

Students' Attitude and Student Academic Performance in Government-Aided Secondary Schools in Wakiso District-Uganda

Namuzinge Janifer¹, Nabukeera Madina², Matovu Musa³, Ssali Muhammadi Bisaso⁴

¹Post graduate Student, Faculty of Education, Islamic University In Uganda.

²Associate Professor. Dr., Faculty of Management Studies, Islamic University In Uganda.

³Associate Prof. Dr., Faculty of Education, Islamic University In Uganda.

⁴Dr., Faculty of Education, Islamic University In Uganda.

Abstract

This study explored the relationship between students' attitude and student academic performance in Government-Aided secondary schools in Wakiso District-Uganda. The study was guided by three specific objectives; i) To examine the relationship between student engagement and student academic performance, ii) To examine the relationship between student motivation and student academic performance, and iii) To examine the relationship between student behavior and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district. The study adopted a correlational research design coupled with both quantitative and qualitative approaches. A sample size of 40 respondents was considered constituting of head teachers and teachers from the 10 selected government-aided secondary schools in the district. Both descriptive analysis and correlation analysis was employed to provide answers to the study phenomenon. The study revealed that there is a very strong positive and statistically significant relationship between student engagement and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district. The study also revealed that there is a moderately positive and statistically significant relationship between student motivation and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district. Further, the study also revealed that there is a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between student behavior and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district. Therefore, the study concludes that student attitude in form of student engagement, student motivation, and student behavior has a statistically significant association with student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district in that an increase in the different forms of student attitude will resultantly lead to an improvement in student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district. The study recommends that the government and secondary schools' administrators should ensure efficiency and promote student attitudes such as motivation, engagement and participation, comprehension, and critical thinking as these play a significant role in helping students achieve higher academic performance and develop skills that are valuable throughout their educational careers and beyond in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district.

Keywords: Students' Attitude, Student Engagement, Student Motivation, Student Behavior, Student Academic Performance, and Government-Aided Secondary School.

Introduction

This study aimed at exploring the relationship between students' attitude and student academic performance in Government-Aided secondary schools in Wakiso District-Uganda.

Historical Perspective

Globally, student academic performance is significantly influenced by students' attitudes which can alter every education aspect of the students' life which attitudes include their interest, ability, and willingness to learn (Rebelo, 2018). During the early to mid-20th century there was progressive education movement which promoted experiential learning and the idea that education should be student-centered and also emphasized the importance of student attitudes, particularly curiosity and intrinsic motivation as these were seen as crucial for meaningful learning to achieve improved academic performance (Awang, Ghani & Ramalu, 2013). In the African context, education is highly valued as a means of upward social mobility and improving one's life circumstances which has resulted into putting more emphasis and implementing strategies aimed at improving student performance in the education sector such as enhancing student positive attitudes towards education often instilled from a young age, emphasizing respect for teachers, dedication to studying, and perseverance through challenges (Godwin & Okoronka, 2015).

Theoretical Perspective

The study was guided by the Self-Determination Theory developed by Ryan and Deci in 1985. The theory focuses on the role of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in driving human behavior and attitudes towards a specific aspect (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The theory also focuses on how students' motivation, autonomy, and sense of competence influence their attitudes and academic performance (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Covington (2018) argues that when students experience autonomy (feeling in control of their actions), competence (feeling capable), and relatedness (feeling connected to others), students are more likely to have positive attitudes towards learning and achieve higher academic performance outcomes. Therefore, this theory was adopted and applied to this study since it provides a connection between students' attitudes and student academic performance.

Contextual Perspective

The study was conducted in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district examining the relationship between students' attitude and student academic performance. This case study has been considered due to the limited or no research that has been conducted in the area in relation to students' attitude and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools. Additionally, Wakiso district was considered due to the increased poor student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools indicated by a decline in the performance of students in UCE exams from 78.4% in 2019 to 72.6% in 2021 of the student who passed in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district (Wakiso District Local Government[WDLG], 2021).

