

**EFFECT OF ECONOMIC POVERTY ON THE COMPLETION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL
SCHOOLING AMONG STUDENTS OF NAMBULU SECONDARY SCHOOL IN SIRONKO
DISTRICT**

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DECLARATION

I NABUDE CATHERINE, Registration Number S21/MUC/BPAM/017 hereby declare that this is my original work, is not plagiarised and has not been submitted any other institution for any award.

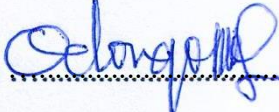
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APPROVAL

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DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to my dear family members.

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LIST ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CVI	Content Validity Index
D.V	Dependent Variable
EDM	Educational Data Mining
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEM	Global Education Monitoring
I.V	Independent Variable
M.V	Moderating Variable
PTA	Parents Teachers Association
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SES	Socio-Economic Status
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

ABSTRACT

The research investigated the Effect of Economic Poverty on the Completion of Secondary Schooling among Students of Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko District. Employing a descriptive research design, the study utilized mixed methods to gather comprehensive data on household income's influence on academic performance and students' economic status on educational aspirations. The findings underscored the significant influence of household income levels on academic performance and the nuanced relationship between economic status and educational aspirations. While supporting existing theories, the study revealed contrasting perspectives and uncertainties among participants, highlighting the need for tailored interventions to support students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Furthermore, the investigation shed light on the complex interplay of school-related factors and academic performance. While some aspects aligned with expectations, others revealed disparities and contrasting perspectives. These findings emphasize the importance of tailored interventions and further research to address multifaceted school environments' impact on student outcomes. Recommendations drawn from the study's conclusions include investing in diverse learning resources to bridge resource disparities, enhancing teacher-student interactions through training programs, and prioritizing infrastructure improvements to create conducive learning environments. These recommendations aim to support educational practice and policy development at Nambulu Secondary School and similar institutions.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter offers background information of the study. The chapter provides a clear understanding of the history of the problem, highlights the scope of the study. It also covers key areas such as problem statement, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, and conceptual framework.

1.1 Background to the Study

Globally, education is recognized as a fundamental human right and an essential element for the development of individuals and societies. The global effort to reduce poverty and achieve equitable, inclusive quality education is exemplified by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goals 1 and 4. According to UNESCO (2017), education plays a central role in poverty reduction, with estimates suggesting that if all adults completed secondary school, the global poverty rate would be more than halved. Despite progress in the early 2000s, the out-of-school rate has stagnated in recent years, with approximately 264 million children, adolescents, and youth excluded from education. This includes 23% of primary school-age children, 23% of lower secondary school-age adolescents, and 53% of upper secondary school-age youth. Despite initial declines, out-of-school rates have plateaued, with primary and lower secondary rates remaining at around 9% and 16%, respectively, and upper secondary rates at 37%. (UNESCO, 2017).

According to UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report team, education could significantly reduce poverty rates, with nearly 60 million people escaping poverty with just two additional years of schooling for all adults, and 420 million lifted out of poverty globally through the completion of secondary education. Despite these potential benefits, persistently high out-of-school rates remain a significant challenge globally, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, where over half of youth aged 15-17 are not in school. Girls in poor countries face significant barriers to education, with over 11 million primary-age girls out of school in low-income countries (Burnett, N. 2008).

In Africa, the effect of poverty on education is profound. The continent faces challenges such as high levels of poverty, inadequate schooling facilities, and overcrowded classrooms, which significantly impact students' ability to complete their education. The imposition of a 30% minimum pass requirement by the Minister of Basic Education in South Africa has sparked

debate, with critics like Allen (2014) arguing that it violates children's rights to quality education. Wilkinson (2015) highlights the inadequacy of the current low pass requirement, which fails to equip learners with necessary skills and contributes to limited educational and employment prospects. Despite efforts to improve schooling, only a small fraction of South African schools are considered 'functional,' with many unable to provide essential skills due to poor management of funds and socio-economic factors affecting attendance and staff qualifications. This study aims to examine poverty's impact on education in South Africa, addressing factors influencing education, poverty, and accessibility. High poverty levels and substandard education standards persist, compounded by challenges such as costly education, teacher capabilities, and inadequate infrastructure (Nortje, M. J. 2017).

The impact of poverty on education in East Africa remains a significant challenge, compounded by structural issues such as the lack of employment opportunities for school and university graduates. Despite efforts to address these challenges, 67 million children worldwide, approximately 53% of whom are girls, lack access to basic education. The Education Commission projects that if current trends persist, only 4 out of 10 children in low- and middle-income countries will be on track to gain basic secondary-level skills by 2030. Barriers to education, identified by UNICEF, include direct and indirect costs, local attitudes, health, and crises, particularly affecting girls, children with disabilities, and those in conflict areas. Low educational attainment is widespread in Sub-Saharan Africa, where unstable economies and conflicts exacerbate the educational crisis and poverty levels. Despite economic growth, secondary education enrollment rates remain low in East Africa, presenting challenges for social progress. Investments in education, particularly in SMEs and infrastructure, are essential to address poverty's impact on education and foster economic development in the region (Nyagah, C. N. 2013).

In Uganda, education faces significant challenges despite the country's diversity and ambitious development goals. With over 40 languages spoken and a rapidly growing population—projected to double by 2050—Uganda struggles to provide adequate schooling amidst resource constraints and population pressures. The youth population explosion, dubbed a "demographic time bomb," strains infrastructure, exacerbates unemployment, and hampers poverty reduction efforts. Despite economic growth, Uganda's per capita GDP remains low, and the education system suffers from overcrowded classrooms, a shortage of qualified teachers, and limited access to secondary and tertiary education. These issues are particularly acute in rural areas and among vulnerable populations like refugees and the poor.

Chronic underfunding and mismanagement further compound educational challenges, underscoring the need for comprehensive reforms amidst governance and institutional weaknesses. The government has implemented policies like Universal Secondary Education to improve access, but completion rates remain low, with only about 22% of students completing secondary education as of 2003 (Hassan, R., & Macha, W. 2020).

Sironko District, located in Eastern Uganda, has over 208 schools, including 25 secondary schools. However, accessing secondary education remains a challenge as approximately 30 out of 42 sub-counties lack secondary schools, significantly impacting educational opportunities, particularly for girls. The absence of secondary schools has led to high dropout rates, teenage pregnancies, and child marriages due to the long distances children must travel to attend school. Nambulu Secondary School is one of the institutions in the district, and like others, it faces challenges related to economic poverty that impact students' completion of secondary schooling (Woniala, M. 2022).

This study, therefore, explored these concepts within the context of Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko District, examining how economic poverty affects students' ability to complete their secondary education and the broader implications for the community.

1.2 Problem Statement

In Sironko District, a pervasive challenge confronts the educational landscape, where access to secondary education remains a distant dream for many. The stark reality reveals that 30 out of 42 sub-counties within the district grapple with the absence of secondary schools (Woniala, 2022). This glaring shortage perpetuates a cycle of educational inequality, particularly disadvantaging vulnerable groups, such as girls, who are disproportionately affected. As echoed by Mr. Moses Nambale, the district education officer, the shortage of secondary schools not only impedes access to education but also fosters an environment conducive to unfavourable outcomes, including heightened rates of school dropouts, teenage pregnancies, and child marriages (Woniala, 2022).

While commendable efforts have been undertaken by the government to address this pressing issue, including the construction of the Shs 2.3 billion Buteza Seed Secondary School and the integration of policies into development plans, the educational disparities persist. Despite the infusion of resources and initiatives, the root causes underlying the scarcity of secondary schools in Sironko District remain inadequately addressed. Consequently, the aspirations outlined in governmental development plans, such as achieving lower-middle-income status

by 2020 and upper-middle-income status by 2040, face significant hurdles in the realm of education (Woniala, 2022). Hence, there existed a compelling research gap, necessitating a thorough examination of the systemic challenges and the formulation of innovative strategies to enhance access to secondary education in Sironko District, thereby paving the way for inclusive and sustainable development.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 General Objective

To investigate the Effect of Economic Poverty on the Completion of Secondary Schooling among Students of Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko District.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

- i. To find out how household income levels influence academic performance of students at Nambulu Secondary School, Sironko district.
- ii. To investigate the relationship between students' economic status and educational aspirations among students at Nambulu Secondary School, Sironko district.
- iii. To find out the school related factors affecting students' academic performance in Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko district.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. How does household income level influence academic performance of students at Nambulu Secondary School, Sironko district?
- ii. What is the relationship between students' economic status and educational aspirations among students at Nambulu Secondary School, Sironko district?
- iii. What school related factors affect students' academic performance in Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko district?

1.5 Justification of the study

This research is crucial to shed light on a pressing issue impacting educational outcomes in the region. By understanding the specific challenges posed by economic poverty, this study might provide valuable insights for government authorities to craft tailored policies aimed at improving access to education and increasing completion rates. Moreover, local authorities stand to benefit significantly from the findings, as they can utilize the insights to allocate resources more effectively, thereby maximizing the impact of educational interventions. Additionally, as a student pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Public Administration and

Management, conducting this research contributed valuable knowledge to the field and fulfil academic requirements for degree completion.

