.2%) of the respondents. Another response related these parents in supporting other school activities was mentioned by 102(54.8%) of the respondents. On the other hand, children who come from economically struggling families see this as a nightmare.

In regard to access to basic requirements, the responses were summarized into three elements, i.e., adequate pocket money, medical attention and access to basic scholastic material.

The study's findings highlighted the significant impact of financial stability on students' educational experiences, particularly regarding health and classroom engagement. A notable 22 (11.8%) of respondents indicated that students from financially secured families have better access to medical facilities, which enhances their overall well-being and engagement in academic activities.

Furthermore, the finding that 138(74.2%) of respondents emphasized the importance of access to basic school necessities underscores the critical role of resources in educational achievement.

The mention of pocket money provided by economically stable parents, noted by 26(14%) of

respondents, introduced another dimension to the discussion of financial support and educational engagement.

The findings from the interviews conducted with respondents revealed a significant insight into the educational landscape: children from parents with stable income level tend to have access to better-quality schools, which, despite being expensive, provide a more conducive environment for learning and development. Respondents consistently highlighted that these institutions often offer superior resources, experienced teachers, and enhanced extracurricular opportunities that were simply not available in schools serving economically disadvantaged families. Respondents noted that the stark contrast in educational resources between affluent and economically struggling neighborhoods contributes to a cycle of disadvantage, as children from lower-income families are frequently relegated to underfunded schools with fewer opportunities for academic and personal growth.

The interviews also revealed that parents from stable families often prioritized educational investments, viewing the costs associated with high-quality schooling as necessity for their children's future success. Respondents described a pervasive sense of frustration among low-income families, who recognized the educational benefits that come with wealth but felt powerless to provide similar opportunities for their children. Ultimately, these interview findings underscored the critical role of economic stability in accessing quality education and highlight the need for policies aimed at bridging the educational divide, ensuring that all children, regardless of their socioeconomic background, have equitable access to high-quality schooling.

The study further found that students from financially stable families have significantly easier access to essential teaching and learning aids, both at home and in school, which greatly

enhanced their educational experience. Respondents noted that these parents often invested in expensive textbooks that were not available in school libraries, thus ensuring their children have the most current resources. One respondent remarked, “My parents always buy the latest textbooks because they know how important it is for my studies; I never have to worry about what I can’t find at school.” Additionally, many financially stable families provided their children with smartphones equipped with access to various educational tutorials and online resources, further enabling remedial learning opportunities. Another respondent shared, “Having a smartphone has changed everything for me; I can watch tutorials whenever I need help, something my friends can’t do.”

The qualitative data gathered from interviews with school administrators revealed critical insights into how family economic stability influenced students' self-esteem and self-confidence, subsequently impacting their educational outcomes. One administrator noted, “Students from low-income backgrounds often struggle with self-esteem; they come to school feeling less capable than their peers. This affected their participation in class and willingness to engage in discussions.” Another administrator remarked, “It is evident that those from financially stable families exuded confidence; they approached learning opportunities without the fear of failure, which led to better performance.” A third administrator stated, “When students lacked the basic support that comes from a stable home environment, their self-worth can take a hit, and this would be reflected in their academic results.”

The interviews further revealed a profound connection between social capital and the ease of socialization in school settings, particularly emphasizing the struggles faced by students from financially unstable families in interacting with their more affluent peers. These students often found themselves on the periphery of social circles dominated by those from wealthier backgrounds, which can significantly limit their opportunities for meaningful academic

collaboration and peer support. The resulting social isolation not only hindered their engagement in school activities but also restricted access to valuable networks that could have enhanced their educational experiences and aspirations.

Chapter Five

Discussions, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with discussions, conclusions and recommendations done on the basis of the research objectives.

5.1 Discussion

5.1.1 The Influence of Parents' Educational Level on Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools

The result indicated that parents' educational level influences students' academic success. This reflected a critical dimension of educational achievement rooted in the interplay between parental education, expectations, and social capital. Educated parents often possess a deeper understanding of the educational landscape, which translates into higher expectations for their children regarding academic attainment and career aspirations. This expectation can manifest in various ways, such as an emphasis on the importance of pursuing higher education and setting ambitious academic goals. Research consistently supported the notion that parents' educational levels correlate with students' academic performance; for instance, studies have shown that children of college-educated parents were more likely to enroll in higher education themselves (Kapur, 2018). Furthermore, educated parents often have extensive social networks developed throughout their educational journeys, which can provide their children with valuable academic resources and opportunities for collaboration. This social capital facilitates a learning environment where students can engage with peers who share similar academic aspirations, participate in study groups, and access tutoring or mentorship that may otherwise be unavailable.

In contrast, the respondents who disagreed with the influence of parental education may suggest that other factors, such as personal motivation or intrinsic capabilities, can also play significant roles, but this perspective appears less prevalent in the overall findings. By emphasizing the importance of educated parents in shaping academic success, the study highlighted a critical pathway through which social and educational disparities were perpetuated, reinforcing the need for policies that address these inequalities. Thus, the significant consensus among parents, teachers and students supported Hafeez et al.'s (2020) assertion that the educational attainment of parents serves as a crucial determinant of their children's academic achievements, echoing findings from various studies that illustrated how parental educational backgrounds create environments conducive to academic success.

Furthermore, the assessment of the respondents' opinions on parents' educational level and students' academic performance revealed the following specific factors as highlighted below.

Teachers' beliefs that parents' educational level can motivate students' academic achievement highlighted a crucial dynamic in the relationship between family background and educational aspirations. Educated parents often served as powerful role models, not only through their academic accomplishments but also by exemplifying the tangible benefits that education can yield, such as stable employment and career advancement. When students observe their parents engaged in fulfilling and well-paying jobs that stem from their educational attainment, they are likely to associate these successes with the value of education itself. This recognition can spark an intrinsic desire to achieve similar levels of success, driving students to pursue higher education as means to emulate their parents' paths.

Furthermore, educated parents were found to be typically more adept at fostering a supportive learning environment, setting high expectations, and actively discussing the importance of education and career goals. They may engage in conversations about their own educational

journeys, the challenges they overcame, and the skills they developed, effectively translating their experiences into motivation for their children. This motivation was not merely about pushing for good grades; it encompasses instilling a sense of ambition and the belief that education was a gateway to achieving a desired lifestyle and career.

Conversely, some teachers who disagreed with this notion may reflect the understanding that motivation was complex and can be influenced by other factors, including peer relationships and personal interests. However, the predominant agreement among teachers underscored the essential role of parental education in shaping students' academic motivations. This finding suggests the initiatives that can be advance by educated parents to improve on the academic performance of their children in school, which was sometimes done to maintain the academic legacy of their family; therefore, parents who have achieved higher education levels may not bear the reality of seeing their children not perform well or go far with their education (Liu & Yang, 2022). Such insights were critical for the study, as they highlight the different ways parental education influences students' academic performances in schools, advocating for policies that recognize and leverage this dynamic in educational settings.