Conceptual Perspective

Students' attitude refers to their beliefs, feelings, and perceptions towards various aspects of learning, sch-

oling, and academic activities which significantly influence student motivation, engagement, and behavior (Mahdi, 2014). Student performance refers to the outcomes and contributions of the student in an academic institution to enable them attain their academic goals (Tadese, Yeshaneh & Mulu, 2022). For the case of this study, students' attitude was conceptualized in terms of student engagement, student motivation, and student behavior, while student performance was conceptualized in terms of grades and scores, class attendance, extracurricular activities, communication skills, participation and engagement, subject mastery, completion of assignments, and cognitive skills among others.

Statement of the problem

In Uganda, the government through the Ministry of Education and Sports has implemented and put in place several policies and programs aimed at improving the education system and the performance of students in the different districts in the country. For instance, the Universal Secondary Education (USE) policy and program has been implemented with the objective of providing education for All and free education to students and also aimed at increasing the students' motivation and attitudes towards joining the secondary education level as well to induce student performance in all government or government-aided secondary schools in the country (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2018).

However, despite all the remarkable efforts and policies, student performance in the government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district is still grappling characterized with a decline in the student final exam grades, increased student absenteeism rates, and limited engagement in classroom activities among others (Rwothumio & Kambaza, 2022). Evidence indicates indicated by a decline in the performance of students in UCE exams from 78.4% in 2019 to 72.6% in 2021 of the student who passed in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district (WDLG, 2021). This has consequently resulted into increased student dropouts at the O-Level not making it to the next level, and also students missing out on employment opportunities as a result of their academic performance. Therefore, it is upon this evidence that the current study examined the relationship between students' attitude and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district.

Objectives of the Study

General Objective

The general objective of the study was to examine the relationship between students' attitude and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district.

Specific Objectives

1. To examine the relationship between student engagement and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district.
2. To examine the relationship between student motivation and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district.
3. To examine the relationship between student behavior and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district.

Study Hypotheses

The specific objectives were guided by the following alternative hypotheses;

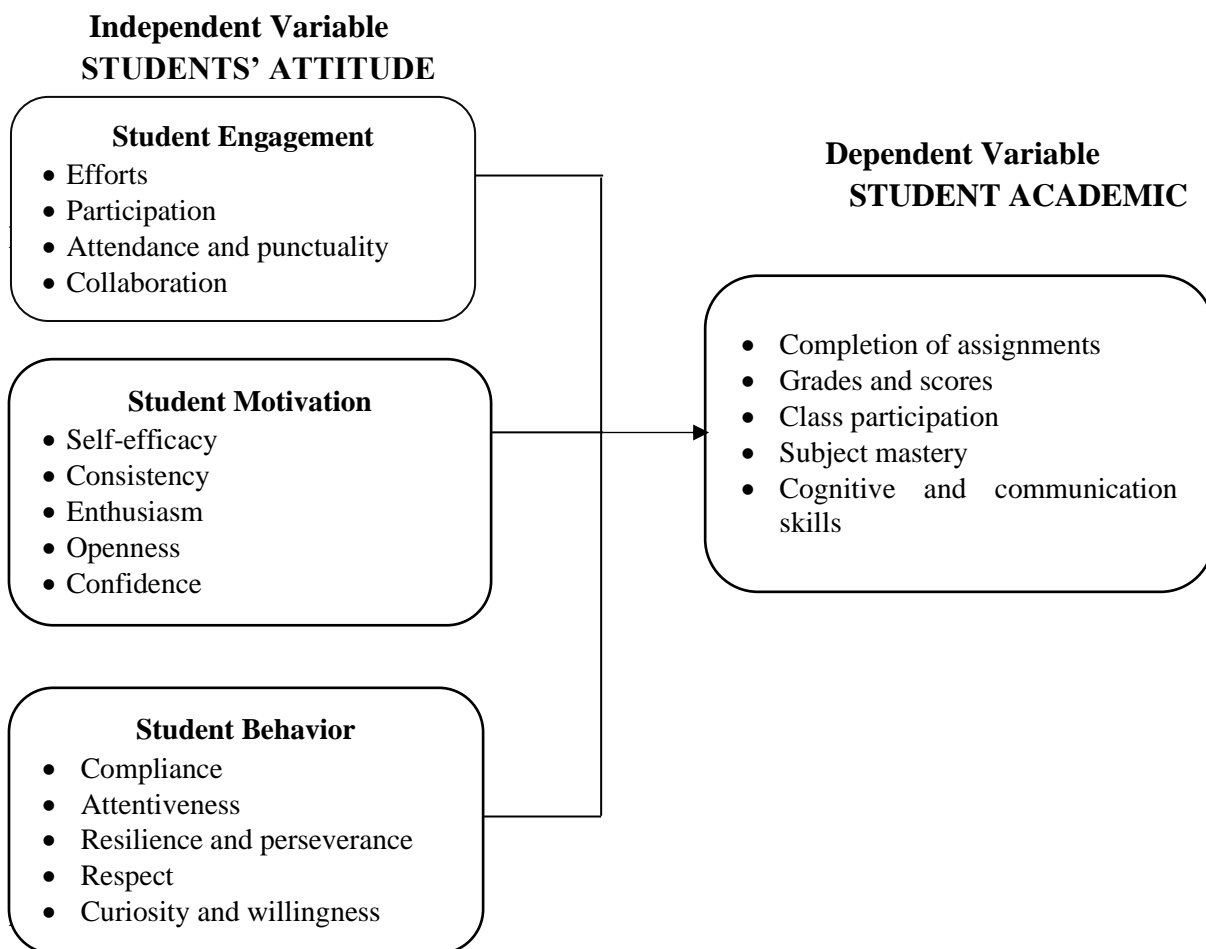
Ha1: There is a statistically significant relationship between student engagement and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district.