1.6 Significance of the study

The significance of this study might lie in its potential to address a critical gap in understanding the impact of economic poverty on educational outcomes; it might offer insights into the specific challenges faced by students in economically disadvantaged settings, shedding light on factors that hinder their ability to complete secondary education.

The findings of this study might serve as a basis for developing targeted interventions and policies aimed at improving educational access and equity for vulnerable student populations.

The study might provide localized data that can inform decision-making at the local and regional levels, ultimately leading to more effective resource allocation and program implementation.

The study might also serve as a stepping stone for future research endeavours, laying the groundwork for continued exploration of the complex relationship between poverty and education in similar contexts.

1.7 Scope of the study

1.7.1 Geographical Scope:

The geographical scope of this study was centred on Nambulu Secondary School, located in Nambulu Village, Bubeza Parish, Buwalasi Sub-county, Budadiri West approximately 3 kilometres from Patto along Buwalasi-Budadiri Road in Sironko District, Eastern Uganda. This area is emblematic of the rural settings prevalent throughout the region, characterized by distinct socio-economic challenges. Through examining the specific circumstances of Nambulu Secondary School within this geographic context, the study aimed to provide insights applicable to similar educational settings facing similar challenges in the region.

1.7.2 Time Scope:

This study spanned a duration of three years, between 2021 to 2023. The study captured any temporal variations and trends in educational outcomes influenced by economic poverty during this period. Furthermore, this time frame facilitated the collection of data during multiple academic cycles, enabling a more robust analysis of the factors affecting secondary school completion within the specified timeframe.

1.7.3 Content Scope:

The study fell within the realm of education research, particularly focusing on the intersection of socio-economic factors and educational outcomes. It involved examining various articles, documents, literature relating to economic poverty and its impact on students' ability to complete secondary education. Additionally, the study drew on theories and concepts from disciplines such as sociology, economics, and public administration to provide a comprehensive analysis of the issue.

1.8 Conceptual framework

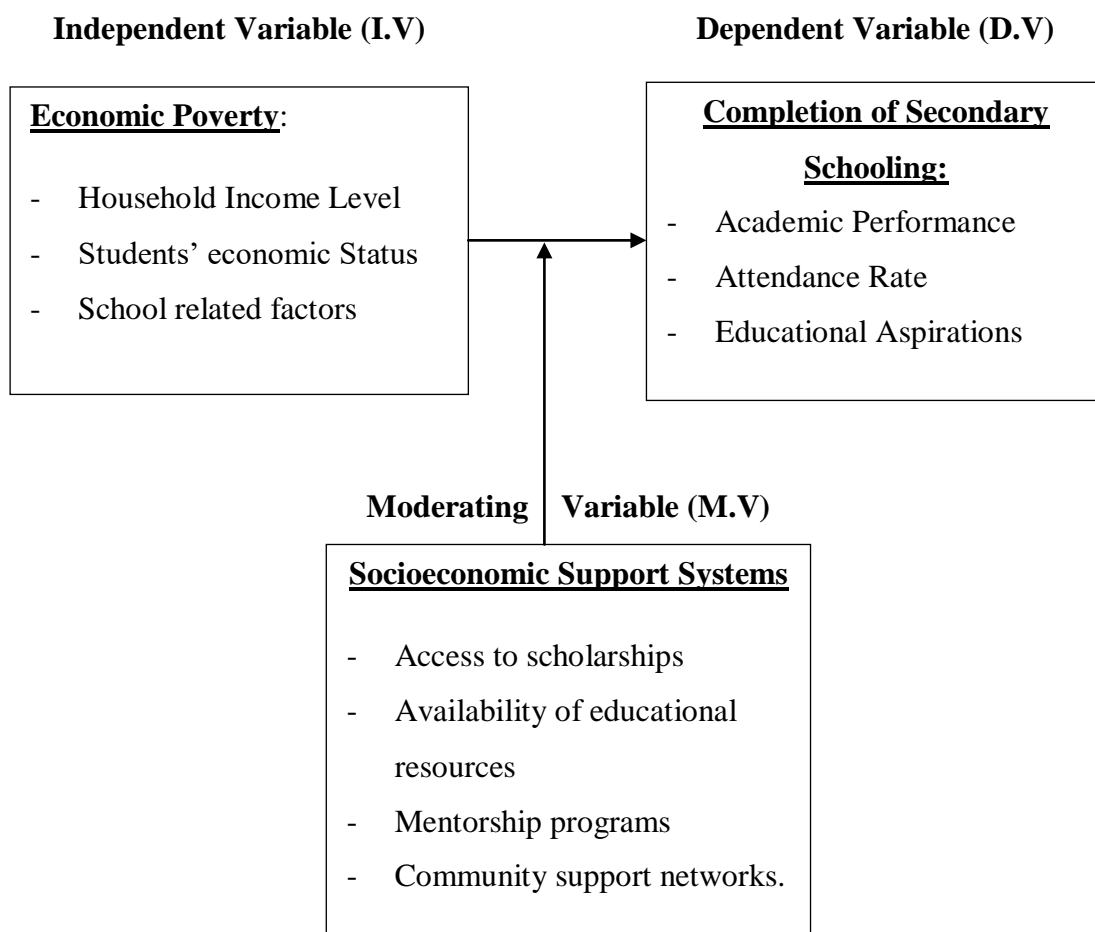


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework

In this conceptual framework, Economic Poverty as the Independent Variable influenced Completion of Secondary Schooling (the Dependent Variable) through various channels. Household Income Level impacted students' access to educational resources, affecting Academic Performance and Attendance Rate. Additionally, Students' Economic Status shaped their Educational Aspirations, potentially limiting opportunities beyond secondary

school. Socioeconomic Support Systems as the Moderating Variable intervened, buffering poverty's impact. Scholarships and aid programs alleviated financial burdens, while mentorship and community support fostered resilience. These systems modified the relationship between Economic Poverty and Completion of Secondary Schooling by providing resources and guidance, enhancing students' ability to overcome obstacles. As a result, they increased the likelihood of students successfully completing secondary education despite economic challenges.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter critically examined existing literature on Effect of Economic Poverty on the Completion of Secondary Schooling among Students, identifying research gaps. Literature sources included journals, textbooks, and internet articles, aligning with study objectives. It encompassed theoretical and related literature reviews, summarizing findings to inform the study's focus on the effects of economic poverty on the completion of secondary schooling.

2.1 Definition of key terms

Poverty: This refers to the state of one who lacks a usual or socially acceptable amount of money or material possessions. (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2024). It is a state of deprivation characterized by insufficient financial resources to meet basic needs, including adequate housing, nutrition, education, and healthcare. In this context, poverty is understood as a phenomenon that significantly impacts individuals' and families' well-being and access to educational opportunities, thereby influencing their ability to complete secondary schooling.

Economic Poverty: This refers to a state of financial deprivation or insufficiency, where individuals or households lack the resources necessary to meet their basic needs, including food, shelter, clothing, and healthcare (Adam Augustyn, 2014). In the context of this research, economic poverty specifically pertains to the financial constraints experienced by individuals or families in Sironko District, resulting in limited access to educational resources and opportunities.

Students: The term “students” refers to individuals who are formally engaged in learning, particularly those who are enrolled in educational institutions such as secondary schools, colleges, or universities (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2014). In this research, "students" refer to individuals enrolled in secondary education at Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko District. They are the primary subjects of the study and represent the population affected by economic poverty concerning educational outcomes.

Completion of Secondary School (Completion rate): This is defined as the percentage of a cohort of children or young people aged 3-5 years above the intended age for the last grade of

secondary education who have completed that grade (UNESCO, 2020). In the context of this study, it encompasses students' ability to finish their secondary education at Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko District, including the successful passage of all required coursework and examinations.

2.2 How household income levels affect academic performance among students

The empirical literature on the impact of income level on academic performance, reveals several key findings and conclusions as portrayed below:

Liu, J., et al. (2022) conducted a two meta-analyses study to investigate relations between socioeconomic status (SES) and academic achievement, with a focus on macro-level, micro-level, and methodological moderating variables in primary and secondary education. The first meta-analysis was based on 326 empirical studies with 949,699 students from 47 countries and areas, and the second was based on three international large-scale assessments (i.e., PISA, TIMSS, and PIRLS) with 1230 independent samples of 5,095,283 students from 105 countries and areas. It found moderate correlations between SES and academic achievement across the world, $r_s = .22 \sim .28$.

Additionally, moderation analyses revealed that (a) these relations have strengthened since the 1990s; (b) GDP per capita and economic equality did not affect the relations; (c) higher net enrollment ratio and longer duration of compulsory education did not weaken these relations; (d) the relations stayed stable or even strengthened across grades in concurrent and longitudinal designs. Taken together, the findings suggested that educational expansion that focuses on increasing educational opportunities does not seem to reduce inequalities in academic outcomes between high- and low-SES school children in educational systems on the national level. The study recommended that quality indicators for educational expansion, however, should be considered in setting educational policy to achieve inclusive, equitable education (Liu, J., Peng, P., Zhao, B. et al. 2022).

