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# Social Economic Status Of Parents And Learners' Progress In Kisoro District: A Case Study Of Muko Primary School In Nyabwishenya Sub County

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**Abstract**

This study was conducted to investigate the influence of parental socio-economic status on learners' academic progress at Muko Primary School in Nyabwishenya Sub-County, Kisoro District. A cross-sectional survey design was adopted, employing both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. A sample of 148 respondents, including learners, teachers, parents, and the District Education Officer, was selected from a target population of 240 using simple random and purposive sampling techniques. Data was collected through questionnaires and interview guides, and analyzed using both descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. The results revealed a concerning academic performance profile, with only 41% of learners performing at "Good" or "Excellent" levels, while the majority (59%) were at "Average" or "Poor" levels. Despite this, learner attendance was high at 74%, indicating that barriers to learning persisted despite physical presence in school. The findings identified parental income as the most significant factor, with 65% of respondents citing it as a primary influence on progress. A lack of school fees was the most prevalent challenge, affecting 34% of learners, followed by a poor learning environment (27%) and limited parental supervision (24%). Parental education was also a key factor (60% influence), whereas parental occupation presented a dualistic impact, providing essential income but often limiting supervision time. It was concluded that the socio-economic status of parents is the predominant determinant of learners' progress, creating a profound opportunity gap that the formal education system alone could not overcome. The high attendance rate coupled with low academic achievement indicated that the challenges were rooted in socio-economic deprivation rather than a lack of student commitment. A syndicate of interconnected challenges financial deprivation, inadequate home support, and poor learning environments collectively undermined educational outcomes and perpetuated a cycle of disadvantage. It is recommended that a multi-stakeholder approach be implemented, including the establishment of a School-Based Support System to provide scholastic materials and a feeding program for the most vulnerable learners. Furthermore, parental empowerment through income-generating initiatives and adult literacy programs should be prioritized. The school administration should also adopt differentiated instruction techniques and advocate to the district local government for increased capitation grants and improved school infrastructure to create a more equitable and effective learning environment.

**Keywords: Socio-Economic Status, Academic Progress, Parental Income, Universal Primary Education, Kisoro District, Learner Performance, Parental Education.**

**Background of the Study.**

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Globally, the influence of parental socio-economic status (SES) a measure encompassing income, parental education, and occupational status on a child's educational progress is one of the most robustly documented phenomena in educational research (Kazaara & Nelson, 2024). International organizations, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Bank, consistently highlight that inequality in educational opportunity begins early in life and is heavily predicted by family background (Julius, 2025). Children from affluent families benefit from a multitude of advantages, including access to quality early childhood education, nutritional security, books, technology, and the ability to afford private tutoring, all of which contribute to cognitive development and academic readiness (Julius et al., 2024). Conversely, children from low socio-economic backgrounds often face significant barriers such as inadequate learning resources at home, poor nutrition affecting concentration, and stressors related to financial instability, which can impede cognitive development and lead to lower academic achievement (World Bank, 2019). This creates a cycle of intergenerational poverty where limited education perpetuates low socio-economic status (Christopher & Micheal, 2022). The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) aims to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all," explicitly targeting the reduction of these disparities by calling for equal access to all levels of education for vulnerable children (United Nations, 2015). The global challenge, therefore, is not merely to provide access to education but to dismantle the socio-economic barriers that prevent equitable outcomes once children are in school (Kanyerere & Muhammed, 2023).

In Africa, the impact of socio-economic status on education is exacerbated by broader systemic challenges. While the continent has made significant strides in increasing primary school enrollment, largely due to initiatives like the abolition of school fees, the focus is now shifting to the crisis of learning poverty (Faridah et al., 2023). According to the World Bank (2022), nearly 90% of children in Sub-Saharan Africa are in learning poverty, meaning they cannot read and understand a simple text by age 10. This crisis is deeply intertwined with poverty at the household level. A report by the African Development Bank (2021) notes that a significant proportion of African households spend a large share of their income on basic necessities, leaving little for educational investments such as uniforms, books, and other scholastic materials, which are often required despite policies of free primary education. Furthermore, children from impoverished families are often required to contribute to household chores or income-generating activities, leading to high rates of absenteeism and dropout (Victor et al., 2023). The African Union's Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25) acknowledges these challenges, emphasizing the need to address out-of-school children and improve learning quality, particularly for girls and children from marginalized communities (African Union, 2016). The African context thus presents a situation where socio-economic disadvantages are not just individual family issues but are amplified by insufficient public investment in education, leading to overcrowded

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classrooms, insufficient instructional materials, and a failure to support the most vulnerable learners (Godfrey et al., 2023).