The finding that motivation plays a crucial role in enhancing good academic performance of students in schools was in line with Moral-Garcia et al. (2020), who highlighted that motivation serves as a driving force that encourages students to engage in their studies, persist through challenges, and strive for academic excellence. The authors underscored that motivated students are more likely to adopt effective learning strategies, participate actively in class, and demonstrate greater resilience when faced with difficulties. Moreover, the paper discusses how motivation was intertwined with healthy habits, suggesting that students who were motivated to succeed academically were also more likely to engage in behaviors that support their physical and mental health. This holistic approach indicates that motivation was not just about

academic tasks; it encompasses a broader framework that contributes to students' overall development (Mugyenyi, Asiimwe & Apiku, 2023).

From Table 3, the consensuses highlighted the critical role of parental involvement in education, as educated parents not only possess a vocabulary and understanding that aligns with academic discourse but also share a common language with their children that facilitates effective communication. This shared understanding enables parents to provide meaningful support, whether through helping with homework or clarifying complex concepts that may not have been adequately addressed by teachers. This finding agreed with Darko-Asumadu and Sika- Bright (2021), who found out that students who had parents with formal education did better on end of term examinations than students whose parents did not have formal education.

In contrast, those who disagreed with this correlation presented a significant perspective worth exploring. Their views suggested that some parents, regardless of their educational backgrounds, may still engage actively with their children's education through alternative means, such as emotional support, motivation, or utilizing external resources, which may not necessarily rely on academic knowledge. This divergence opens an important dialogue regarding the nature of parental involvement, indicating that engagement can take various forms beyond direct academic assistance. Nevertheless, the prevailing belief among the majority underscored that educated parents not only guide their children through the intricacies of their studies but also can adapt their teaching strategies to their children’s linguistic and conceptual needs. For instance, in situations where educational institutions struggle to convey complex subjects often due to language barriers or inadequate instructional methods educated parents can bridge this gap. They can explain concepts in a language and context familiar to their children, thereby enriching their understanding and addressing gaps left by classroom instruction.

Interestingly this revelation relates to Haider et al.'s (2024) finding that parents who had achieved a higher level of education possess a particular interest in the education of their children by offering them guidance and academic support, which in turn can positively influence their performance in school.

According to the data presented, the respondents indicated that educated parents were willing to engage in school meetings pertaining the welfare and the academics of their children. This was probably because educated parents were aware and interested in helping and supporting their children through the different educational challenges and also providing necessary assistance to the school, besides just meeting their obligations as parents. Some of the responses showed that the educated parents were engaged in active communication with the teachers that teach their children; this probably because educated parents were more willing to reinforce better performance among the students through getting to know their areas of strength and weaknesses in class and therefore joining efforts with their teachers to see that the children achieve their academic dreams accordingly. This could be through creating a favorable reading environment at home and providing mentorship to the children at the parent- child relationship level which could impact greatly their academic journey.

Furthermore, the respondents presented that educated parents, based on discipline issues raised by the school about their children, actively participated in carrying out disciplinary action on the children. The need to participate in disciplining their children at school underscored the fact that educated parents were aware that bringing up and holistically developing a child was a shared responsibility between them and the school: it was a combined effort from both the school or the teachers and the parents as well. Therefore, they understood that as parents, they should be able to monitor and account for their children's behavior and act wherever they go, hence contributing to better academic performance amongst their children at school.

This finding agreed with Lv et al. (2016) who observed that to improve the connection between academic success and well-being in China, regular communication between parents and teachers was essential for enhancing children's learning while addressing the academic expectations of both parties. Furthermore, when parents engage in their children's education at school, they gained valuable insights into the academic environment, which helped them better adapt their parenting approach. On the other hand, one may argue that uneducated parents may not be able to fully engage themselves in their children's affairs in school, except for paying fees, which was also subject to scrutiny, considering that they think it was a normal thing even if their children do not achieve academically. However, it was noteworthy considering the fact that there could be uneducated parents who could still do all these kinds of engagement in schools as educated parents do.

The finding that parents' engagement in school has a positive effect on the academic performance of their children relates to Axford et al.'s (2019) study which revealed the critical importance of schools actively supporting parents' engagement in their children's learning as means to enhance educational outcomes. They also emphasized that effective parental engagement was linked to improved academic performance, better social skills, and increased motivation among students. Schools can foster this engagement by creating welcoming environments, providing clear communication about student progress, and offering resources that empower parents to participate in their children's education. Furthermore, their research highlighted the need for tailored strategies that consider diverse family backgrounds and challenges, ensuring that all parents have the opportunity to engage meaningfully. By recognizing the essential role of parental involvement and implementing supportive practices, schools can strengthen the home-school partnership, ultimately benefiting student learning and development.

Further, three responses were revealed in regards to educated parents being able to make better academic choices for their children; these were in terms of choice of subjects, choice of schools and choice of appropriate learning materials.

The finding that educated parents were more inclined to make informed decisions regarding their children's subjects in 'O' Level, underscored the significant influence of parental education on academic pathways. This trend suggested that educated parents possess a greater awareness of the subjects that align with current job market demands, particularly in fields where science subjects have been increasingly emphasized (case of Uganda) due to their perceived viability in terms of employability. Their familiarity with the potential career opportunities associated with various subjects likely drives them to encourage their children to pursue science-related disciplines, which they viewed as more promising for future job prospects. This knowledge can stem from their own educational experiences and understanding of how certain subjects can lead to higher income and stability in the workforce. Consequently, this parental influence may result in a shift towards science subjects among students, reflecting a strategic decision that parents make based on their awareness of the evolving job landscape.

This dynamic not only impacts students' educational choices but also highlights the role of parental guidance in navigating academic options that can lead to successful careers, reinforcing the notion that informed parental involvement was critical in shaping students' futures. The study highlighted those parents were not only concerned about the educational outcomes but also about creating a safe and supportive learning environment, indicating that these dual considerations were critical in shaping their choices and expectations for their children's education (Debs, 2016).

Additionally, those believed that parents' education level was directly linked to their choices in selecting schools for their children highlighted the critical role that educated parents play in

navigating the educational landscape. This analysis suggested that educated parents possess a heightened awareness of school performance metrics, allowing them to discern between higher-performing and lower-performing secondary schools. Interview responses further supported this assertion, revealing that educated parents tend to prioritize schools with proven academic success, contrasting sharply with the decisions made by less educated parents, who may not fully appreciate the importance of school quality. This discrepancy often results in educated parents opting to enroll their children in schools in Kampala, known for their strong academic track record in UNEB examinations. In contrast, less educated parents may inadvertently choose underperforming schools due to lack of understanding of how educational quality impacts academic outcomes.

