

Socio-Economic Status and Quality Education in Uganda

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Abstract

Original Research Article

This scientific study examined the contribution of socio-economic status on quality education in Uganda while focusing on Ntungamo district in Uganda. The focal study utilized a descriptive survey research design with mixed approaches. A sample of 352 respondents out of 3430 target population were chosen using Sloven's formula. Data was gathered using survey questionnaires and interview guides and analyzed utilizing Descriptive statistics and Pearson Linear Correlation Coefficient (PLCC) for quantitative data and thematic analysis was employed for summarizing qualitative data. The research study findings came up without a significant correlation between socio-economic status and quality education, a case of secondary schools in Ntungamo district in Uganda. It was therefore concluded that the level of family socio-economic status does not affect the quality of education among students in Ntungamo District. High performing students come from both high and low socio-economic status families and similarly low performing students also come from both high and low socio-economic status families. The systematic research study recommended that the political leadership of Ntungamo District needs to be informed to spearhead sensitization of households to embrace socio-economic transformation through education and agricultural production. Generally, the parents and community need to be made to appreciate the need to address the socio-economic status that would enable their children to attain quality education in secondary schools.

Keywords: Socio-economic Status, Sensitization, Quality education, Uganda.

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INTRODUCTION

Globally, education is regarded as the bedrock to economic, political and technological advancement of a nation and this is why it is often emphasized that no nation can rise above its educational system. Higher education, particularly, secondary, technical and university education are being demanded all over the world owing to the fact that economic and social factors are increasingly driven by the advancement and application of knowledge being provided by them (Hanushek, 2021). Access to education has over many years of human development been a prerogative of those that could afford it and as a result it was a defining element as to the social class of a person. Wealthier parents could afford to send their children to better schools and generally because they were better educated and they were able to make a more informed decision as to which school their children should attend (Lee & Smith, 2017).

The Canadian education system like many others in modern economic states, face challenges of

the information and an increasingly competitive global economy. Consequently, many Canadian educators recognize the need to improve and create a kind of relevant quality education young Mexican schools contain a large percentage of average students in each grade because of students repeating grades and or dropping out and then re-enrolling in school. Since 1993, the state governments have controlled the running of pre-schools, primary and secondary schools and teacher training institutes. Many Mexican students do not advance to the upper secondary school level (Bernard, 2020).

The Indian constitution set forth in 1950 directs the government to provide free and compulsory education for all children of age 14. In 1986, the federal parliament adopted its National policy for education which has served as the base for the development of the national curriculum for elementary and secondary education. The intent of the common core is to cut a cross subject areas and to promote cultural heritage, egalitarianism, democracy and secularism, equality of sexes, protection of the environment, removal of social

barriers and the encouragement of scientific outlook (Krieger *et al.*, 2021).

South Africa is one of the most multicultural societies in the world. From 1941 to 1991, the structure of society was shaped by an official policy of apartheid. The apartheid legislation was repealed in 1991, initiating what promises to be dramatic restructuring of society including a restructuring of the segregated education system that had supported it. The government in the process of re-conceptualizing the school system from top to bottom in an effort to clarify the legal status of different categories of schools to establish national norms and standards for governance, finance and effectiveness of schooling (Ugandan Committee to review the organization, Governance and funding of schools, 2015).

In Uganda, education is one of government's key sectors and has continued to receive priority in resource allocation. Over the last five years the budget allocation to the education sector has been increasing steadily from six hundred thirty three billions in the year 2005/2006 to one trillion. Part of this money is meant for construction of class rooms because other schools do not have enough class rooms and pupils are taught under trees (Wamakuyu & Baguma, 2019).

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Data Capturing

The dataset used for the systematic research study was garnered while employing both primary and secondary foundations of data. Primary data was gathered while utilizing questionnaires and interview guides to key people in relation to the controlled research scientific study. Ancillary information was collected with the use of documented reviews. The scientific investigation study used a survey descriptive research design including qualitative and quantitative viewpoints.

Amin (2005) said that descriptive research design is usually used to report an event and its data characteristics. The scholar got a total of 352 respondents (sample size) while using Slovens formula to belong to the investigation study.

Sampling Methods

The investigator applied simple random sampling and purposive sampling modus operandi in the research scientific study. The study population involved the categories like students, teachers, parents and school managers.

Questionnaire and Interviews

The academic investigator used a scholar generated questionnaire to garner information from the

field because it covers a varied geographical space in data congregation; it gathers much information within a short period, and offers strong assurance in connection to secrecy.

The scholar used a qualitative consultation guide because it was important to comprehend the participants' subjective view of their backgrounds; unfolding the explanation of their world, revealing their real practices prior to organized elaborations (Karoro, 2017).