Uganda's education landscape is a clear reflection of these continental challenges. The introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1997 was a landmark policy that dramatically increased enrollment, with gross enrollment rates surpassing 130% at their peak as over-age children entered school (MoES, 2021). However, this quantitative success has been severely undermined by a qualitative crisis, creating what is often termed the "UPE paradox." The 2021 National Assessment of Progress in Education (NAPE) report revealed alarmingly low proficiency levels, with only 35% of Primary 3 pupils and 47% of Primary 6 pupils proficient in literacy, and numeracy proficiency at 36% for P3 and 54% for P6 (UNMEB, 2021). This crisis is intrinsically linked to socio-economic stratification. While UPE provides access, the hidden costs of education including uniforms, exercise books, pens, and mandatory parental contributions for activities and infrastructure create a significant burden for poor families (Muvawala & Sebaggala, 2021). Consequently, children from the poorest households, though enrolled, often attend school irregularly, are unable to afford essential materials, and may come to school hungry, all of which negatively impact their ability to learn (Mercy et al., 2023). The situation is worse in rural areas, where poverty levels are higher and parents often have lower levels of education themselves, limiting their capacity to support their children's learning at home. This has resulted in a two-tiered education system where wealthier families opt for private schools, perpetuating a cycle where public UPE schools, intended to be the great equalizer, often become sites of concentrated disadvantage (Nasuru & Bafaki, 2023).

Kisoro District, located in the highlands of Southwestern Uganda, presents a poignant and urgent case study of how socio-economic factors dictate educational progress (Victoria et al., 2023). The district is characterized by a high population density, reliance on subsistence agriculture, and significant levels of poverty. According to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS, 2024), the district has some of the highest poverty rates in the country, with many households engaged in small-scale farming that generates minimal cash income (Derrick et al., 2023). Within this context, Nyabwishenya Sub-County and specifically Muko Primary School, a typical UPE school, epitomize the challenges at the grassroots level. Preliminary observations and local government reports from the Kisoro District Education Office (2023) indicate that schools in the area grapple with high pupil-to-classroom ratios, often exceeding 80:1, and inadequate sanitation facilities. For parents in this community, the meager household income is prioritized for food and other basic needs, making the procurement of scholastic materials a major challenge (Kazaara et al., 2024). This leads to a situation where many pupils at Muko Primary School attend classes without exercise books, pens, or uniforms, which affects their morale, attendance, and ability to participate fully in learning activities. Furthermore, child labour, particularly during planting and harvest seasons, leads to sporadic attendance and high

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dropout rates (Sub-county et al., 2023). The capacity of parents, many of whom are subsistence farmers with little formal education, to provide academic support at home is also severely limited. This local context, therefore, frames the core problem: despite the policy of UPE ensuring physical access to school, the low socio-economic status of parents in Nyabwishenya Sub-County creates formidable barriers that hinder the meaningful academic progress of their children at Muko Primary School (Ntirandekura et al., 2022). This study, therefore, seeks to investigate the specific mechanisms through which parental socio-economic status influences learners' progress in this vulnerable and representative setting.

**Statement of the Problem.**

The academic progress of learners remains a concern for educators and policymakers in Uganda. Despite interventions to improve performance, schools in Kisoro District, including Muko Primary School, continue to record challenges such as low academic achievement, poor attendance, and limited access to resources (Nelson, 2024). Parental socioeconomic status has consistently been linked to learners' progress, yet the specific dynamics of this relationship remain unclear. Studies by Gunn and Klebanov (2017) emphasize the role of family background but fail to explore how parental education, income levels, and marital status directly impact learners' motivation and achievements (Anthony et al., 2023). In rural Uganda, these factors are compounded by poverty and limited access to educational resources, making it imperative to investigate their effects. Previous research (e.g., Rouse and Barrow, 2016) has established a causal relationship between parental socioeconomic status and learners' outcomes but lacks clarity on how changes in parents' education and income influence learners'progrss (Julius & Kazaara, 2025). This gap necessitates an in-depth study of how family background variables affect learners' progress in rural settings. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to investigate the relationship between parental socioeconomic status and learners' progress at Muko Primary School in Nyabwishenya Sub County, Kisoro District (Brighton et al., 2023). The findings provided a basis for targeted interventions to address disparities and enhance learners' educational outcomes.