The inclination of educated parents to seek out better-performing schools reflected their investment in their children's future and their recognition of the pivotal role that quality education played in academic success and overall well- being. Therefore, this revelation correlates with Debs (2016), who argued that parents navigate educational choices for their children within the context of a diverse school landscape. Debs (2016) confirmed and emphasized that parents were motivated by various factors, including their values, beliefs about education, and perceptions of school quality. Hence this finding underscored the fact that many parents seek schools that align with their educational philosophies and aspirations for their children, they often encountered conflicts and challenges due to systemic inequities and differing educational priorities (Hoque et al. (2017).

Lastly, regarding the choice of learning materials, parents with a strong educational background have easier access to academic materials for their children. Educated parents were generally more knowledgeable about the most effective learning resources available, which include selecting appropriate textbooks and other essential learning materials. Their familiarity

with educational content enabled them to provide their children with high-quality resources that aligned with their academic needs. Furthermore, educated parents were more likely to invest in access to modern learning tools, such as educational gadgets, academic television series, and online resources that enhance learning experiences. This comprehensive approach to utilizing relevant learning materials allows them to create an enriching educational environment at home, which can significantly boost their children's understanding of the subjects they study. In contrast, respondents during the interview submitted that parents with lower educational attainment may struggle to identify and access these essential materials, potentially limiting their children's academic growth.

The ability of educated parents to maximize the use of all available learning resources reflects a proactive engagement in their children's education, demonstrating their commitment to fostering academic success. This revelation agreed with Hoque et al. (2017), who submitted that educated parents are more like to provide access to teaching and learning materials for their children which improves their academic performance, and this also reinforces the need for initiatives aimed at improving parental involvement in the educational process. Ultimately, the capacity of educated parents to effectively select and utilize learning materials served as a crucial factor in shaping their children's educational experiences and outcomes.

5.1.2 The Influence of Family Size on Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools.

The data presented, indicated the distribution of responses to the fact that family size determines or influences students' academic performance. The breakdown illustrated the varied opinions held by the respondents regarding the statement in question. But generally, it can be concluded that family size determines or influences students' academic performance in secondary schools.

Furthermore, the assessment of respondents' opinions on family size and academic performance revealed specific factors which were as presented in the subsequent paragraphs below.

Findings from respondents' essays revealed three major elements (proper budgeting, savings and buying scholastic materials), which have been summarized under the allocation of resources.

The findings from this study shed light on the intricate dynamics between family size and financial management, particularly in budgeting, savings, and access to educational resources. The observation that perceived small families as better at budgeting compared to their larger counterparts revealed a critical aspect of household financial behavior. In larger families, the complexity of managing multiple financial demands can lead to overlapping expenses, making it more challenging to maintain a clear and effective budgeting strategy. This aligned with the work of Maynard (2019), who noted that larger family units often struggle with resource allocation due to competing needs among siblings. The dilution of financial resources in these families can result in stress and inefficiencies in budgeting practices, as parents may find it difficult to address the unique needs of each child while ensuring that basic household expenses were met. Consequently, these findings implied that families with fewer children can implement more effective budgeting strategies, which ultimately leads to a more stable financial environment and greater household resilience, enhancing the academic successes of their children in schools.

Furthermore, the beliefs that small families were better savers highlighted an important dimension of financial well-being that extends beyond basic budgeting. The capacity to save effectively can provide families with a buffer against economic uncertainties and enable them to invest in their children's education and personal development. This was consistent with Chen's

(2021) research, which indicated that smaller families tend to prioritize savings, allowing them to allocate funds towards educational opportunities and extracurricular activities that can enhance their children's academic experiences. Such investments were crucial in fostering an environment that promotes learning and skill development. The ability to save money effectively not only supports immediate family needs but also builds long-term financial security, enabling parents to make strategic decisions that benefit their children's futures. This highlights a significant socio-economic advantage that smaller families may enjoy, suggesting that they were in a better position to support their children's educational journeys, thereby promoting upward mobility.

Finally, the insight that children from small families have greater access to scholastic materials underscored the socio-economic implications of family size on educational outcomes. The reduced competition for resources within small families often translates into enhanced access to necessary educational tools and materials, which can significantly affect a child's learning experience. Research by Foster (2020) supported this view, demonstrating that children in resource-abundant environments, where families can afford to provide a variety of educational supports, typically achieved higher academic performance. This relationship emphasizes the critical role that resource availability plays in shaping educational success. Moreover, the implications extended beyond individual families; if smaller families contribute to improved educational outcomes, this could have broader societal benefits, such as increased educational attainment and a more skilled workforce. These findings called for a re- evaluation of family dynamics in relation to financial behaviors and educational access, suggesting that policymakers and educators need to consider targeted support for larger families to help mitigate resource constraints. By understanding these dynamics, strategies can be developed to foster equitable educational opportunities for all children, regardless of family size.

In the teachers' questionnaire, teachers were asked to rate the assumption that children from a small family size were more likely to receive emotional support which also enhanced their concentration in class, thus contributing to their performance.

Teachers believed that children from smaller families receive more emotional care than those from larger families. This perspective underscored the notion that emotional support plays a crucial role in a child's educational success, as a nurturing environment fosters resilience and motivation, essential traits for effective learning (Domitrovich et al., 2017). In smaller families, where parental attention and resources can be more concentrated, children may experience heightened emotional security, which in turn facilitates better academic outcomes. This aligned with research by Raver (2002), which highlighted that a child who received adequate emotional support were better equipped to handle academic challenges, thereby improving their overall academic performance in school.

Conversely, some teachers who disagreed with this assumption pointed to the complexity of family dynamics, suggesting that emotional care was not solely determined by family size but also influenced by other factors such as parenting style, socio-economic status, and cultural context. This revelation agreed with McLoyd (2021), who discussed that children from larger families can also receive substantial emotional care when parents were actively engaged and supportive, irrespective of the number of siblings. This complexity implied that while smaller family sizes may offer advantages in emotional care, it was essential to consider a holistic view of family influences, where the quality of parental interactions and the socio-economic environment also play critical roles. This finding pointed to the fact that much as the child's academic performance can be affected by other things, emotional factors were very instrumental in a child's learning in schools.

Analysis of results from the interview also supported this; one of the participants argued that

children who go through family violence were emotionally tortured. This was pointed out in the following quotations by one of the teachers: “for me as a teacher, I sometimes go down to earth to ask students whose performance are very poor, and most of them tell me that they come from a polygamous family and their stepmothers sometimes tell them hurting statements and sometimes force them to do some home chores and it can be late.” This points out the issues of emotional aspects that children from polygamous families sometimes perform poorly academically due to constant violence in the family. This revelation was also in line with Egunsola and Isani (2014) who found out that conflicts tend to be resolved more smoothly in monogamous families compared to polygamous ones, and students from polygamous families were more prone to psychological issues than those from monogamous families.