Masereka, Biitikoro et al (2023) carried out a study on the Influence of Family Income Level on Academic Performance Among Secondary School Students. The study investigated the impact of parental income on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Kitwamba and Rugendabara-Kikongo town councils in Kasese District. A cross-sectional research design was used, with data collected from 286 students and five head teachers. The findings showed that family income significantly influenced students' academic performance. The findings had implications for parents, teachers, policymakers, and administrators in the

education sector, emphasizing the importance of parental income in determining academic success (Masereka, Biitikoro; Muhammad, Tukur & Rahim, Abdul 2023).

Another study on the Influence of Family Background on Students' Academic Performance aimed to examine the influence of parental income on children's academic performance in government secondary schools in Sironko District. The research utilized a cross-sectional survey design and included a sample of 314 respondents, comprising parents and students. The findings indicated that parental income level, family size, and parents' education level significantly influence students' academic performance. The study concluded that these variables are critical factors affecting the performance of students in secondary schools within the district (Abubakar Arzika, 2015).

The existing empirical literature above provides valuable insights into the relationship between income level and academic performance, highlighting moderate correlations between socioeconomic status (SES) and educational outcomes across various contexts. However, studies by Liu et al. (2022), Masereka, Biitikoro et al. (2023), and Abubakar Arzika (2015) primarily focus on broader trends at the macro-level or within specific districts, overlooking the nuanced dynamics within individual schools. This research, however, seeks to bridge this gap by investigating how income level specifically affects academic performance among students at Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko District, Uganda. By focusing on a single school setting, the study aims to provide a detailed analysis of the unique challenges and opportunities faced by students in a rural district, contributing to a deeper understanding of the factors influencing educational outcomes in low-resource contexts.

2.3 The relationship between students' economic status and educational aspirations.

The empirical literature on the relationship between students' economic status and educational aspirations reveals a complex interplay of factors that influence students' ambitions and expectations for their educational journey.

Salgotra, A. K., et al. (2018) carried out a study on educational aspiration and socio-economic status among secondary school students. The study revealed that socio-economic status (SES) plays an important role in the formulation of aspirations of adolescents. SES of the family basically determines the level and quality of education that can be provided to the adolescents. The extent to which the adolescents can be educated as well as the kind of

courses which a family can afford to provide for the child depends on the SES. The main aim of study was to find significant differences in Educational Aspiration among adolescents studying in secondary schools in relation to their Socio-Economic Status and study the relationship between socio-economic status and educational aspiration among the adolescents.

In addition to the above, the study was confined to only adolescents studying in secondary school. It involved class 10th students by using multistage sampling in Jammu district. It used a sample of only 351 students. Precisely, it employed a quantitative approach, using questionnaires to gather data from students across various SES backgrounds. The findings indicated a positive correlation between higher SES and greater educational aspirations. Students from higher-income families were more likely to aspire to tertiary education compared to their lower-income peers (Salgotra, A. K., & Roma, K. 2018).

Another study focused on the effects of parental socioeconomic status on the academic achievement of primary school pupils. All the pupils studying at primary school level in Ife East local government area, Ile – Ife, Osun state (Nigeria) constituted the population of the study. The study was delimited to only three government primary schools and three private primary schools in Ife East local government area. The study was further delimited to the pupils of final year class (i.e. primary five or six). In order to have adequate representation of the population, 150 primary school pupils were selected through simple random sampling technique. The study was survey type and therefore a self-developed structured questionnaire was used for the collection of data. Data was collected through personal visits. The data was organized, tabulated and analyzed statistically using T-test. Therefore, the researcher concluded that parental socio-economic status; parent's educational level, mother's occupational level; and parental income level affect the academic achievement of primary school pupils. Based on the findings, it was suggested that unemployment should be controlled. Poor pupils should be provided scholarships, free books and other stationary. In addition, it was also recommended that government should take steps to raise socioeconomic status of people (Gideon Adedayo, 2017).

A study by Boxer, P., et al. (2011) examined whether disconnection between educational aspirations and expectations is associated with socioeconomic status, academic performance, academic risk-related behaviours and related psychosocial factors in an ethnically and economically diverse sample of early adolescents from a public middle school (N = 761).

Results suggested that students who aspire to achieve more than they expect to achieve also are likely to have more economically disadvantaged backgrounds and poorer academic performance. These students also show a variety of academic and social risks. Specifically, students whose aspirations exceeded their expectations reported lower levels of school bonding, higher levels of test/performance anxiety, and elevated behavioural/emotional difficulties. Results were discussed in terms of social-cognitive theory as well as applications for promoting student social and academic success (Boxer, P., et al. 2011).

The studies reviewed consistently show that students' economic status plays a significant role in shaping educational aspirations. Higher students' economic status often equates to higher aspirations due to access to resources, support systems, and exposure to a variety of career paths. However, there is a gap in the literature regarding the specific context of Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko District. While the general trend suggests a positive correlation between students' economic status and aspirations, the unique socioeconomic and cultural dynamics of Sironko District may influence this relationship differently.

Furthermore, there is a need for more qualitative research to understand the personal narratives and lived experiences of students at Nambulu Secondary School. Such studies could provide deeper insights into how students' economic status influences aspirations beyond the statistical correlations, capturing the nuances of individual student experiences and the local context. The research seeks to address these gaps by focusing on the specific students' economic status factors affecting the students of Nambulu Secondary School and how these factors translate into educational aspirations within the unique setting of Sironko District.

2.4 The school related factors affecting students' academic performance

The empirical literature reveals a substantial body of research focusing on the factors influencing students' academic performance, particularly in secondary schools.

Koçak, Göksu, and Göktaş (2021) conducted a systematic review of meta-analyses to identify variables affecting academic achievement, emphasizing psychological, socio-economic, socio-demographic, and individual characteristics, among others. The study aimed to identify the factors and to demonstrate their effects on academic achievement in various publications that utilized meta-analyses. For this purpose, the meta-analyses publications on the Web of Science-All Database till 2018 were reviewed. In the study, the systematic review method was adopted. Following a related review, 169 meta-analyses were included in the scope of the

study. The effects of 254 variables on academic achievement were investigated, and consequently, 427 effect sizes were found in total. Variables obtained from meta-analyses with the effect sizes between $-.799$ and 3.170 were examined in nine categories. The results revealed that the number of variables evaluated in the categories of psychological, socio-economic, socio-demographic and individual characteristics, learning theories and teaching strategies, and family was bigger than other categories.

Labasano (2015) explored the Factors Affecting Students' Academic Performance in Research: The Senior High School Perspective. This study focused on the students' academic performance in research subject as affected by students' sex, class attendance, hours of study, and attendance during the review classes. The data were collected from the teacher-researcher's record and from a short survey conducted. The result revealed that sex, hours of study, and review attendance were significant predictors of students' academic performance.

Similarly, Ullah and Almani (2022) investigated Factors Affecting Students' Academic Performance: A Case Study Of Secondary Schools Of Makran Division Balochistan, highlighting Students' performance is not only influenced by the talent of nature but also several factors that are involved for better performance. For the social and economic improvement of the society and nation as a whole, it is mandatory to provide quality education for our children. This study aimed to assess and explore school and students related factors that are affecting the student secondary school performance in Makran division, Balochistan. To obtain data questionnaires were administrated to the 650 secondary school students and 200 teachers. Furthermore, 24 headteachers were selected for the data collection as a purposive sampling technique. In this regard, different factors were highlighted. Data were analyzed with the help of the statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS)23.

Thus the result revealed that there is a significant impact of school-related factors and students' intrinsic factors on students' academic performance in secondary schools of Makran division in Balochistan. This study determines the most important factors that have a massive influence on students' academic performance were: Insufficient teachers, Lack of reading and teaching materials in school, for the students, untrained teachers, and learning environment in school, inadequate classrooms, weak school management. The based-on study it was recommended the following suggestions, the government should provide school facilities timely, need to ensure availability of qualified teachers, adequate teaching and learning materials, enough classrooms for the students, and laboratory devices in secondary schools,

with conducive learning and friendly environment at schools, are the factors that affect the students' performance at the secondary school level.

Moreover, Kocsis and Molnár (2024) focused on Factors influencing academic performance and dropout rates in higher education. The aim of this study was to identify and evaluate the most frequently used research methods and factors influencing academic performance, based on a pool of 95 studies, published after 2012. They considered only peer-reviewed papers containing 78 empirical and 17 meta-analytic studies. Their theoretical background lied in the different approaches of the terms 'university dropout' and 'academic performance'. After the systematic analysis they ascertained the most commonly used methods are Educational Data Mining (EDM) algorithms (decision tree, logistic regression and neural networks) and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM).

The strength of the predictive power depended on the dataset, however Support Vector Machines, Multilayer Perceptron, Naïve Bayes algorithm were found to be the most precise in prediction. Regarding factors influencing academic performance they derived our results based on 600,000 secondary school students. Considering the data from meta-analyses and systematic reviews, reaching up to 900 studies, they found aggregates to be the most consistent and decisive predictors of academic performance. Nevertheless, these output variables were mediated by student factors (intrinsic motivation, self-regulated learning strategies, self-efficacy, prior education) and throughput factors (work, finances, academic engagement). They also had contradictory results on age and family background.