Ha2: There is a statistically significant relationship between student motivation and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district.

Ha3: There is a statistically significant relationship between student behavior and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework presents a diagrammatic illustration on the association between Students’ Attitude and Student Academic Performance.



Students’ Attitude and Student Academic Performance

Students’ attitudes towards learning and education play a crucial role in shaping student academic performance. Positive student attitudes foster motivation, engagement, effective study habits, emotional well-being, strong support systems, and self-confidence all of which contribute to higher student academic achievement and performance (Langat, 2015). According to Erdogan, Bayram and Deniz (2018) positive student attitudes towards learning, school, and specific subjects generally correlate with higher student academic performance. The authors argue that students with positive attitude towards learning often exhibit intrinsic motivation through engagement in learning activities for the inherent satisfaction they provide which leads to greater effort and perseverance in their studies (Erdogan et al., 2018).

Student attitudes encompass a variety of dimensions reflecting their feelings, beliefs, and behavior towards different aspects of their educational experience. Student attitude also includes the student academic engagement which measures the extent of a student's participation and investment in their educational activities such as motivation, interest in the subjects, effort put into studying, and participation in class discussions and activities (Awang, Ahmad, Bakar, Ghani, Yunus, Ibrahim, Ramalu, Saad & Rahman, 2013). In addition, the authors assert that student attitudes also involve the students' beliefs about their own abilities and competence in academic settings such as belief in one's ability to succeed (self-efficacy) and overall perception of oneself as a learner (self-concept) which may significantly influence the student academic performance (Awang et al., 2013).

A study by Ming, Ling and Jaafar (2017) found that student attitudes in form of motivation including self-efficacy and goal orientation significantly predict student academic performance in Malaysian Secondary Schools. The authors posit that students with positive attitudes and high self-efficacy tend to achieve higher grades and perform better in class compared to those with negative attitudes and low self-efficacy (Ming et al., 2017). Similarly, positive student attitudes encourage students to put in consistent effort, tackle challenging tasks, and persist through difficulties. This sustained effort directly impacts student academic success thus leading to an improvement in student academic performance (Ming et al., 2017).

According to Jassem (2014) students' attitude encompasses student active engagement and participation in academic and learning activities which may promote and enhance student academic performance. The author asserts that students with favorable attitudes are more likely to participate actively in class discussions, group work, and other learning activities which enhances understanding and retention of material, leading to better student academic performance outcomes such as better grades, improved communication skills, and proficiency in specific academic subjects (Jassem, 2014). In addition, Yara and Philiat (2019) argued that students' attitude includes attitudes toward teachers and teaching methods such as students' perceptions of and respect for their teachers, as well as their opinions on the effectiveness of different teaching methods and approaches which perceptions affect their understanding and this may resultantly affect their performance in class and in different activities at school.