When the respondents were engaged in a discussion during an interview, they submitted that there was likely to be effective parent-child communication in small families that can enhanced their teaching and learning at home and school. In contrast, the respondents observed that children from large families do not experience effective communication based on very many things e.g., bad relationships with guidance, limited time of interaction with the children, and lack of basic materials.

The findings from the study shed light on the significant impact of family size on communication dynamics and, consequently, on the educational experiences of children. Respondents noted that effective parent-child communication plays a crucial role in enhancing teaching and learning, both at home and in school settings. This insight aligned with contemporary research emphasizing the importance of communication in fostering educational success. For instance, Liu et al. (2019) highlighted that open lines of communication within families were strongly correlated with children's academic performance and emotional well-being. In contrast, respondents pointed out that children from large families often faced barriers to effective

communication due to factors such as strained relationships with caregivers and a lack of essential resources.

This resonates with findings from recent literature, such as the work of Alhassan and Tambo (2020), which suggested that larger family sizes can dilute individual attention and hindered meaningful interactions between parents and children. The respondents further observed that in large families, especially those associated with extended families, it became increasingly difficult to engage all children effectively, which can lead to feelings of neglect or isolation among some family members. This phenomenon was echoed in research by Brown and O'Reilly (2021), which indicated that children in larger family units often struggle to form secure attachments with their parents, adversely affecting their social and emotional development. Thus, these insights highlighted the necessity of recognizing the complexities inherent in family dynamics and their implications for educational outcomes, suggesting that interventions aimed at enhancing communication in polygamous contexts could be vital for improving the overall well-being and academic success of children.

Furthermore, analysis of results from the field revealed decision making, time allocation and easy home management as key factors associated with family size and academic performance of students. The respondents argued that children who come from large families faced the crisis of poor decisions compared to those from the small families, which in turn interfered with home management, hence affecting a child’s level of concentration in class.

The findings further provide valuable insights into the relationship between family size and children's educational engagement and performance, particularly emphasizing how smaller family units facilitate quicker decision-making, which positively impacts learning. The respondents indicated that smaller families promote rapid decision-making processes, enabling parents to more effectively support their children's educational needs. This observation aligned

with existing literature suggesting that children from smaller families benefit from increased parental attention, which correlates with better academic outcomes. For example, Huang et al. (2020) argued that smaller family sizes often allow parents to tailor their support to each child's unique learning requirements.

In contrast, larger families frequently face challenges in managing multiple educational needs, leading to diluted attention and resources. Research by Glick and Lin (2019) supported this assertion, indicating that the complexities of larger family dynamics can hinder effective educational support due to the need for parents to balance the demands of multiple children. Thus, the current findings reinforced the notion that family size significantly influences the ability of parents to engage with their children's academic needs, ultimately impacting educational success.

Moreover, the data revealing the ease of making viable academic decisions in smaller families underscored the critical role of parental involvement in shaping educational outcomes. This finding resonated with the work of Leung et al. (2021), which suggested that families with fewer children can allocate resources more efficiently, enhancing their children's academic performance. The ability to prioritize educational decisions, such as selecting appropriate learning materials or dedicating specific times for study, was often hampered in larger families due to competing demands. This perspective pointed out a fundamental difference in the educational experiences of children based on family size; while smaller families can create an environment conducive to focused learning, larger families may struggle to provide the same level of individualized support.

The finding that it was easier to manage academic engagement in smaller families further supported the argument that family size has a substantial impact on children's educational experiences. Larger families often face various distractions, including sibling conflicts and the

need to address multiple basic needs, which can detract from a child's ability to focus on academic tasks. This observation was consistent with research conducted by Glick and Lin (2019), which indicated that increased competition for parental attention and resources in larger families can negatively affect children's academic engagement and overall well-being.

The current findings suggested that the streamlined dynamics of smaller families allow for a more organized approach to managing educational responsibilities.

Parents in smaller families may be better equipped to create structured learning environments that foster academic success, ultimately leading to improved outcomes for their children. This alignment with existing literature highlighted the critical nature of family dynamics in shaping educational contexts and suggested that further investigation into the specific mechanisms by which family size influences educational engagement was warranted.

Lastly, the revelations related to the allocation of time for the child's learning at home reinforced the idea that smaller family sizes facilitate better time management and prioritization of educational activities. Effective time management was essential for promoting academic success, and as highlighted by O'Connor et al. (2022), parents who can allocate time effectively tend to see better educational outcomes in their children. In smaller families, parents can dedicate more focused time to academic engagement without the competing demands that larger families face. This observation underscored the need for educational interventions that consider family size when designing programs aimed at improving academic outcomes. While the findings of this study resonate with existing literature on the benefits of smaller family units, they also called for a nuanced understanding of the challenges faced by larger families. Strategies that can enhanced academic engagement in these households were essential, as the disparities in educational experiences based on family size can have lasting implications for children's academic trajectories and overall development.

5.1.3 The Impact of Parents' Income Level on Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools.

Respondents were asked whether they agreed with the assumption that students who come from stable economic backgrounds performed well as compared to those students who come from homes with low level of income; the findings indicated that about 90% of the respondents contacted agreed with this state of affairs while 10% of the respondents did not consider that parents' level of income enhanced the academic performance of students in school. This particular response may mean that even students who were from poor families can perform well; however, from the consensus, the study noted that parents' level of income affects performance of students in one way or the other in schools. This is explained in the following paragraphs.

The findings revealed a significant consensus among the respondents regarding the impact of economic stability on children's educational outcomes, with an overwhelming number asserting that children from economically stable families benefitted from having their fees paid in advance, thereby enhancing their academic performance in school; and some disagreed that it was not the family income level that do contribute to students' academic performance in a school.

This perspective aligned with contemporary literature emphasizing the crucial role of financial security in educational success, as recent studies indicated that economic stability correlates strongly with access to resources such as tutoring, extracurricular activities, and a conducive learning environment (Mistry et al., 2020; Evans & Kim, 2020). Mistry et al. (2020) found that children from higher-income families often perform better academically due to increased access to educational resources and support systems, reinforcing the notion that financial preparedness can positively impact academic achievement.

However, the minority viewpoint of the respondents who disagreed, raised important considerations regarding the complexity of educational performance. This dissenting opinion may reflect a belief that factors such as intrinsic motivation, parental involvement beyond financial support, and community resources also played crucial roles in academic success (Sullivan & Brown, 2021). Furthermore, while the overwhelming majority pointed towards a clear association between economic stability and educational performance, this finding contrasted with research suggesting a more nuanced relationship where the quality of parental engagement can sometimes outweigh financial factors (Hsin & Farkas, 2020).