2.5 Conclusion

The existing empirical literature provides valuable insights into the relationship between students' economic status and educational outcomes, shedding light on macro-level trends and specific district-level dynamics. However, a notable gap persists in understanding the nuanced dynamics within individual schools, particularly in low-resource contexts like Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko District, Uganda. This study aims to address this gap by investigating how household income levels specifically influence academic performance among students in this unique setting. Furthermore, while existing studies offer insights into the relationship between students' economic status and educational aspirations, there remains a lack of comprehensive exploration of broader school-related factors influencing academic achievement. By narrowing the focus to a single school, this research seeks to provide insights into the complex interplay of economic status, educational aspirations, and school-

related influences on students' academic performance. Thus, bridging this gap is essential for informing targeted interventions and policy development to improve educational outcomes in similar low-resource contexts.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

This chapter presented the research design, area of the study, study population, sample size and sampling technique, study variables and measurements, procedure for data collection, the data collection instruments, reliability and validity of instruments, data processing and analysis and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

The researcher employed a descriptive research design for this study. As per Kothari (2015), a research design outlined the conditions for data collection and analysis, ensuring alignment with the research purpose while maintaining efficiency. Descriptive research was chosen for its ability to provide a snapshot of current events. This design facilitated the utilization of mixed methods, integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches to data collection. By employing both methods, the researcher attained a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, ensuring the completeness of research instruments, as highlighted by Mugenda and Mugenda (2019). This approach enabled the gathering of detailed information essential for drawing well-founded conclusions.

3.2. Study Population

Kothari (2005) explains that the study population encompasses all individuals or subjects relevant to the researcher's interests. Similarly, Mugenda and Mugenda (2013) define population as a collective of individuals sharing observable traits. In this research, the study population consisted of 108 individuals drawn from Nambulu Secondary Schools in Sironko District. It comprised 06 school administrators, 15 teachers, 03 members of the Board of Governors, 02 school bursars, 02 Inspectors of Schools, and 80 members of the Parents Teachers Association. These individuals were selected based on their relevance and importance to the research objectives. The study gathered data from this population to investigate the Effect of Economic Poverty on the Completion of Secondary Schooling among Students of Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko District.

3.3. Sample Size determination

The sample size of 88 was selected from a study population of 108 respondents using Morgan and Krejcie simple table of sample size determination (1970).

Table 3.1. Showing sample size determination

Category of Population	Study Population	Sample Size	Sampling Techniques
School Administrators	06	04	Purposive Sampling
Teachers	15	10	Simple Random Sampling
Board of Governors Members	03	02	Purposive Sampling
School Bursars	02	01	Purposive Sampling
Inspectors of Schools	02	01	Purposive Sampling
Parents Teachers Association Members	80	70	Simple Random Sampling
Total	108	88	

Source: Field Data, 2024

3.4 Sampling techniques

3.4.1. Purposive sampling technique

Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental or selective sampling, is a non-random sampling technique where researchers deliberately choose participants based on their expertise, knowledge, or relevance to the research objectives. In this study, purposive sampling was employed for subgroups such as School Administrators, Board of Governors Members, School Bursars, and Inspectors of Schools. For each of these subgroups, participants were selected based on their specific roles, responsibilities, and expertise relevant to the research topic. School Administrators were chosen for their leadership positions and in-depth knowledge of school operations, while Board of Governors Members were selected for their decision-making authority and insight into educational policy and governance. Similarly, School Bursars and Inspectors of Schools were chosen based on their expertise in financial management and school evaluation, respectively. Purposively selecting participants with the most relevant knowledge and experience, the study aimed to gather rich and comprehensive data aligned with its research objectives.

3.4.2. Simple Random Sampling

According to Kothari (2015), Simple random sampling is a basic probability sampling technique where each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected, and the selection of each participant is independent of other selections. In this study, simple random sampling was utilized for the Teachers and Members of the Parents Teachers Association (PTA). For these subgroups, a list of all eligible individuals was created, and participants were selected randomly from this list using a random number generator or a lottery method. This ensured that every member of the subgroup had an equal opportunity to be chosen, minimizing bias and allowing for a representative sample.

3.5 Procedure for data collection

The data collection process commenced with the development of tailored questionnaires and interview guides for diverse participant groups like administrators, teachers, board members, and parents. Participants were chosen based on predetermined criteria. Questionnaires, integrating Likert scale responses, were disseminated physically, while interviews were conducted in-person. Data gathered from these methods underwent analysis using statistical software and thematic analysis, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of the research topic while upholding ethical standards..

3.6 Data collection instruments

This study employed questionnaires for quantitative data collection on demographics, economic status, and educational aspirations, while semi-structured interviews gathered qualitative insights from key stakeholders. Questionnaires featured closed-ended questions, while interview guides contained open-ended prompts for detailed responses, ensuring a comprehensive data collection approach. According to Kaplan (2015), questionnaires are preferable for gathering data from a sizable number of participants, as Peil (2015) suggests they are well-suited for populations capable of completing the survey independently.

3.6.1. Questionnaire Survey

Linda (2016) states that conducting a questionnaire survey is crucial for assessing the validity and reliability of the research instrument. It also helps in evaluating the cost-effectiveness of the study, estimating the required sample size, and devising a strategy for questionnaire distribution. In this research, the questionnaire method was utilized to gather data from various stakeholders involved in the educational system. School administrators, teachers, board of governors members, school bursars, inspectors of schools, and parents-teachers

association members all received questionnaires tailored to their respective roles and experiences. These questionnaires contained structured questions designed to elicit information about the impact of economic poverty on students' ability to complete secondary schooling. The Likert scale consisted of a series of statements, and participants specified their level of agreement or disagreement on a symmetric agree-disagree scale, with 1 representing "Strongly Agree," 2 representing " Agree," 3 representing "Not Sure," 4 representing " Disagree," and 5 representing "Strongly Disagree." This scale allowed for nuanced responses and provided valuable insights into participants' perspectives on the research topic. The questionnaire method allowed for standardized data collection across different participant groups, enabling the researcher to systematically analyze and compare responses to gain comprehensive insights into the research topic.

3.6.2. Interview Method

In this research, the interview method complemented the questionnaire approach to gather in-depth insights from key stakeholders. Interviews were conducted with select individuals, such as school administrators, teachers, and parents-teachers association members, to explore their perspectives and experiences related to economic poverty and its impact on students' ability to complete secondary schooling. Semi-structured interviews were employed to allow for flexibility in questioning while ensuring that key topics were covered consistently across interviews. The interview process provided an opportunity for participants to express their views, share anecdotes, and provide context to the quantitative data collected through questionnaires. Engaging in direct dialogue with stakeholders helped the researcher gain a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding the research topic, thereby enriching the overall analysis and findings of the study.

3.7. Data Control

In ensuring the quality and reliability of the research, the instruments and techniques to be used were carefully assessed for reliability and validity. This involved selecting established measures with demonstrated reliability and validity in similar studies. Additionally, data collection methods were rigorously planned and executed to minimize errors and biases. Regular checks and pilot testing were conducted to validate the effectiveness and accuracy of the instruments and techniques employed in gathering data.

3.7.1. Reliability

Amin (2015) opines that reliability is the extent to which an instrument consistently measures whatever it is measuring. Mugenda and Mugenda (2013) consider reliability as the extent to which a research tool gives consistent results after repeated trials. To ensure reliability, the researcher constructed a questionnaire using clear, straightforward language familiar to participants. They avoided double-barrelled, leading, and assumption-based questions in both the questionnaire and interview guide. The reliability of the instrument was computed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 23.

3.7.2. Validity

According to Muhammad Hassan (2014) Validity refers to the extent to which a concept, measure, or study accurately represents the intended meaning or reality it is intended to capture. It is a fundamental concept in research and assessment that assesses the soundness and appropriateness of the conclusions, inferences, or interpretations made based on the data or evidence collected. The level of accuracy of the instruments was determined through computation of Content Validity Index (CVI), an indicator of level of accuracy of the instrument.

$$CVI = \frac{\text{Number of items declared valid}}{\text{Total Number of items}}$$

The CVI formula by Amin (2015) applied was;

$$CVI = \frac{VR + R}{K}$$

After computing the CVI as a way of determining the level of accuracy of the instrument, the researcher interpreted the CVI on the basis of George and Mallery's (2013) rule of thumb; (A) 1 - 0.9 = Excellent (B) 0.89 – 0.80 = Good (C) 0.79 – 0.70 = Acceptable (D) 0.69 – 0.60 = Questionable (E) 0.59 – 0.50 = Poor (F) 0.49 – 00 = Unacceptable.