Positive student behavioral attitudes towards school and learning promote good classroom behavior, such as attentiveness, respect for teachers and peers, and adherence to classroom norms. These student behaviors create a conducive learning environment that benefits and detrimental to the academic performance of students in the school (Malala, Onderi & Ajowi, 2021). The authors argued that students with a positive outlook behavior towards their education often develop effective study habits, such as regular review of material, organized note-taking, and strategic preparation for exams which habits and behaviors significantly influence the student academic performance (Malala et al., 2021). Additionally, Langat (2015) postulated that positive attitudes towards school and learning are often reflected in better classroom behavior and discipline. Students who respect rules and maintain a positive attitude are more likely to create a conducive learning environment for themselves and others which might influence the student academic performance.

A study by Reynolds, Bazemore, Hanebuth, Hendren and Horn (2021) found out that non-cognitive factors such as student attitude have a positive and significant association with university science students' academic performance in United States. The study indicates that students' attitude such as motivation, active engagement, and student study habits or behaviors are strong predictors of university students' academic performance, even more so than prior academic achievements. Additionally, the author argues

that students with a growth mindset in terms of a positive attitude towards learning and intelligence development perform better academically compared to those with a fixed mindset (Reynolds et al., 2021). Student engagement and participation as a form of student attitude towards learning fosters a teacher-student relationship which positively influences the student academic performance (Dagneu, 2017). Actively engaged students often develop strong relationships with their teachers who can provide guidance, support, and personalized feedback to the students and this relationship fosters a positive learning environment and encourages academic success and improved student performance (Dagneu, 2017). Additionally, Kurniawan, Astalini, Darmaji and Melsayanti (2019) argued that engaged students frequently collaborate with their peers, leading to shared knowledge, diverse perspectives, and enhanced problem-solving skills through group work and study sessions that reinforce learning and improve student academic performance. The authors also assert that attitudes can be contagious. Positive attitudes towards learning can spread among peers, creating a supportive and collaborative learning environment that enhances the overall students' academic performance (Kurniawan et al., 2019).

A study by Awang, Jindal-Snape and Barber (2013) examined the relationship between students' attitudes towards education and students' academic performance in China. The study found out that there is a strong and significant association between students' attitudes towards education and students' academic performance and commitment in China. The authors argued that students who have negative attitudes towards education activities are found to exhibit challenging behavior including anti-social and off-task behavior which behaviors significantly affect their academic performance (Awang et al., 2013).

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopted a correlational research design coupled with both quantitative and qualitative approaches. A correlational research design is concerned with examining for an association between variables in the given population of study (Kassu, 2019). Therefore, this research design enabled the researcher in examining the relationship between students' attitude and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district. A mixed approach enabled the researcher to obtain both the quantitative and qualitative data that was utilized to provide an understanding to the study phenomenon.

Target Population and Sample Size

The study considered a target population of 57 government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district (WDLG, 2022). However, due to the time constraint the researcher considered 10 government-aided secondary schools from which a sample was selected that participated in the study. The study considered a sample size of 40 respondents which constituted of a total of 10 head teachers and a total of 30 teachers selected from the ten selected government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district to provide both qualitative and quantitative data respectively that was used to provide answers to the study objectives.

Sampling Procedure

The researcher employed both convenient sampling and simple random sampling to select respondents who participated in the study. Convenient sampling involves the researcher selecting participants who are readily available and easily accessible and this was used to select the school head teachers who acted as key informants to provide qualitative data. Simple random sampling was employed to select teachers from the different schools to participate in the study so as to provide quantitative data. Simple random sampling

gives an equal probability of selection to each of the individuals in the study population into the study sample (Elfil & Negida, 2017).

Data Collection Methods

Questionnaire Survey Method

A questionnaire survey method is a way of attaining information through a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of collecting information from respondents (Mathiyazhagan, 2013). The questionnaire survey method was vital in order to generate uniform information which ensured the comparability of data using easy to understand structured questions. Thus, this method was used as it enabled the researcher to obtain and collect quantitative data from the respondents in the shortest time possible.