Furthermore, respondents viewed that child from economically stable families received facilitation in co-curricular activities and also their parents support other school activities. On the other hand, children who come from economically struggling families see this as a nightmare. Another response related the parents supports in other school activities was also mentioned. Furthermore, analysis of results from the interview also supported these two perspectives; First, the respondents argued that economically stable parents were more likely to support their children when it comes to extracurricular activities like games, sports, music and fieldwork or tours, which can be challenging for parents who struggled to even pay fee. Respondents, during the interview, argued that there were other school activities like holiday coaching or extension which was very easy for students from stable families to cope with compared to those from economically struggling families who often perceived such opportunities as a daunting challenge.

This finding supported Mistry et al.'s (2020), which found that parents with greater financial means were better positioned to provide their children with a variety of extracurricular opportunities, which can enhance both academic performance and social development. Conversely, children from lower-income families often missed out on these critical experiences

due to financial constraints, leading to a narrower range of opportunities that could foster holistic development (Duncan & Magnuson, 2019).

Moreover, the qualitative data from interviews reinforced the quantitative findings, revealing that the respondents believed economically stable parents were more inclined to invest time and resources in activities such as holiday coaching and other extension programs, further widening the gap in educational equity. This aligned with the work of Evans and Kim (2020), who argued that parental involvement in school activities was heavily mediated by socioeconomic status, suggesting that children from wealthier families benefited from a network of support that enhanced their educational trajectory.

In contrast, parents facing economic hardship may struggled to participate in or support their children's educational experiences, creating a vicious cycle that exacerbates disparities in educational outcomes (Sullivan & Brown, 2021). The interviews highlighted that economically struggling families viewed their situation as a "nightmare," emphasizing not only the immediate financial stress but also the long-term implications for their children's educational opportunities. This emotional aspect of financial strain has been explored by McLoyd (2019), who noted that the stress associated with poverty can affect parental involvement, leading to decreased engagement in children's schooling and extracurricular activities.

The study's findings further highlighted the significant impact of financial stability on students' educational experiences, particularly regarding health and classroom engagement. The respondents indicated that students from financially secured families have better access to medical facilities, which enhanced their overall well-being and engagement in academic activities. This observation aligned with recent research, such as that by Jansen et al. (2021), which demonstrated that improved health outcomes significantly correlate with increased school attendance and participation. Conversely, students facing health disparities often rooted in

socioeconomic status are more prone to absenteeism and decreased academic performance (Naylor et al., 2020). Ensuring access to adequate healthcare was thus essential for promoting not just health but also educational success, reinforcing the argument that health interventions should be integral to educational policy.

Furthermore, the findings of the importance of access to basic school necessities underscored the critical role of resources in educational achievement. This supported more recent studies, like that by Bertram et al. (2022), which highlighted the significance of educational resources in facilitating student success. Students lacking essential supplies often experienced heightened stress, detracting from their focus and motivation (McCoy et al., 2019). In contrast, equitable access to educational resources has been shown to significantly narrowed achievement gaps (Lee et al., 2020). The discrepancy in resource availability underscored the pressing need for policies that address these inequities, emphasizing that merely providing access to education was insufficient without ensuring that students have the necessary tools to succeed.

The mention of pocket money provided by economically stable parents, introduced another dimension to the discussion of financial support and educational engagement. Research by Miller et al. (2021) suggested that financial assistance allowed students to participate in extracurricular activities, which have been linked to higher motivation and academic performance. This aligned with findings from Li et al. (2020), who found that engagement in extracurriculars positively affects students' academic outcomes. However, it raises questions about disparities in opportunities available to students from different socioeconomic backgrounds. Overall, the study's findings resonate with a robust body of literature emphasizing the intersection of socioeconomic status and educational outcomes, reinforcing the need for targeted interventions to promote equity in education.

The findings from the interviews conducted with respondents revealed a significant insight into

the educational landscape: children from economically stable families tend to have access to better-quality schools, which, despite being expensive, provide a more conducive environment for learning and development. The respondents consistently highlighted that these institutions often offered superior resources, experienced teachers, and enhanced extracurricular opportunities that were simply not available in schools serving economically disadvantaged families. This perspective aligned with current literature that underscored the impact of socioeconomic status on school quality and educational outcomes. Research by Johnson and Lubienski (2020) indicated that wealthier families can afford to send their children to private or well-funded public schools, which often boast smaller class sizes, advanced curricula, and more comprehensive support services, thereby facilitating better academic performance.

Respondents further noted that the stark contrast in educational resources between affluent and economically struggling neighborhoods contributes to a cycle of disadvantage, as children from lower-income families were frequently relegated to underfunded schools with fewer opportunities for academic and personal growth (Orfield et al., 2021). This was further supported by the work of Reardon (2019), who emphasized that residential segregation often leads to disparities in school funding, resulting in a widening achievement gap between students from different socioeconomic backgrounds.

The interviews also revealed that parents from economically stable families often prioritized educational investments, viewing the costs associated with high-quality schooling as necessary for their children's future success. This aligned with the findings of Chmielewski and Reardon (2019), who found that families with greater financial means were more likely to invest in educational resources, leading to improved outcomes for their children. In contrast, economically struggling families faced not only financial barriers but also the psychological burden of navigating a system that seems designed to disadvantage them. Respondents

described a pervasive sense of frustration among economically disadvantaged families, who recognized the educational benefits that come with wealth but feel powerless to provide similar opportunities for their children. This sentiment echoed findings from the literature that emphasized the emotional toll of economic hardship on educational aspirations (McLoyd, 2019). Ultimately, these interview findings underscored the critical role of economic stability in accessing quality education and highlighted the need for policies aimed at bridging the educational divide, ensuring that all children, regardless of their socioeconomic background, have equitable access to high- quality schooling.

The study found that students from financially stable families have significantly easier access to essential teaching and learning aids, both at home and in school, which greatly enhanced their educational experience. Respondents noted that these parents often invested in expensive textbooks that may not be available in school libraries, thus ensuring their children have the most current resources. One respondent (a student) remarked, "My parents always buy the latest relevant textbooks because they know how important it is for my studies; I never have to worry about what I cannot find at school." Additionally, many financially stable families provide their children with smartphones equipped with access to various educational tutorials and online resources, further enabling remedial learning opportunities. Another respondent shared, "Having a smartphone has changed everything for me; I can watch tutorials whenever I need help, something my friends cannot do." This stark contrast in access to educational resources underscored the broader systemic inequalities highlighted in the literature, where economic resources played a crucial role in educational attainment and equity.