3.8. Data Presentation and Analysis

3.8.1. Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis for the study involved entering survey responses into statistical software like SPSS. Descriptive statistics summarized variables such as household income,

economic status, aspirations, and school-related factors. Inferential statistics, including correlation and regression analysis, were used to explore relationships between these variables, providing insights into the impact of economic poverty on academic performance and educational aspirations. The findings helped answer the research questions and contributed to understanding the dynamics of poverty in educational outcomes.

3.8.2. Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis for the study entailed transcribing and coding interview responses and open-ended survey questions. Thematic analysis identified recurring patterns, themes, and categories related to economic status, educational aspirations, and school-related factors. Through iterative coding and constant comparison, emergent themes were refined to capture the complexity of students' experiences with poverty and its impact on academic achievement. The qualitative findings complemented quantitative results, providing rich contextual insights into the research questions and enhancing the study's overall understanding of poverty's effects on education..

3.9 Ethical considerations

In this study, ethical principles guided the methodology. This included ensuring confidentiality, obtaining informed consent from participants, and addressing any ethical challenges transparently. Confidentiality measures safeguarded participants' personal information, while informed consent was obtained, explaining the study's purpose and participants' rights. Integrity in data collection and analysis was maintained, and any ethical dilemmas encountered were promptly addressed with measures to protect participants' well-being and research integrity.

3.10 Methodological constraints

The research faced methodological constraints due to limitations and weaknesses inherent in the chosen methods and tools. The use of questionnaires and interviews introduced response bias or social desirability bias, affecting the accuracy of data collected. Additionally, the reliance on self-report measures led to subjective interpretations. Moreover, sample size limitations restricted the generalizability of findings. These constraints impacted the reliability and validity of the research findings, necessitating cautious interpretation and acknowledgment of potential limitations in the study's conclusions.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presented the characteristics of respondents; it was guided by the research objectives that is; how household income levels influence academic performance of students; the relationship between students' economic status and educational aspirations among students; the school related factors affecting students' academic performance in Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko district. The presentation also included a computation of the rate of response and the demographic data of the respondents.

4.1 Response Rate

To compute this, the researcher divided the total number of completed surveys by the initial number of contacted respondents and then multiplied the outcome by 100. The objective was to determine the response rate of the participants, with the findings presented in the table below.

Table 4.1: Response rate

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Expected response	88	100
Actual response	85	97
Non response	03	03

Source: *Primary Data 2024*

As indicated Table 4.1 The study attained a substantial response rate of 91% (n=85), indicating high participation, while only 3% (n=03) of the invited individuals chose not to partake. The significant level of respondent involvement is viewed as commendable for upholding the research's validity, consistent with Amin's (2005) recommendation of achieving at least a 70% participation rate. The researcher's dedicated actions, such as personally following up with participants who hadn't submitted their questionnaires within the allotted time and displaying patience with those encountering delays in completing

surveys or attending interviews, played a crucial role in achieving this remarkable response rate.

4.2 Background information

4.2.1 Gender of Respondents

The study aimed to determine the gender distribution among respondents, and the following table provides a summary of the findings.

Table 4.2 Gender of the Respondents

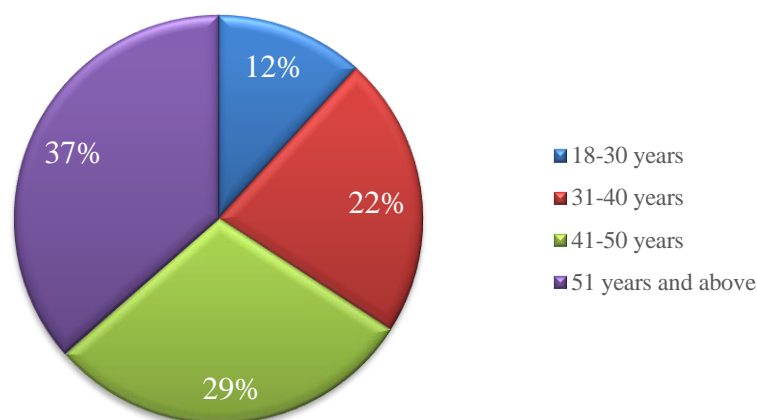
	Frequency	Percent
Male	51	67
Female	34	33
Total	146	100

Source: *Primary Data 2024*

Based on the results, the majority of respondents were male 67% (n=51), while females accounted for 33% (n=34). These findings suggest economic factors could have played a role in that response, with males potentially having more availability or access to resources to participate in the study compared to females.

4.2.2 Respondents' Age

The study also aimed to determine the age distribution of the respondents, and the results are presented below



Source: *Primary Data 2024*

The results presented in Figure 4.3 indicate that the largest proportion of participants in this study, numbering 31 (37%), fell within the age group of 41 and 50 years. Following this, 25 participants (29%) were aged between were 51 years old and above, while 19 individuals (22%) were 31-40 years. The smallest group, consisting of 10 participants (12%), belonged to the age range of 18 to 30 years. Since the survey targeted education system stakeholders, it's plausible that individuals in the age group of 41 to 50 years old, who had more experience and involvement in educational matters, were more inclined to participate. This age group had a greater interest in educational issues and were more actively engaged in activities related to the education system, thus explaining their higher representation in the study.

4.2.3 Highest education qualification

The study aimed to determine the distribution of respondents based on their level of education, and the summary is as follows:

Table 4.4 Highest education qualification of the respondents

Category	Frequency	Percent
O' level	15	17
A' level	05	06
Certificate	10	12
Diploma	23	27
Bachelors' degree	28	33
Others	04	05
Total	85	100

Source: Primary Data 2024

The largest group, comprising 28 individuals (33%), held Bachelor's degrees, followed by 23 (27%) with Diplomas, and 15 (17%) with O' level Certificates. Another 10 (8%) and 05 (8%) held certificates and A' level certificates respectively, while the smallest group, 04 individuals (4%), had other academic qualifications. These findings implied that the respondents brought varied experiences and expertise to the study, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the research topic.

4.2.4 Position Held at work

Findings were also sought to establish the positions held by the respondents in the respective work positions.

Table 4.5: Position Held at work

Category	Frequency	Percent
School Administrators	04	05
Teachers	10	12
Board of Governors Members	32	38
School Bursars	01	01
Inspectors of Schools	01	01
Parents Teachers Association Members	37	43
Total	85	100

Source: Primary Data 2024

The results revealed that 37 individuals (43%) were Members of the Parents Teachers Association, while 32 (38%) were Members of the Board of Governors and another 10 (12%) were teachers. Additionally, 04 (04%) were School Administrators, and 1% (01%) was the school bursar and Inspector of schools. These findings suggest that the study captured perspectives from multiple roles within the school environment, enriching the depth and breadth of insights into the research topic.

4.2.5 Duration of service

Findings on the duration of service by the different health staff were as follows.

Table 4.6: Duration of service

Category	Frequency	Percent
1-3 years	17	20
4-6 years	14	17
6-9 years	24	28
9 years and above	30	35
Total	85	100

Source: *Primary Data 2024*

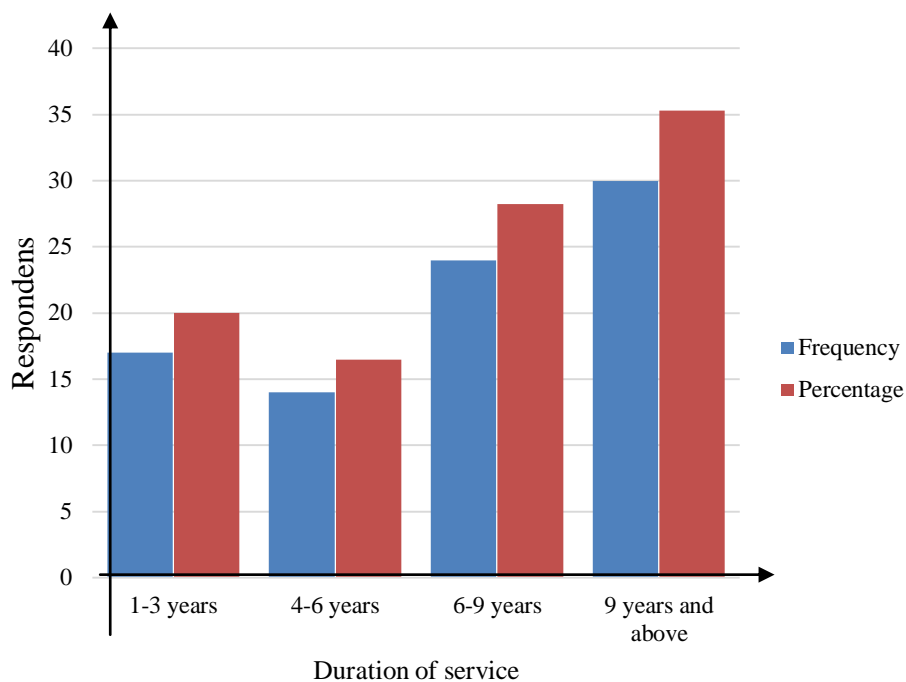


Figure 4.6: Showing Respondents' Duration of Service

Majority of the respondents 30(35%) had worked for 9 years and above, 24(28%) had worked for 6-9 years, 17 (20%) for 1-3 years, with the least 14(17%) that had worked for 4-6 years. This distribution suggests that a considerable proportion of respondents have accumulated substantial experience in their respective roles, with a notable percentage having worked for 9 years or more. It also indicates a diverse range of tenure lengths among participants, reflecting various levels of experience within the educational system.