Interview Method

An interview method involves the use of unstructured questions where the researcher seeks to probe for an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study (Sekaran, 2013). This method enabled the researcher to probe for in-depth information that was generated from key informants' (head teachers) opinions and views in relation to the study phenomenon.

Data Collection Instruments

Structured Questionnaire

A structured questionnaire is a tool used to collect information from respondents constituting of closed-ended responses to the questions from which respondents are required to choose (Acheung, 2014). The study used structured questionnaires to collect quantitative data from the teachers which contained closed-ended questions and encoded answers that were self-administered to the respondents in the different selected government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district. The structured questionnaires were used since they require little time and gather a lot of information on the phenomenon under study.

Interview Guide

An interview guide is a research instrument used to collect qualitative information comprising of open-ended questions that are used to generate respondents' in-depth views and perceptions about a given phenomenon under study (Sekaran, 2013). The interview guide comprised of open-ended questions which were asked to the key informants (head teachers) purposively to obtain in-depth information related to the study objectives.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis enables the researcher to measure, analyze and understand a phenomenon through running statistical tests and descriptive analysis. The study employed both descriptive and correlation analysis methods in analyzing the quantitative primary data collected. Descriptive analysis was used when analyzing respondents' demographics presented in form of frequencies and percentages. In order to examine the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable, Spearman's rank correlation analysis was employed to give the empirical evidence on the study hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. Spearman's Rank Correlation measures the relationship between two ordinal or nominal variables (Jerrold, 2016). Additionally, qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis involved the transformation of respondents' views and perceptions by the researcher into themes in relation to the research questions and these were presented in form of verbatim quotations so as to supplement the quantitative data collected.

Ethical Consideration

Before undertaking the study, the researcher acquired an introductory letter from Islamic University in Uganda as a prerequisite for obtaining permission from authorities in the different schools to conduct the study in their premises. The researcher also first sought for respondent’s consent to participate in the study before questionnaires were given to them or engaged in the interviews and the purpose of the study was explained to the respondents at the beginning of the study. Additionally, the researcher ensured confidentiality of the respondents and information that was provided as this is a fundamental ethical prerequisite in research.

Study Findings

The findings presented in this chapter include; descriptive statistics on the demographic composition of the respondents and correlation analysis to provide answers to the study objectives.

Findings on the Demographic Compositions

The study assessed the demographic compositions of the respondents who took part in the study from the different selected government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district and the results are presented in Table 1;

Table 1: Demographic Composition of Respondents

Demographic Composition			
Category	Items	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	21	70.0
	Female	9	30.0
	Total	30	100.0
Age Category	25-30 years	4	13.3
	31-35 years	13	43.3
	36-40 years	8	26.7
	Above 40 years	5	16.7
	Total	30	100.0
Level of Education	Certificate	4	13.3
	Diploma	11	36.7
	Bachelors	14	46.7
	Masters	1	3.3
	Total	30	100.0
Marital Status	Married	18	60.0
	Single	9	30.0
	Divorced	3	10.0
	Total	30	100.0
Period of Work at the Secondary School	1-3 years	3	10.0
	4-5 years	15	50.0
	Above 5 years	12	40.0
	Total	30	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2024

From Table 1, the results indicate that majority 21 (70.0%) of the respondents who participated in the study were males and 9 (30.0%) of the respondents who participated in the study were females. The study findings also revealed that a bigger proportion 13 (43.3%) of the respondents were aged 31-40 years, followed by 8 (26.7%) of the respondents who were aged 36-40 years, then 5 (16.7%) of the respondents who were aged above 40 years, and the least proportion 4 (13.3%) of the respondents were aged 25-30 years.

In addition, the study findings revealed that most 14 (46.7%) of the respondents had attained a bachelors' level of education, followed by 11 (36.7%) of the respondents who had attained a diploma level of education, then 4 (13.3%) of the respondents who had attained a certificate level of education, and only 1 (3.3%) of the respondents had attained a masters' level of education. In regards to marital status, majority 18 (60.0%) of the respondents were married, followed by 9 (30.0%) of the respondents who were single, and a few 3 (10.0%) of the respondents were divorced.