Research by Duflo et al. (2020) indicated that access to learning materials directly correlates with improved academic performance, suggesting that the ability to acquire quality educational aids can significantly impact a student's learning outcomes. Similarly, a study by McCoy et al.

(2021) emphasized that children from wealthier families were more likely to benefit from supplementary educational tools, including online learning platforms, which were less accessible to their less affluent peers. This finding resonated with the argument made by Reardon (2019) regarding the persistent achievement gaps tied to socioeconomic status, as access to learning aids and technology becomes a determinant of educational success. Consequently, this study highlighted the critical need for interventions to provide equitable access to learning resources for all students, regardless of their economic background, to ensure a more level playing field in educational opportunities.

The qualitative data gathered from interviews with school administrators revealed critical insights into how family economic stability influences students' self-esteem and self-confidence, subsequently impacting their educational outcomes. One administrator noted, "Students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds often struggle with self-esteem; they come to school feeling less capable than their peers. This affects their participation in class and willingness to engage in discussions." Another administrator remarked, "It is evident that those from financially stable families exude confidence; they approach learning opportunities without the fear of failure, which leads to better performance."

A third administrator stated, "When students lack the basic support that comes from a stable home environment, their self-worth can take a hit, and this would be reflected in their academic results."

These observations align with existing literature that underscored the role of socioeconomic status in shaping self-perception and academic engagement. Research by Bandura (1997) emphasized that self-efficacy, or belief in one's capabilities, was heavily influenced by social and economic contexts, leading to variations in academic performance. Additionally, a study by Chen and Wu (2020) found that students from low-income backgrounds frequently

experienced lower self-esteem, resulting in decreased motivation and engagement in educational settings. The connection between economic stability, self-esteem, and academic success highlighted the necessity for educational policies that provide support systems aimed at fostering resilience and self-confidence in students from underprivileged backgrounds.

The interviews revealed a profound connection between social capital and the ease of socialization in school settings, particularly emphasizing the struggles faced by students from financially unstable families in interacting with their more affluent peers. These students often found themselves on the periphery of social circles dominated by those from wealthier backgrounds, which can significantly limit their opportunities for meaningful academic collaboration and peer support. The resulting social isolation not only hindered their engagement in school activities but also restricted access to valuable networks that can enhanced their educational experience and aspirations.

This phenomenon mirrored findings in recent literature, where studies have consistently shown that socioeconomic disparities created barriers to social interaction among students. Research conducted by Murray and Nolen (2022) highlighted how students from lower-income families were often excluded from extracurricular activities that foster social bonding, thereby reducing their chances to form connections with diverse peer groups. Similarly, Feliciano and L'Heureux (2021) found that social capital plays a crucial role in academic success, with economically disadvantaged students facing significant obstacles in accessing supportive social networks that facilitated collaborative learning. The implications of these studies resonate with the interview findings, reinforcing the notion that socioeconomic status directly influenced the quality of peer relationships in educational settings. Thus, creating inclusive environments that promote social integration was essential for bridging these gaps, enhancing not only academic interactions but also fostering a sense of belonging among all students, regardless of their financial background.

5.2 Conclusions

The study provides a comprehensive examination of how family background influences students' academic performance in secondary schools, revealing that factor such as parents' education level, family size, and parents' income level play pivotal roles in shaping educational outcomes of the students.

The findings illustrated that parents with higher levels of education not only set elevated expectations for their children but also serve as crucial role models and sources of academic support. Their engagement in school activities such as offering academic guidance at home, attending school meetings, communicating effectively with teachers, making correct subject and school choices for their children, and participating actively in the disciplinary issues of their children in schools foster a collaborative environment that enhances children's motivation and learning experiences.

Furthermore, higher level of parental education positively correlates with better academic performance of their children in secondary schools due to increased parental support, resources, motivation, and engagement. These findings highlight the importance of educational programs and support for families with lower education levels to help bridge this academic gap. By empowering all parents, regardless of educational level, with tools to support their children's education, schools and communities can promote more equitable academic outcomes.

The research further highlighted the importance of family size, indicating that smaller family sizes often provide more individualized attention and resources such as emotional support, effective parent–child communication, quick decision making on academic issues, and accessibility of scholastic materials for their children, that significantly contribute to a child's academic success.

Students from smaller families typically enjoyed greater access to resources, more individualized parental support, and a supportive learning environment, whereas children from larger families encountered academic difficulties as a result of resource constraints, parental attention distribution, and increased household responsibilities. When taken as a whole, these elements support the tendency of children from smaller families performing better academically in schools. Students from larger families can benefit from equal educational opportunities if these gaps are addressed through focused support programs in the communities and schools.

The analysis of parents' income level showed that family income has a big impact on students' academic performance in secondary schools. Although access to resources, opportunities, and support networks that promote academic achievements are made possible by financial stability, low-income students frequently encounter obstacles that impair their academic performance in schools. To help level the playing field for students from low-income households, targeted assistance programs like scholarships, free tutoring, and mentorship activities are needed to close this income-based success gap.

A supportive family background can positively influence a student's academic performance in secondary school. The role of parents' education level, family size, and family income level, cannot be underrated in shaping students' attitudes, discipline and above all, academic outcomes of the students in schools.

5.3 Recommendations

From the conclusions, the following recommendations were made.

Community based workshops should be implemented to help parents, especially those with lower education levels understand how to support their child's learning. This can be focused on home study routines, positive communications, and school engagement.

Teachers and school administrators should engage parents of different education levels by simplifying communication with them regarding academic progress and offer practical tips on supporting students' learning at home. Parents may have limited formal education but can contribute significantly with guidance from teachers on how to support academics effectively.

A family-friendly policy like work schedules and parental leave should be encouraged so that parents can invest more time and attention in their children's academic growth. The policies can alleviate time constraints especially for parents with larger families.

A program should be established in schools that address the specific needs of students from larger families or lower income backgrounds, such as peer mentoring, homework assistance, and counselling services that help students manage educational challenges effectively.

In large families, parents should strive to create time and space for each child's academic needs. They should prioritize balanced attention and, where possible, assign household responsibilities that do not interfere with study time.

Teachers should further foster a classroom environment where students can learn from each other through peer mentoring or study groups. This will benefit students from larger families or those with limited home support by building a supportive academic network.

A policy should be designed to provide financial assistance, scholarships, and grants for low-income families to reduce educational disparities. Fundings to schools especially in rural areas where income level of parents is low should be increased in order to reduce on the resource gap between high income and low-income communities.

Families with limited resources should tap into community resources that can support students' learning such as public libraries, peer learning approach, and after-school programs, e.g., remedial lessons.

5.4 Contribution

Theoretically, this study has made great knowledge contribution by revealing that family background enhance students' academic performance in secondary schools.