4.3 Major Findings of the Study

The study sought to investigate the Effect of Economic Poverty on the Completion of Secondary Schooling among Students of Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko District. The objectives that were studied were: To find out how household income levels influence academic performance of students; To investigate the relationship between students' economic status and educational aspirations among students and to find out the school related factors affecting students' academic performance in Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko district. The descriptive findings for each construct of the objectives of the study are presented in the subsequent sections below:

4.3.1 How household income levels influence academic performance of students at Nambulu Secondary School, Sironko district.

This section is organized in alignment with the first study objective, which aimed to find out how household income levels influence academic performance of students at Nambulu Secondary School, Sironko district.

Table 4.3.1: Showing How household income levels influence academic performance of students at Nambulu Secondary School, Sironko district.

STATEMENT	SA		A		NS		SD		D	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
The economic status of students' families profoundly shapes their academic performance within the school environment.	43	51	14	16	0	0	12	14	16	19
Students from financially stable households tend to exhibit better academic achievements compared to their counterparts.	27	32	23	27	2	2	15	18	18	21
Household income levels serve as a significant determinant of students' educational attainment and performance outcomes.	39	46	15	18	11	13	8	9	12	14
The socioeconomic background of students directly influences their engagement and success in academic endeavours.	41	48	25	29	0	0	16	19	3	4
Academic progress is intricately linked to the financial resources and support available within students' family environments.	23	27	19	22	30	35	7	8	6	7

Source: Primary Data 2024

From Table 4.3.1 above, Based on the survey results, 51% of respondents strongly agreed and 16% agreed with the statement regarding the influence of household income levels on academic performance at Nambulu Secondary School. Interestingly, 0% were not sure about this relationship. However, 14% strongly disagreed, and 19% disagreed with the notion. These percentages indicate a consensus among the majority of participants that household income levels do indeed impact students' academic performance.

In an interview with a School Administrator, they remarked, *"We've observed that students from low-income families often face additional challenges in their academic journey. Financial constraints can affect their access to educational resources and support systems, impacting their performance in school."* This observation aligns with the findings of Liu, J., Peng, P., Zhao, B. et al. (2022), who highlighted the significant influence of household income levels on students' academic success.

From the responses of this survey, 32% of respondents strongly agreed and 27% agreed with the statement regarding the correlation between students' academic achievements and their household's financial stability at Nambulu Secondary School. Only 2% were unsure about this relationship. However, 18% strongly disagreed, and 21% disagreed with the notion. These percentages suggest that while there is a significant portion of participants who believe in the positive association between financial stability and academic achievements, there is also a notable proportion that disagrees with this assertion. This indicates a divergence of perspectives among the respondents regarding the impact of household financial stability on students' academic performance.

In alignment with this, Biitikoro et al (2023) emphasized in their study the significant influence of family income levels on students' academic performance, supporting the notion that financial stability contributes to better academic achievements among students.

Based on the survey results, 46% of respondents strongly agreed and 18% agreed with the statement indicating that household income levels serve as a significant determinant of students' educational attainment and performance outcomes at Nambulu Secondary School. About 13% expressed uncertainty regarding this relationship. Conversely, 9% strongly disagreed, and 14% disagreed with the notion. These findings suggest a general consensus among the majority of participants regarding the influence of household income on students' educational outcomes.

In support of this perspective, Liu, J., Peng, P., Zhao, B. et al. (2022) emphasized in their study the moderate correlations between socioeconomic status and academic achievement, underscoring the significance of household income levels in shaping students' educational outcomes. During an interview, a School Administrator commented, *"We've seen firsthand how household income levels can impact students' access to educational resources, tutoring, and even basic necessities like textbooks. It's clear that financial stability plays a crucial role in determining students' educational attainment and performance."*

Based on the survey results, 48% of respondents strongly agreed and 29% agreed with the statement indicating that the socioeconomic background of students directly influences their engagement and success in academic endeavours at Nambulu Secondary School. Notably, 0% expressed uncertainty regarding this relationship. Conversely, 19% strongly disagreed, and 4% disagreed with the notion. These findings suggest a strong consensus among the majority of participants regarding the impact of socioeconomic background on students' academic engagement and success.

In alignment with these findings, Masereka, Biitikoro et al. (2023) emphasized in their study the significant influence of parental income on students' academic performance, highlighting the role of socioeconomic background in shaping educational outcomes. During an interview, a Board of Governors Member remarked, *"We've observed that students from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds often face barriers that hinder their academic success, such as limited access to educational resources and support systems. It's evident that socioeconomic factors play a crucial role in determining students' level of engagement and success in their academic pursuits."*

Based on the survey results, 27% of respondents strongly agreed and 22% agreed with the statement indicating that academic progress is intricately linked to the financial resources and support available within students' family environments at Nambulu Secondary School. Notably, 35% expressed uncertainty regarding this relationship, indicating a lack of consensus. Conversely, 8% strongly disagreed, and 7% disagreed with the notion.

In agreement with these findings, Abubakar Arzika (2015) highlighted in their study the significant influence of parental income on students' academic performance, emphasizing the role of financial resources in shaping educational outcomes. During an interview, a School Administrator remarked, *"We've observed that students from families with greater financial stability often have access to additional resources and support systems that positively impact*

their academic progress. However, it's also important to acknowledge that financial resources alone may not guarantee academic success, as other factors such as student motivation and school environment also play crucial roles."

4.3.2 The relationship between students' economic status and educational aspirations among students at Nambulu Secondary School, Sironko district.

This section is organized in alignment with the second study objective, which aimed to investigate the relationship between students' economic status and educational aspirations among students at Nambulu Secondary School, Sironko district.

Table 4.3.2: Showing the relationship between students' economic status and educational aspirations among students at Nambulu Secondary School, Sironko district.

STATEMENT	SA		A		NS		SD		D	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Students' aspirations for higher education often reflect their family's economic status and opportunities available in their community.	33	39	19	22	1	1	17	20	15	18
Economic circumstances can profoundly impact students' long-term educational goals and aspirations for future careers.	51	60	23	27	2	2	4	5	5	6
The financial resources available to students' families may influence their aspirations regarding educational attainment and future success.	35	41	21	25	0	0	24	28	5	6
Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may have different educational aspirations compared to their peers from more affluent families.	33	39	27	32	3	4	15	18	7	8
Family income levels can shape students' perceptions of the feasibility and desirability of pursuing higher education and specific career paths.	28	33	12	14	13	15	17	20	15	18

Source: Primary Data 2024

Responses from the Table 4.3.2 indicate that, 39% of respondents strongly agreed and 22% agreed with the statement indicating that students' aspirations for higher education often reflect their family's economic status and opportunities available in their community at Nambulu Secondary School. Notably, only 1% expressed uncertainty regarding this relationship. Conversely, 20% strongly disagreed, and 18% disagreed with the notion. In agreement with these findings, Masereka, Salgotra, A. K., et al. (2018)) emphasized in their study the influence of family income level on students' academic aspirations, highlighting the connection between economic status and educational goals.

During an interview, a Teachers' Representative remarked, *"We've noticed that students from families with higher economic status often aspire to pursue higher education, reflecting their access to educational opportunities and resources. Conversely, students from lower-income families may have limited aspirations due to financial constraints and lack of exposure to higher education options."*

Based on the survey results, a significant majority of respondents, with 60% strongly agreeing and 27% agreeing, indicated that economic circumstances can profoundly impact students' long-term educational goals and aspirations for future careers at Nambulu Secondary School. Only a small percentage (2%) expressed uncertainty regarding this relationship. Conversely, 5% strongly disagreed, and 6% disagreed with the notion.

In agreement with these findings, Salgotra, A. K., et al. (2018) emphasized in their study the strong correlation between socioeconomic status and academic achievement, suggesting that economic circumstances can influence students' educational aspirations and career goals. During an interview, a member of the Board of Governors remarked, *"We've observed that students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds often have limited access to career guidance and exposure to diverse career options. Economic constraints can shape their aspirations and inhibit their ability to pursue their desired career paths."*

Based on the survey results, a notable portion of respondents, with 41% strongly agreeing and 25% agreeing, indicated that the financial resources available to students' families may influence their aspirations regarding educational attainment and future success at Nambulu Secondary School. Interestingly, none of the respondents were unsure about this relationship. However, a significant proportion (28%) strongly disagreed, and 6% disagreed with the notion.

This aligns with the findings of Gideon Adedayo (2017), who emphasized the impact of parental income on students' academic performance and aspirations. Their study underscored the influence of financial resources in shaping students' educational goals and future prospects.