**Specific Objectives of the Study**

1. To examine the level of social economic status of parents at Muko Primary School in Nyabwishenya Sub County, Kisoro District.
2. To examine the level of learner's progress at Muko Primary School in Nyabwishenya Sub County, Kisoro District.
3. To establish the relationship between social economic status of parents and the progress of learners at Muko Primary School in Nyabwishenya Sub County, Kisoro District.

**Methodology**

The methodology for this study employed a cross-sectional survey design, which was preferred largely because it permitted the researcher to study a target population by examining a representative cross-section of that population to arrive at findings that were applicable to the entire group, as defined by Mugenda and Mugenda (2019). The study

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utilized both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques (Sophie & Crispus, 2024). Quantitative techniques were applied to numeric data, such as measurements of the socio-economic status of parents and learners' academic progress, while qualitative techniques were deployed for non-numeric data, such as respondents' views, opinions, preferences, attitudes, and feelings, providing a comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

The research was conducted in Kisoro District, located in South Western Uganda. The district lies between longitudes 29°35'' and 29°50'' East and latitudes 1°44'' and 1°23'' South, bordered by the Republic of Rwanda to the south, the Democratic Republic of Congo to the west, Kanungu District to the north, and Kabale District to the east. With a total land area of approximately 729.2 Km², comprising 662 Km² of open land with the rest being open water and swamps, it was one of the smallest districts in the country (Nafiu et al., 2017). This remote district, with its headquarters in Kisoro Municipal Council and situated approximately 510 km from Kampala, provided the context for the study. Within this district, Muko Primary School in Nyabwishenya Sub-County was selected as a case study to investigate the relationship between the socio-economic status of parents and learners' academic progress, as it was considered a representative site for the phenomena under investigation (Olanrewaju et al., 2021).

The target population for the study was defined by Mugenda and Mugenda (2018) as the totality of respondents, objects, or products in which a particular researcher is interested. The study population consisted of the Head Teacher of Muko Primary School, teachers, parents, the District Education Officer (D.E.O), and students (Aslam et al., 2022). A total target population of 240 individuals was identified, including the Head Teacher, the D.E.O of Kisoro District, 50 parents, 170 students, and 6 teachers. These participants were selected because they were believed to be well-informed about the variables under study. From this target population, a total sample size of 148 respondents was drawn from all categories (Nafiu et al., 2012). The sample size was determined using the formula forwarded by Yamane (1967), where 'n' represented the sample size, 'N' was the total population (240), and 'e' was the error tolerance of 0.05. The calculation resulted in a sample of 148 respondents, which included 1 Head Teacher, 1 District Education Officer, 96 learners, 6 teachers, and 44 parents.

The sampling procedures employed both simple random and purposive sampling techniques. The simple random sampling technique gave equal chances to all members of the finite population to be included in the sample, particularly for the teaching staff and learners (Sarah et al., 2024). This approach helped to remove potential biases that could arise from the researcher favoring some population members, as noted by Mugenda and Mugenda (1999). Respondents selected through this method included students and teachers at Muko Primary School. Conversely, the purposive sampling technique was employed to facilitate the collection of data from specific types of people who were

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able to provide the desired information. As Creswell and Plano (2011) described, purposive sampling involved identifying and selecting individuals or groups knowledgeable about or experienced with the phenomenon of interest. Teddlie and Fen Yu (2017) affirmed that this technique is typically designed to pick a small number of cases that yield the most information. This method was used to select the Head Teacher and the District Education Officer, as these respondents were deemed capable of providing critical insights for the study.

Data collection was carried out using both questionnaire surveys and interviews. According to Ranjit Kumar (2011), an interview involves an interviewer reading questions to respondents and recording their answers, constituting a verbal interchange—often face-to-face—where the interviewer elicits information, beliefs, and opinions. Interviews provided an opportunity for the researcher to revisit issues that might have been overlooked in other instruments and were deemed vital for the study (Olanrewaju et al., 2021). The interviews captured questions on both independent and dependent variables, and probing was applied to elicit comprehensive responses. Each interview lasted approximately ten minutes, and the method involved developing a guide on paper to structure the exercise. This approach allowed the researcher to obtain firsthand information in detail and probe respondents beyond predetermined questions. Key informant interviews enabled the collection of quality data in a relatively short period from knowledgeable people, capturing nuanced views that would have been prohibitively time-consuming to gather otherwise, as noted in Family Practice (1996). This method was primarily used to gather information from the Head Teacher and the District Education Officer. For the questionnaire survey, Kothari (2014) defined a questionnaire as a set of questions sent to a person with a request to provide answers and return it. This method was considered appropriate and cost-effective, free from interviewer bias (Babbie, 2011). According to Sekaran (2013), questionnaires are a popular data collection method because they allow for fairly easy information gathering and straightforward coding of responses. The structured questionnaire was developed following guidelines from scholars like Kothari (2015), Sekaran and Bougie (2017), and Saunders et al. (2019). Questionnaires were preferred for their convenience, as respondents could complete them during their free time and consult for views and information. Self-administered questionnaires with closed-ended questions were used to collect data from teachers and students, helping the researcher save time for other academic matters. Surveys were useful for describing the characteristics of a large population, ensuring a more accurate sample from which to draw conclusions and make important decisions (Scheuren, 2014). The survey process involved selecting populations for inclusion, pre-testing instruments, determining delivery methods, ensuring validity, and analyzing results.