Practically, the findings and recommendations in this study can go a long way in helping headteachers on how to create good environment for students' academic performance.

Societal contribution; From this study, I have also generated and disseminated knowledge to the society through exchanging views during data collection.

5.5 Future Research.

The Relationship Between Students' Intrinsic Capabilities and Academic Performance in Secondary Schools.

Influence of Learning Resources and Technology Use on Students' Academic Performance in Rural Secondary Schools.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Table for Determining Size for a finite Population

N	*S*	*N*	*S*	*N*	*S*
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	1000000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970

Appendix 2: Consent form for the participants

Dear participant,

I am a student of Gulu University, carrying out research on *Family Background and Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools in Lira City***.** I am kindly seeking your consent to assist in providing the necessary pieces of information on this study. Any provided response will be treated confidentially and used only for academic purposes. I appreciate your cooperation very much.

CONSENT AGREEMENT

I hereby give permission that the material contributed may be used for the purpose of Educational research, teaching and scientific exhibitions and publication and I agree that a copy of the material contributed may be kept permanently in the Department Educational Management of Gulu University, Uganda.

Date.....Signature.....

Specific information (strictly confidential, i.e., names will not appear in the thesis.)

1. Gender

Male ☐

Female ☐

Designation

Student ☐

Teacher ☐

Parent ☐

Age ……

Appendix 3: Students' Questionnaire

Introduction

My name is Abor Richard a student at Gulu University pursuing a degree of Master of Education in Education Management.

Your views are helpful to me in my research on the relationship between Family Background and Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools in Lira City.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data regarding Parents' Educational Level, Family Size and parents' Income Level, as well as how these factors affect students' academic performance as measured by beginning of term grades, end of term grades, and U.C.E. grades.

Your responses are confidential and will only be used for research purposes.

Please kindly fill in or tick the appropriate answer.

Part 1: Parents' Educational Level

1. Indicate the highest level of education completed by each of your parents (select one)

   (i) Father: No formal Education ☐ Primary level ☐ secondary level ☐ Tertiary level ☐

   (ii) Mother: No formal Education ☐ Primary level ☐ secondary level ☐ Tertiary level ☐

2. How can you rate your overall academic performance for the previous years?

   [Poor (0 – 39), Fair (40-59), Good (60-79) Very Good (80-100)]

   Poor ☐ Fair ☐ Good ☐ Very Good ☐

3. (a) Does the educational background of your parents affect how well you perform academically in school?

   Yes ☐ No ☐

(b) If yes, how does it affect your academic performance in secondary school?

……..……

……..…….

(c) If no, explain why it does not affect your academic performance in secondary School.

……

4. (a) Do your parents help you with your academic homework after school time?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(b) If yes, state how you are assisted.

……

……

(c) If no, give reasons why you are not assisted.

……

……

5. (a) Give any two challenges you personally have because of your parents' educational background.

……

……

(b) Suggest the potential solutions to the above-mentioned challenges.

……

……

Part 2: Family Income

1. What is your family average net income per month (in shillings)?

   500 – 10,000 ☐ 20,000 – 50,000 ☐ 60,000 – 100,000, ☐ above 100,000 ☐

2. How many people live in your household (including you)?

   ……

3. (a) Do you think your parents' level of income affect your academic performance in school?

   Yes ☐ No ☐

   (b) If yes, state how it affects your academic performance.

   ……

   (c) If no, give reasons why it does not affect your academic performance.

   ……

4. (a) Are all of the family's school-age children's fundamental needs such as food, clothes, shelter, and education being met by the household income?

   Yes ☐ No ☐

   (b) If yes, explain how.

   ……

   ……

   (c) If no, explain why not being met.

   ……

5. What resources or support would you find helpful to improve your academic performance in school?

   ……

   ……

Part 3: Family Size

1. Which category best describe your family's size including you?

   Small (1-2 children) ☐ Medium (3-4 children) ☐ Large (Above 4 children) ☐

2. Indicate the birth position in the family……

3. (a) Has this position affected your academic performance in school?

   Yes ☐ No ☐

   (b) if yes, state how it has affected your performance

   ……

   ……

   (c) If no, explain

   ……

   ……

4. Has your gender affected your academic performance in school?

   Yes ☐ No ☐

   (b) if yes, state how it has affected your performance

   ……

   ……

   (c) If no, explain

   ……

   ……

5. Please rank your family's level of support for your academic achievement.

   [Very low (pay school fees only), low (pay fees and meet other school requirements),

   High (pay fees, meet other school requirements and support in academic homework)]

   Very low ☐ Low ☐ High ☐

6. (a) Do you think your academic performance in school is affected in any way by the size of your family?

   Yes ☐ No ☐

   (b) If yes, please explain

   ……

   ……

   (c) If no, give reasons why it does not

   ……

   …….

7. (a) Are the materials you require to perform academically in school, such as books, the internet, or a comfortable place to study at home, available for you?

   Yes ☐ No ☐

   (b) If yes, explain

   ……

   ……

   (c) If no, state why they are not available

   …….....

   ……..

8. What difficulties do you have when trying to combine your household obligations and your studies that negatively affect your academic performance?

   ……

   ……

9. What are the best ways, in your opinion, to assist students from households that do not provide academic support so they can perform well academically in schools?

   ……

   ……

10. (a) In what order would you prioritize the following aspects of the family background: the family size, family income, and educational level of the parents?

    ……

    ……

    (b) Why would you take the order of priority above?

    ……

    ……

Appendix 4: Parents' Questionnaire

Introduction

My name is Abor Richard a student at Gulu University pursuing a degree of Master of Education in Education Management.

Your views are helpful to me in my research on the relationship Family Background and Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools in Lira City.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data regarding Parents' Educational Level, Family Size and parents' Income Level, as well as how these factors affect students' academic performance as measured by beginning of term grades, end of term grades, and U.C.E. grades.

Your responses are confidential and will only be used for research purposes. You will take about 15 minutes in this questionnaire.

Part 1: Parent's Education Level.

1. Indicate the highest level of education you have completed.

   No formal Education ☐ Primary level ☐ secondary level ☐ Tertiary level ☐

2. How important do you think your education is to your child's academic success?

……

……

……...

3. How often do you assist your child in his/her academic work after school time? [Never (No assistant given), sometimes (frequency of assistant is low), Always (Assistant given whenever there is need by the child)]

   Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Always ☐

4. (a) Are you involved in any other activities that can enhance your child's academic success in school?

   Yes ☐ No ☐

   (b) If yes, please state the activities

   ……

   ……

   ……

(c) If no, give two reasons that hinder your involvement

……

……

……

5. How would you rate your child's overall academic performance? [Poor (0 – 39), Fair (40-59), Good (60-79) Very Good (80-100)]

Poor ☐ Fair ☐ Good ☐ Very Good ☐

6. (a) What challenges do you face in supporting your child's education that can affect his/her good academic performance?