During an interview, a School Administrator commented, "*We've observed that students from affluent families often have higher aspirations and greater confidence in pursuing ambitious educational and career goals. Conversely, students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds may have limited aspirations due to financial constraints and lack of exposure to opportunities.*"

Based on the survey results, a significant proportion of respondents, with 39% strongly agreeing and 32% agreeing, indicated that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may have different educational aspirations compared to their peers from more affluent families at Nambulu Secondary School. A small percentage (4%) expressed uncertainty about this relationship. However, 18% strongly disagreed, and 8% disagreed with the notion. This aligns with the findings of Gideon Adedayo (2017), who emphasized the influence of socioeconomic status on students' academic aspirations. Their study highlighted the disparities in educational goals between students from different socioeconomic backgrounds. During an interview, a Board of Governors Member remarked, "*We've noticed that students from disadvantaged backgrounds often have more practical career aspirations due to limited exposure to higher education and professional opportunities. In contrast, students from wealthier families may aim for prestigious professions or pursue advanced degrees, reflecting their access to resources and support networks.*"

Responses on the statement regarding the influence of family income levels on students' perceptions of higher education and career paths revealed that 33% of respondents strongly agreed, and 14% agreed with the statement. However, there was some uncertainty among participants, with 15% indicating they were not sure about this relationship. Conversely, 20% strongly disagreed, and 18% disagreed with the notion. Findings on the statement resonate with the perspective presented by Masereka, Salgotra, A. K., et al. (2018), emphasizing the influence of family income on students' academic performance and aspirations. Their study underscored the significance of socioeconomic factors in shaping students' educational goals and career aspirations. During an interview, a School Administrator mentioned, "*We've observed that students from low-income families often have limited exposure to diverse*

career options and may perceive higher education as financially unattainable. On the other hand, students from affluent backgrounds may have greater access to information about various career paths and the means to pursue higher education, shaping their aspirations accordingly."

4.3.3 The school related factors affecting students’ academic performance in Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko district.

This section is organized in alignment with the first study objective, which aimed to find out the school related factors affecting students’ academic performance in Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko district.

Table 4.3.3: Showing the school related factors affecting students’ academic performance in Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko district.

STATEMENT	SA		A		NS		SD		D	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
The adequacy of learning resources, such as textbooks and laboratories, significantly influences students' academic performance in secondary education.	46	54	18	21	0	0	21	25	0	0
The quality of school facilities, including classrooms and libraries, plays a crucial role in shaping students' academic success and achievement levels.	35	41	22	26	5	6	10	12	13	15
Positive interactions between teachers and students, characterized by effective communication and support, contribute significantly to students' overall academic performance.	23	27	13	15	21	25	10	12	18	21
School administrative policies, such as discipline enforcement and academic support programs, have a notable impact on students' academic progress and outcomes.	37	44	26	31	0	0	17	20	5	6

Source: Primary Data 2024

From Table 4.3.3 above, Responses on the statement regarding the influence of learning resources on students' academic performance indicate a strong consensus among participants,

with 54% strongly agreeing and 21% agreeing with the statement. Interestingly, none of the respondents were unsure about this relationship. However, 25% strongly disagreed with the notion. This result aligns with the findings of Koçak, Göksu, and Göktaş (2021), who emphasized the crucial role of adequate learning resources in enhancing students' academic achievement. Their study highlighted the need for equitable access to educational resources to ensure all students have the tools necessary for success.

During an interview, a School Administrator remarked, *"Access to adequate learning resources is crucial for students' academic success. In our experience, schools with well-equipped libraries, laboratories, and updated textbooks tend to have higher student performance compared to those with limited resources. It's essential to address resource disparities to promote educational equity and improve student outcomes."*

Responses on the statement regarding the influence of school facilities on students' academic success indicate a notable agreement among participants. 41% strongly agreed, and 26% agreed with the statement, suggesting a consensus on the importance of quality school facilities. However, 12% strongly disagreed, and 15% disagreed with the notion, indicating some dissenting opinions. This result is consistent with the findings of Labasano (2015), who emphasized the significant role of school facilities in shaping students' academic achievement. Labasano's study highlighted the need for well-maintained classrooms and libraries to create conducive learning environments that support student success.

During an interview, a Board of Governors Member stated, *"Quality school facilities are essential for students' academic success. Well-equipped classrooms and libraries provide students with the necessary resources and space for effective learning. Schools should prioritize maintaining and upgrading their facilities to ensure all students have access to a conducive learning environment."*

Responses on the statement regarding the impact of positive teacher-student interactions on academic performance show varying perspectives among participants. While 27% strongly agreed and 15% agreed with the statement, indicating some level of consensus, 12% strongly disagreed, and 21% disagreed. Interestingly, 25% were not sure about this relationship, suggesting uncertainty among a significant portion of respondents. This result aligns with the findings of Ullah and Almani (2022), who emphasized the importance of effective communication and support between teachers and students in enhancing academic

performance. According to their study, positive teacher-student interactions foster a conducive learning environment that promotes student engagement and achievement.

During an interview, a School Administrator noted, "*Positive interactions between teachers and students are crucial for fostering a supportive learning environment. When students feel valued and supported by their teachers, they are more motivated to actively participate in class and strive for academic success.*"

Responses on the statement regarding the impact of school administrative policies on students' academic progress indicate a significant level of agreement among participants. A total of 44% strongly agreed and 31% agreed with the statement, suggesting a consensus on the importance of administrative policies in shaping academic outcomes. Interestingly, 20% strongly disagreed, and 6% disagreed, indicating some disagreement among respondents. This result resonates with the findings of Labasano (2015), who emphasized the significant influence of school administrative policies, such as discipline enforcement and academic support programs, on students' academic progress and outcomes. Labasano's study highlighted the role of supportive administrative policies in creating a conducive learning environment that fosters student success.

During an interview, a Board of Governors Member remarked, "*School administrative policies play a crucial role in setting the tone for academic success. When schools have clear and consistent policies in place, students are better able to focus on their studies and thrive academically.*"

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0. Introduction

In this chapter, the study findings were clarified, examining them in light of existing theories and empirical evidence discussed earlier. The researcher analyzed how these results aligned with previous assumptions and expectations, assessing the extent to which they supported the proposed propositions. Conclusions were drawn from the findings, and recommendations were provided based on these conclusions.

5.1. Discussion of the results

5.1.1 How household income levels influence academic performance of students at Nambulu Secondary School, Sironko district.

The study aimed to clarify the results of the investigation regarding the influence of household income levels on students' academic performance at Nambulu Secondary School. Upon analysis of the data, several key findings emerged, which were then compared and contrasted with existing reviewed theories and empirical findings.

In line with prior assumptions and expectations, the majority of respondents agreed that household income levels significantly impact academic performance. This aligns with existing theories suggesting that socioeconomic factors play a crucial role in shaping educational outcomes. For example, researchers such as Liu, J., Peng, P., Zhao, B. et al. (2022) have emphasized the significant influence of household income levels on students' academic success, supporting the findings of this study.

However, there were also contrasting perspectives among participants, with some expressing uncertainty or disagreement regarding the relationship between household income and academic performance. This highlights the complexity of socioeconomic factors and suggests that additional variables may influence the academic success of students.

Despite these varying perspectives, the overall consensus among respondents supports the proposition that household income levels play a significant role in determining students' academic performance. This finding reinforces the importance of addressing economic disparities in educational interventions and policy decisions to ensure equitable access to educational resources and opportunities.

5.1.2 The relationship between students' economic status and educational aspirations among students at Nambulu Secondary School, Sironko district.

The investigation aimed to elucidate the relationship between students' economic status and their educational aspirations at Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko district. By analyzing the survey responses, contrasting them with existing theories and empirical evidence, and evaluating them against prior assumptions, the study provides valuable insights into this complex relationship.

Findings from the survey revealed a diversity of perspectives among respondents regarding the influence of economic status on educational aspirations. A significant proportion, comprising 39% who strongly agreed and 22% who agreed, supported the notion that students' aspirations for higher education often correlate with their family's economic status and local opportunities. This aligns with existing theories emphasizing the impact of socioeconomic factors on educational outcomes (Masereka, Salgotra, A. K., et al., 2018). However, a notable minority, including 20% who strongly disagreed and 18% who disagreed, indicated dissenting views, suggesting that socioeconomic status may not be the sole determinant of educational aspirations.

Similarly, the survey uncovered mixed perspectives on the influence of economic circumstances on long-term educational goals and career aspirations. While a majority, with 60% strongly agreeing and 27% agreeing, acknowledged the profound impact of economic circumstances, there were contrasting opinions, with 5% strongly disagreeing and 6% disagreeing. These findings reflect the complexity of socioeconomic factors in shaping students' aspirations and echo previous research highlighting the multifaceted nature of this relationship (Salgotra, A. K., et al., 2018).

Furthermore, the study identified divergent views regarding the influence of family income on perceptions of educational attainment and future success. While a significant proportion, including 41% who strongly agreed and 25% who agreed, recognized the role of financial resources, 28% strongly disagreed, indicating skepticism about this relationship. This suggests that while economic resources may play a significant role, other factors may also contribute to students' aspirations, such as access to support networks and career guidance (Gideon Adedayo, 2017).