The study further revealed that majority 15 (50.0%) of the respondents had worked with the respective government-aided secondary schools for a period of 4-5 years, followed by 12 (40.0%) of the respondents who had worked with the respective government-aided secondary schools for a period of above 5 years, and the least proportion 3 (10.0%) of the respondents had worked with the respective government-aided secondary schools for a period of 1-3 years.

Findings on the Objectives of the Study

This section presents the findings in relation to the specific study objectives.

Relationship between Student Engagement and Student Academic Performance in Government-Aided Secondary Schools in Wakiso District

The study sought to examine the relationship between student engagement and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district. The relationship was analyzed using Spearman's Rank correlation analysis and the findings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Correlation findings on the Relationship between Student Engagement and Student Academic Performance in Government-Aided Secondary Schools in Wakiso District

		Student Engagement	Student Academic Performance
Student Engagement	Spearman's Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.807**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	30	30
Student Academic Performance	Spearman's Correlation Coefficient	.807**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	30	30

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary data, 2024

The study findings in Table 2 revealed that there is a very strong positive and statistically significant relationship between student engagement and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district ($r = 0.807$, $N = 30$, $P\text{-value} = 0.000$) at a 0.01 level of significance. The findings imply that an increase in student engagement strongly and significantly leads to an improvement in student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district.

In regards to student engagement and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district, some of the key informants asserted that;

“...student engagement influences better attendance. Engaged students are more likely to attend classes regularly which ensures that they do not miss out on important lessons, discussions, and activities which are crucial for understanding the material and performing well academically.” (Head teacher 07)

“When students are engaged, they participate more actively in class. This includes asking questions, contributing to discussions, and collaborating with peers which active participation helps reinforce learning, clarify doubts, and deepen understanding, all of which contribute to better student academic performance.” (Head teacher 01)

“Engaged students are more focused during lessons, which improves their ability to comprehend and retain information. The students are more likely to connect new knowledge with existing knowledge leading to a more integrated understanding of the subject matter and this greatly improves the academic performance of students in the school.” (Head teacher 10)

“Student engagement often involves activities that promote critical thinking, such as problem-solving, analysis, and evaluation. These skills are essential for academic success as they enable students to tackle complex questions, make informed decisions, and apply knowledge in various contexts which improves and enhances the student academic performance.” (Head teacher 01)

“Engaged students generally have a positive attitude towards learning and education. They are more likely to enjoy school, take pride in their work, and have higher self-esteem and these positive attitudes contribute to a more conducive learning environment which would lead to better academic performance outcomes.” (Head teacher 06)

Relationship between Student Motivation and Student Academic Performance in Government-Aided Secondary Schools in Wakiso District

The study also sought to examine the relationship between student motivation and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district. The relationship was analyzed using Spearman’s Rank correlation analysis and the results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation findings on the Relationship between Student Motivation and Student Academic Performance in Government-Aided Secondary Schools in Wakiso District

		Student Motivation	Student Academic Performance
Student Motivation	Spearman’s Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.488**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	30	30
Student Academic Performance	Spearman’s Correlation Coefficient	.488**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	30	30

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary data, 2024

The study findings in Table 3 revealed that there is a moderately positive and statistically significant relationship between student motivation and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district ($r = 0.488$, $N = 30$, $P\text{-value} = 0.000$) at a 0.01 level of significance. The findings imply that an increase in student motivation moderately but significantly leads to an improvement in student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district. In accordance to student motivation and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district, some of the key informants had this to say;

“Student motivation is associated with increased effort and persistence. Motivated students are more likely to put in the necessary effort to understand and master the material. They are also more persistent in overcoming academic challenges and setbacks, leading to better student academic performance over time.” (Head teacher 04)

“...motivation drives students to engage more deeply with their studies. They are more likely to participate in class discussions, complete assignments, and seek out additional resources to enhance their understanding of the subject matter.” (Head teacher 09)

“Highly motivated students develop effective study habits and strategies. The students are more organized, manage their time well, and are proactive in their learning which contributes to better retention of information and higher academic achievement.” (Head teacher 06)

“Student motivation fosters a positive attitude towards learning. Motivated students often find joy and satisfaction in the learning process which can lead to a more enjoyable and enriching educational experience that can enhance their overall academic performance. Additionally, motivated students are better able to concentrate during lessons and study sessions which allows them to absorb and process information more efficiently, leading to improved understanding and retention.” (Head teacher 02)