Validity and reliability of scientific research instruments

Validity of the scholar structured questionnaire was determined by applying content validity Index. After testing of the validity of the inquiry study instruments, the researcher obtained content validity index (CVI) of 0.78 which was generally above 0.75 indicating that the research tool was effective to elicit information necessary for the plausible systematic study (Amin, 2005). However, the validity of the interview plan was arrived at by talking to crucial participants to prove the answered interrogations (Gibbs, 2007).

Reliability of the academic generated questionnaire was considered using Cronbach's alpha coefficient formula looking at the investigation study variables that got an alpha coefficient of value more than 0.70. Since the reliability digit got by the scholar talked of 0.79 alpha value, it implied that the research information gathering method was reliable to avail data vibrant for the study. On the other side, the reliability of the study interviews was grasped relying on peer review mechanisms or strategies (Gibbs, 2007).

Data Analysis

Investigation statistical instruments which were engaged to analyze data for this scientific inquiry study included; descriptive statistics like tables, frequencies, percentages, and inferential analyses like Pearson Linear Correlation Coefficient (PLCC) for summarizing or scrutinizing quantitative data. More to that, Qualitative data were evaluated by scientifically consolidating information into logical subjects or sub themes for swift Interpretation along a narrative manner (Gibbs, 2007).

RESULTS

Quantitative relationship between socio-economic status and the quality of education

Pearson product moment correlation coefficient at 95% of level of significance at 0.05 margin of error was used to correlate socio-economic status and quality of education as indicated in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Pearson product moment correlation coefficient between socio-economic status and the quality of education in secondary schools in Ntungamo district (Level of significance = (0.05)

		1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Socio-economic status	1					
2	S1-S3 aggregate	-.091	1				
3	S4 aggregates	-.129	-.719	1			
4	S5 points	-.028	-.917	-.476	1		
5	School environment quality	-.139	-.147	-.310	-.058	1	
6	Student performance quality	-.064	-.086	-.147	-.006	-.411	1

Note. * =correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed), **=Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results in Table 1 indicated that the relationship between socio-economic status and quality of education in terms of both quality of school learning environment and quality of learner performance was not statistically significant. This implies that the family socio-economic status did not associate in any way with the students' academic attainments.

The results further indicated that the aggregate scored by the learners at senior 4 was significantly negatively related to the quality of the school learning environment ($r = -.310$, $p < .05$). This implied that the higher the quality of the school environment, the lower the aggregate (and hence the better performance) scored at senior 4. Conversely, it implied that the lower the quality of the school environment, the higher the aggregate (and hence the poorer the performance) scored at senior 4.

Qualitative relationship between socio-economic status and the quality of education

Contrary to the quantitative findings from the student data, all the respondents in the qualitative survey observed that the level of family socio-economic status affects the learners' performance. For example, Respondent 1 gave the following account:

"If parents are poor and cannot avail all the needs of the child, it will impact negatively to their performance in school. Quality teaching is compromised because teachers who are not paid properly and lack teaching materials will obviously not deliver as expected."

Community/parental involvement in a school situation will be very low if the parents / community are of low Socio-economic status. Parents who are poor will never fundraise for the school. A community that is poor will never motivate its citizens to support the school.

The socio-economic status of course affects school/work readiness of the learners as low social economic status families would find it rather difficult to systematically provide scholastic materials like books and pens to students. Such families might not provide enough meals to the learners and could find it difficult to pay for their children".

This suggested that all these above hinder the readiness of the school to deliver as expected in as far

as motivating learners is concerned. Learners who lack a lot in terms of supportive school materials will never concentrate well and their performance may be deplorable.

DISCUSSION

The findings indicated that the relationship between socio-economic status and quality of education in terms of both quality of school learning environment and quality of learner performance was not statistically significant. This implied that the family socio-economic status does not really affect the students' academic performance.

This finding was in consonance with the study conducted by Ominde (2019) on Family background education, who found out that families with above average income parents, often lack the time and energy to invest fully in their children's preparation for school, and they sometimes face a limited array of options for high-quality child care both before their children start school and during the early school years. Kindergarten teachers throughout the country report that children are increasingly arriving at school inadequately prepared.

However, these findings are in opposition to a popular study conducted by Okiooga (2013) on Learner Environment in Academics who found out that families from low Socio-economic status communities are less likely to have the financial resources or time availability to provide children with academic support, hence resulting in poor performance at school than their counterparts in high socio-economic status.

CONCLUSION

The level of family socio-economic status does not affect the quality of education among students in Ntungamo District. High performing students come from both high and low socio-economic status families and similarly low performing students also come from both high and low socio-economic status families.

Implications for the study

The political leadership of Ntungamo district needs to be informed to spearhead sensitization of households to embrace socio-economic transformation through education and agricultural production. Generally, the parents and community need to be made

to appreciate the need to address the socio-economic status that would enable their children to attain quality education in secondary schools. This can be done by local government officials in Uganda.

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