5.1.3 The school related factors affecting students' academic performance in Nambulu Secondary School, Sironko district.

The investigation aimed to clarify the influence of school-related factors on students' academic performance at Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko district. These results were analyzed in comparison with existing theories and empirical findings, and their implications were evaluated in relation to prior assumptions and expectations.

One of the key findings pertained to the influence of learning resources on academic performance. A significant majority of respondents (75%) agreed that learning resources, such as textbooks and laboratories, significantly impact academic performance. This finding aligns with existing theories, such as the Resource-Based View of Education, which emphasizes the importance of adequate resources in facilitating learning outcomes. Additionally, empirical studies by researchers like Koçak, Göksu, and Göktaş (2021) have highlighted the positive correlation between access to learning resources and academic achievement.

However, contrasting views were evident regarding the impact of school facilities on academic success. While 67% of respondents acknowledged the importance of quality school facilities, 25% expressed skepticism or disagreement. This discrepancy suggests that while some believe in the significance of well-equipped classrooms and libraries, others may prioritize different factors in explaining academic performance. This finding challenges the assumption that all school-related factors uniformly contribute to academic success.

Similarly, the role of positive teacher-student interactions yielded mixed responses. While 42% of participants recognized the importance of such interactions, 46% expressed uncertainty or disagreement. This contrasts with theories like Social Learning Theory, which underscore the importance of supportive teacher-student relationships in fostering academic motivation and achievement. Empirical findings by Ullah and Almani (2022) support this theory, suggesting that positive interactions contribute to a conducive learning environment.

Regarding school administrative policies, 75% of respondents acknowledged their impact on academic progress. This finding is consistent with existing theories highlighting the role of organizational behaviour in shaping educational outcomes. Labasano (2015) has argued that supportive administrative policies contribute to a positive school climate, which in turn enhances student performance. However, dissenting views (25%) suggest that not all

participants perceive administrative policies as influential, highlighting potential variations in school contexts.

5.2 Conclusion

The study's findings provide valuable insights into the relationship between household income levels and academic performance. While they support existing theories regarding the influence of socioeconomic factors on educational outcomes, they also highlight the need for further research to explore additional variables that may contribute to students' academic success. By understanding the complex interplay of factors affecting academic performance, educators and policymakers can develop more effective strategies to support students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

The findings of the investigation offer valuable insights into the complex interplay between economic status and educational aspirations. While there is evidence to support the influence of socioeconomic factors, there are also contrasting perspectives and uncertainties among participants. These findings underscore the need for a nuanced understanding of the factors shaping educational aspirations and highlight the importance of tailored interventions to support students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds in achieving their educational and career goals.

The investigation's findings provide valuable insights into the complex interplay between school-related factors and academic performance. While some aspects, like learning resources and administrative policies, align with existing theories and expectations, others, such as school facilities and teacher-student interactions, reveal contrasting perspectives. These findings underscore the need for tailored interventions and further research to address the multifaceted nature of school environments and their impact on student outcomes.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn from the study's findings, several recommendations can be made to support educational practice and policy development:

The school administration should invest in diverse learning materials and facilities, ensuring equitable access for all students regardless of socioeconomic status. Prioritize resource allocation to support students' academic needs and bridge existing disparities in educational resources.

Nambulu Secondary School should implement training programs to enhance educators' interpersonal skills and foster supportive relationships with students. Encourage open communication and empathy to create inclusive and motivating learning environments conducive to academic success.

Conduct thorough assessments of school infrastructure to identify deficiencies and prioritize improvements. Allocate resources to upgrade classrooms, libraries, and facilities, ensuring all students have access to quality learning environments that facilitate their academic growth and development.

APPENDICES

**APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS,
BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEMBERS, SCHOOL BURSARS, INSPECTORS OF
SCHOOLS, AND PTA MEMBERS**

Dear Respondent,

I am a student of Uganda Christian University, Mbale University College pursuing a Bachelors of Public Administration and Management. This questionnaire is intended to collect data on the Effect of Economic Poverty on the Completion of Secondary Schooling among Students of Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko District. You have been identified as a respondent and you are kindly requested to complete the questionnaire as illustrated in each section. Kindly answer the questions as honestly as possible and the information you give will be kept confidential and used for academic purposes only.

Thank you very much for your participation.

Warm regards,

NABUDE CATHERINE
S21/MUC/BPAM/017

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Instruction: For each of the items in this section, kindly tick (✓) in the box that represents the right option and where necessary, specify accordingly.

1. Sex: Male Female
2. Age: 18-30 31-40 years 41-50 years 51 and above
3. Level of education:
O'level A'level Certificate Diploma Degree
Other (please specify)
.....
4. Position held at your workplace?
5. For how long have you been working in that position?
1-3 years 4-6 years 6-9 years 9 and above years

SECTION B: How household income levels influence academic performance of students at Nambulu Secondary School, Sironko district.

Please tick on the rating scale 1 representing "Strongly Agree," 2 representing " Agree," 3 representing "Not Sure," 4 representing " Disagree," and 5 representing "Strongly Disagree."

	STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5
1.	The economic status of students' families profoundly shapes their academic performance within the school environment.					
2.	Students from financially stable households tend to exhibit better academic achievements compared to their counterparts.					
3.	Household income levels serve as a significant determinant of students' educational attainment and performance outcomes.					
4.	The socioeconomic background of students directly influences their engagement and success in academic endeavours.					
5.	Academic progress is intricately linked to the financial resources and support available within students' family environments.					

SECTION C: The relationship between students' economic status and educational aspirations among students at Nambulu Secondary School, Sironko district

Please tick on the rating scale 1 representing "Strongly Agree," 2 representing "Agree," 3 representing "Not Sure," 4 representing "Disagree," and 5 representing "Strongly Disagree"

	STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Students' aspirations for higher education often reflect their family's economic status and opportunities available in their community.					
2.	Economic circumstances can profoundly impact students' long-term educational goals and aspirations for future careers.					
3.	The financial resources available to students' families may influence their aspirations regarding educational attainment and future success.					
4.	Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may have different educational aspirations compared to their peers from more affluent families.					
5.	Family income levels can shape students' perceptions of the feasibility and desirability of pursuing higher education and specific career paths.					

SECTION D: The school related factors affecting students' academic performance in Nambulu Secondary School in Sironko district.

Please tick on the rating scale 1 representing "Strongly Agree," 2 representing " Agree," 3 representing "Not Sure," 4 representing " Disagree," and 5 representing "Strongly Disagree"

	STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5
1.	The adequacy of learning resources, such as textbooks and laboratories, significantly influences students' academic performance in secondary education.					
2.	The quality of school facilities, including classrooms and libraries, plays a crucial role in shaping students' academic success and achievement levels.					
3.	Positive interactions between teachers and students, characterized by effective communication and support, contribute significantly to students' overall academic performance.					
4.	School administrative policies, such as discipline enforcement and academic support programs, have a notable impact on students' academic progress and outcomes.					

**APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS,
TEACHERS, AND PARENTS-TEACHERS ASSOCIATION MEMBERS**

1. How do rate the household income levels of students at Nambulu Secondary School and how you believe they may impact academic performance?
2. How do you perceive the economic status of students at Nambulu Secondary School influencing their educational aspirations?
3. In your opinion, what are some of the aspirations commonly held by students at Nambulu Secondary School, and how do you think economic status plays a role in shaping these aspirations?
4. From your observations, what school-related factors do you believe have the most significant impact on students' academic performance at Nambulu Secondary School?
5. Discuss any specific instances where you've noticed household income levels affecting students' academic performance?
6. How do you think the economic status of students influences their access to educational resources and support systems at Nambulu Secondary School?
7. From your experience, what interventions or support mechanisms do you think could be implemented to mitigate the impact of economic status on students' educational aspirations?
8. In your opinion, what steps can Nambulu Secondary School take to address school-related factors that may be hindering students' academic performance?

APPENDIX III: RESEARCH INTRODUCTORY LETTER



**UGANDA CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY**
A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa
MBALE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Office of the Academic Registrar

To THE HEADMASTER
NAMBULI SECONDARY SCHOOL

Dear Sir/Madam,
Re: Academic Research
Christian greetings!

I confirm that Nabu Catherine conducted her research work Nambuli. DEPUTY HEADMASTER NAMBULI SECONDARY SCHOOL 18/03/2024

We are honored to introduce to you Mr. Mrs./Miss NABU CATHERINE 077232843
Of Registration Number; SD1/MUC/BPAM/017 pursuing a Masters' Degree/Postgraduate Diploma / Bachelor's Degree OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT

He/ she is required to carry out an academic research on the topic
EFFECT OF ECONOMIC POVERTY ON THE COMPLETION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL SCHOOLS
AMONG STUDENTS OF NAMBULI SECONDARY SCHOOL IN SIRONKI DISTRICT

and thereafter produce a well bound hard cover research report (MAROON) in color for undergraduate and three (BLACK) copies for Postgraduate students as a University requirement for the award of a degree/diploma in the academic discipline that he / she is pursuing.

We shall be grateful for the help you may offer to him or her accordingly.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Mr. Akampurira Timothy
Academic Registrar



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