Relationship between Student Behavior and Student Academic Performance in Government-Aided Secondary Schools in Wakiso District

The study further sought to examine the relationship between student behavior and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district. The relationship was analyzed using Spearman’s Rank correlation analysis and the results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Correlation Findings on the Relationship between Student Behavior and Student Academic Performance in Government-Aided Secondary Schools in Wakiso District

		Student Behavior	Student Academic Performance
Student Behavior	Spearman’s Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.579**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.001
	N	30	30
Student Academic Performance	Spearman’s Correlation Coefficient	.579**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.
	N	30	30

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary data, 2024

The study findings in Table 4 revealed that there is a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between student behavior and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district ($r = 0.579$, $N = 30$, $P\text{-value} = 0.000$) at a 0.01 level of significance. The findings imply that an increase in student behavior considerably and significantly leads to an improvement in student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district.

In relation to student behavior and student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district, some of the key informants argued that;

“Student behaviors that reflect discipline and self-regulation, such as controlling impulses, staying focused on tasks, and avoiding distractions are vital for academic success. These behaviors help students maintain a steady and productive study routine which could improve their academic performance.” (Head teacher 08)

“Proactively seeking help when needed is a behavior that can significantly impact academic performance. Students who ask questions, attend extra help sessions, or seek tutoring are more likely to overcome difficulties and improve their understanding of the subject matter to achieve better academic performance.” (Head teacher 05)

“...student behaviors reflecting a positive attitude towards learning, such as curiosity, perseverance, and a growth mindset, encourage continuous improvement and resilience in the face of challenges, leading to better student academic outcomes. Positive student behaviors support a productive learning environment and effective study practices, leading to higher academic achievement.” (Head teacher 02)

“Effective time management is essential for balancing academic responsibilities with other activities. Students who manage their time well are more likely to allocate sufficient time for studying, leading to better preparation and improved academic performance.” (Head teacher 07)

“Positive student behaviors significantly influence an improvement in the student academic performance. Positive behaviors such as attentiveness, participation in discussions, and active involvement in class activities enhance learning. Students who are engaged are more likely to understand and retain the material, leading to better academic outcomes.....” (Head teacher 01)

Conclusion

The study concludes that student attitude in form of student engagement, student motivation, and student behavior has a statistically significant association with student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district in that an increase in the different forms of student attitude will resultantly lead to an improvement in student academic performance in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district.

Recommendations

The study recommends that the government and secondary schools' administrators should ensure efficiency and promote student attitudes such as motivation, engagement and participation, comprehension, and critical thinking as these play a significant role in helping students achieve higher academic performance and develop skills that are valuable throughout their educational careers and beyond in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district.

The study also recommends that educators and policymakers should design interventions, policies, and programs that better support student academic learning and overall well-being as well as promote positive students' attitudes towards education which can improve student academic outcomes in government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso district.