……

……

……

(b) What measures have you put in place to address the above challenges?

……

……

……

Part 2: Family Income

1. What is your family average net income per month (in shillings)?

500 – 10,000 ☐ 20,000 – 50,000 ☐ 60,000 – 100,000 ☐ Above 100,000 ☐

2. How many people live in your household (including you)?

……

……

……

3. (a) Do you think your family level of income affects your child's academic performance in school?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(b) If yes, explain how it affects the academic performance of the child.

……

……

……

(c) If no, give reasons why it does not affect your child's academic performance in school

……

……..

4. What resources or support would you think would be helpful to improve your child's academic performance in school?

……

……

……

Part 3: Family Size

1. Give the approximate number of family members you have (parent and children)

(2-4) ☐ (5- 6) ☐ (7 and above) ☐

2. Please assign the following ratings to your household's financial stability.

[Very low (cannot meet the basic needs of all family members), low (can meet the basic needs of some family members), and High (can meet the basic needs of all family members and other dependents)]

Very low ☐ Low ☐ High ☐

3. (a) Does your child's academic performance seem to be affected in any way by the size of your family?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(b) If yes, kindly elaborate

……

……

……

(c) If no, how does it not affect the academic performance of your child?

……

……..

……

4. (a) Is there enough time and energy in your schedule for you to assist your child with Schoolwork? (Where you are readily available for consultation for all the children at home)

Yes ☐ No ☐

(b) If yes, explain how you are doing it

……

……

……..……

(c) If no, explain why you are not doing it

……

……

……

5. In your own opinion, explain whether the child's gender affects his/her academic performance in school

……

……..

6. (a) Does the child's birth position in the family affects his/her academic performance in school?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(b) If yes, explain how it affects the academic performance of the child

……

……

……

(c) If no, how does it not affect the academic performance of your child?

……

……

……

Appendix 5: Teachers/school administrators

Introduction

My name is Abor Richard a student at Gulu University pursuing a degree of Master of Education in Education Management.

Your views are helpful to me in my research on the relationship between Family Background and Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools in Lira City.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data regarding Parents' Educational Level, Family Size and parents' Income Level, as well as how these factors affect students' academic performance as measured by beginning of term grades, end of term grades, and U.C.E. grades.

Your responses are confidential and will only be used for research purposes. You will take about 15 minutes in this questionnaire.

1. Indicate your degree of agreement with the following statement.

{Strongly Agree, (SA), Agree, (A), Neutral, (N), Disagree, (DA), and Strongly Disagree, (SD)}

	SA	A	N	DA	SD
(a). Student's academic success is influenced by the educational attainment of their parents.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(b). Parents with higher educational level can help their children make better academic decisions that will improve their academic success.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(c). Parental motivation and guidance have a positive effect on students' academic achievement.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

(d).Low-education background students perform poorly academically. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

(e). Regular communication between parents and teachers improves students' academic performance and learning. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

2. State your level of agreement to the following statement.

{Strongly Agree, (SA), Agree, (A), Neutral, (N), Disagree, (DA), and Strongly Disagree, (SD)}

	SA	A	N	DA	SD
(a). Students from small-family backgrounds perform exceptionally well academically in school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(b). Students from large families typically perform poorly academically in school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(c). The academic achievement of older students in a big family is negatively impacted by their constant involvement in household obligations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(d). When compared to students from monogamous families, those from polygamous families perform worse academically.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(e). The emotional stability that comes from having a small family helps students perform well academically in school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(f). Small-family parents have the time and energy to assist their children with their schoolwork.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

(g) Student's gender affects his/her academic performance in schools ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

3. State the level of agreement to the following statement.

{Strongly Agree, (SA), Agree, (A), Neutral, (N), Disagree, (DA), and Strongly Disagree, (SD)}

	SA	A	N	DA	SD
(a). The academic performance of students from low-income households is poor.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(b).High-income students perform well academically in school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(c). High parental income has a detrimental effect on students' academic performance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(d).Students who pay their school fees on time score better academically.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(e). The income level of parents, whether high or low, has little bearing on the academic performance of their children in school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. How, in your opinion, can schools support students from the following backgrounds achieve academic success?

(a). Parents without a formal education

……

……

(b). Big family size

……

……

c). Poor socioeconomic background

……

……

5. (a) What, in your opinion, are parents, teachers/school administrators, and students not doing to raise the performance of students in secondary schools?

(i) Parents

……..……

……..

(ii) Teachers/school administrators

……

……

(iii) Students

……

……

(b) What solutions are there for the gaps mentioned above?

……

……

Appendix 6: Interview Guide

Introduction

My name is Abor Richard a student at Gulu University pursuing a degree of Master of Education in Education Management.

Your views are helpful to me in my research on the relationship between Family Background and Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools in Lira City.

The purpose of this interview is to collect data regarding Parents' Educational Level, Family Size and parents' Income Level, as well as how these factors affect students' academic performance as measured by beginning of term grades, end of term grades, and U.C.E. grades.

Your responses are confidential and will only be used for research purposes.

1. How do you perceive the importance of education in your family?
2. How do you believe the education level of the parents affect the child's academic performance in schools?
3. Have you noticed any differences in the academic performance of a child whose parents are educated compared to their peers with less educated parents? Why the difference?
4. What strategies do you think are most effective for parents in helping the children to succeed academically in schools?
5. How can a parent support the academic interests and activities of the child in order for the child to excel in school?
6. Do you think the size of your family affects the ability of a child to focus on his/her studies? Why or why not?
7. How do family responsibilities (e.g., chores, caring for siblings) impact on child's study time?
8. Do you feel that the family's financial situation affects the access to educational resources (e.g., books, tutoring technology)? How?

9. Can you share any specific instances where a parents' involvement positively impacted a child's academic performance?
10. What challenges do you think parents face in supporting the education of their children that can impact on the children's academic performance in schools?

Appendix 7: Introductory Letter

GULU UNIVERSITY

P.O. BOX 166 GULU

TEL: +256471432922;

OFFICE OF THE DEAN, FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND HUMANITIES

August 5, 2024

TO : WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to introduce to you Mr. Abor Richard (Reg No. 21/U/3576/MED/PS) a student pursuing a programme of study leading to an award Master of Education in Educational Management of Gulu University, Master of Gulu University.

He is undertaking research on the Topic:

FAMILY BACKGROUND AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN LIRA CITY

Which is in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award.

Any assistance rendered to him in relation to this research work will be highly appreciated.

GULU UNIVERSITY
05 AUG 2024
FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND HUMANITIES

Yours faithfully,

Dr. Denis Thaddeus Ofoyuru

Dean, Faculty of Education and Humanities