References

1. Acheung, A. K. (2014). *Structured Questionnaires*. Dordrecht: Springer. Retrieved from https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007%2F978-94-007-0753-5_2888
2. Awang, M. M., Ahmad, A. R., Bakar, N. A., Ghani, S. A., Yunus, A. N. M., Ibrahim, M. A. H., Ramalu, J. C., Saad, C. P., & Rahman, M. J. A. (2013). Students' Attitudes and Their Academic Performance in Nationhood Education. *Journal on International Education Studies*, 6(11), 21-28.
3. Awang, M. M., Ghani, S. A., & Ramalu, J. C. (2013). Students' Attitudes and Their Academic Performance in Nationhood Education. *Journal on International Education Studies*, 6(11), 21-27.
4. Awang, M. M., Jindal-Snape, D., & Barber, T. (2013). A Documentary Analysis of the Government's Circulars on Positive Behavior Enhancement Strategies in China. *Asian Journal on Social Science*, 9(5), 203-208.
5. Covington, M. V. (2018). Self-Determination Theory, Motivation, and School Achievement: An Integrative Review. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 51(1), 171-200.
6. Dagneu, A. (2017). The Relationship Between Students' Attitudes Towards School, Values of Education, Achievement Motivation and Academic Achievement in Gondar Secondary Schools, Ethiopia. *Journal on Research in Pedagogy*, 7(1), 30-42.
7. Elfil, M. & Negida, A. (2017). Sampling Methods in Clinical Research: An Educational Review. *Journal of Academic Emergency Medicine*, 5(1), 52-69.
8. Erdogan, Y., Bayram, S., & Deniz, L. (2018). Factors that Influence Academic Achievement and Attitudes in Web-based Education. *International Journal of Instruction*, 1(1), 31-48.
9. Godwin, A. B. & Okoronka, U. A. (2015). Attitude and Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Physics in Nigeria. *International Journal on Education, Social Sciences and Humanities*, 8(10), 499-508.
10. Jassem, G. M. (2014). Student Attitudes towards Chemistry: An Examination of Choices and Preferences. *American Journal of Educational Research*, 23(5), 452-489.
11. Jerrold, H. (2016). *Encyclopedia of Biostatistics: Spearman's Rank Correlation*. Berkshire: Open University Press.
12. Kassu, J. S. (2019). *Research Design and Methodology*. London, United Kingdom: IntechOpen Limited.
13. Kurniawan, D. A., Astalini, A., Darmaji, D., & Melsayanti, R. (2019). Students' Attitude towards Natural Sciences. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Uganda*, 8(3), 455-460.
14. Langat, A. C. (2015). *Students' Attitudes and Their Effects on Learning and Achievement in Mathematics: A Case Study of Public Secondary Schools in Kiambu County, Kenya*. Nairobi, Kenya: Kenyatta University.
15. Mahdi, G. J. (2014). Student Attitudes towards Chemistry: An Examination of Choices and Preferences. *American Journal on Educational Research*, 2(6), 351-356.

16. Malala, G., Onderi, H. L. N., & Ajowi, J. O. (2021). Effect of Student Attitude on Academic Performance of Chemistry Subject: A Case of Bondo Sub-County, Kenya. *South Asian Research Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(4), 186-191.
17. Mathiyazhagan, T. (2013). *Survey Research Method*. New Delhi: National Institute of Family & Welfare.
18. Ming, T. S., Ling, T. S., & Jaafar, N. M. (2017). Attitudes and Motivation of Malaysian Secondary Students towards Learning English as a Second Language. *The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies*, 17(1), 40-54.
19. Ministry of Education and Sports. (2018). *Education System in Uganda: Policies and Regulations*. Kampala: Government of the Republic of Uganda.
20. Rebelo, N. (2018). Students Attitudes Towards School, Learning, Competence and Motivation: The Effects of Gender Contextual Background, School Failure, and Development. *Investigation on Attitudes*, 547-555.
21. Reynolds, K., Bazemore, C., Hanebuth, C., Hendren, S., & Horn, M. (2021). The Relationship of Non-Cognitive Factors to Academic and Clinical Performance in Graduate Rehabilitation Science Students in the United States: A Systematic Review. *Journal of Educational Evaluation for Health Professions*, 18(1), 31.
22. Rwothumio, J. & Kambaza, S. (2022). Assessment of Student Performance and the Way Forward in Government-Aided Schools in Uganda: A Case Study of Schools in Kampala District and Wakiso District. *East African Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 2(1), 256-273.
23. Ryan, R. M. & Deci, E. L. (2017). *Self-Determination Theory: Basic Psychological Needs in Motivation, Development, and Wellness*. Guilford Press.
24. Sekaran, U. (2013). *Research Methods for Business: A Skill Building Approach* (4th ed.). New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons.
25. Tadese, M., Yeshaneh, A. & Mulu, G. B. (2022). Determinants of Good Academic Performance among University Students in Ethiopia: A Cross-sectional Study. *BMC Journal on Medical Education*, 22, 395.
26. Wakiso District Local Government. (2021). *Wakiso District Local Government Education Performance Report 2021*. Kampala, Uganda: Wakiso District Local Government.
27. Yara, P. R. & Philiyas, Y. O. (2019). Relationship between Students' Attitude and Students' Academic Performance in Physics in Some Selected Senior Secondary Schools in South Western Nigeria. *European Journal of Social Science*, 11(3), 11-23.