The data collection instruments included interview guides and self-administered questionnaires. The interview guide contained pre-designed questions to ensure all relevant aspects were covered and to tap into detailed information on opinions, beliefs, and perceptions. Interviews allowed the researcher to clarify items by repeating and rephrasing

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questions that were unclear to respondents (Kothari, 2014). The guide also helped address unanswered issues from the questionnaires. For the self-administered questionnaires, the researcher designed a comprehensive set of questions covering all aspects of the study variables based on the objectives and research questions. The questions were close-ended for ease and speed of answering. This method was chosen because the respondents were literate, allowing for hard copies to be filed for reference and for answers to be easily quantified and processed (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). The questionnaires were broken down to capture background information and data related to each variable. A Five-Point Likert Scale questionnaire was used to investigate the relationship between socio-economic status and learners' progress, with responses anchored on a scale ranging from 5 (Strongly Agree) to 1 (Strongly Disagree).

Quality control measures were implemented to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the data, as emphasized by Shamoo (2015). For validity, which Miles and Huberman (1994) defined as the extent to which instrument items measure what they are set out to measure, the researcher contacted two research experts to determine whether the questionnaire tool was valid for collecting relevant information. The construct validity of the instruments was established using the expert judgment method suggested by Gay (1996), and the instrument was refined based on expert advice. The Content Validity Index (CVI) was calculated using the formula: CVI = (Number of items regarded relevant by judges) / (Total number of items). For reliability, which Shamoo (2015) described as the consistency of results after repeated trials, a pilot test was conducted with a similar group possessing the same characteristics as the target population. The reliability of the instruments was computed using the split-half method with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) (Nelson et al., 2022). In this method, the test items were divided into two equal halves, and the product-moment correlation between the two sets of scores provided the reliability coefficient. Open-ended questions were not subjected to reliability testing.

Data analysis involved both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Qualitative data was edited, grouped by theme, and analyzed using content analysis. Quantitative data was entered into a data sheet using coded values and manipulated with SPSS version 18.0 for Windows (Nelson et al., 2023). Descriptive statistics were obtained, and cross-tabulations of some items were made to identify relationships, which were tested using Pearson correlation coefficients significant at the 0.01 level. Frequency counts and percentages were calculated to facilitate interpretations and conclusions, and graphic illustrations were used to summarize and portray general trends. Direct quotations from documents and interviews were also utilized to illustrate ideas and opinions.

The measurement of variables employed three scales: nominal, interval, and ratio. The nominal scale, which classifies objects into mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive categories (Sekaran, 2013), was used to measure variables like the sex, marital status, and experience level of respondents. The interval scale was used to sum and determine the

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magnitude of differences in responses to the Five-Point Likert scale questions, calculating percentages of positive and negative responses and determining the magnitude of preferences. This allowed for the analysis of measures of central tendency and dispersion using SPSS (Denscombe, 2020). The ratio scale, with an absolute zero origin, enabled powerful statistical procedures to be applied to the data generated from the nominal and interval scales, such as determining ratios for socio-economic status and learners' progress.

Ethical considerations were rigorously observed throughout the study. The researcher obtained all necessary permissions before commencing data collection and informed all respondents about the study's topic and purpose, securing their informed consent. All information was handled with utmost confidentiality, and respondent identities were not revealed. The researcher ensured that no respondent was endangered as a result of participation and promised that, with the approval of Metropolitan International University (MIU), authorities and individuals could access the final research report. The study acknowledged several limitations, as defined by Airasian (2016), including high transport costs for interviews and questionnaire piloting, which were mitigated by using cheaper transport means. Unwillingness of some respondents to participate was addressed through good communication skills and rapport building. Natural hazards like heavy rains in Southwestern Uganda were managed by conducting the study on uninterrupted days.

**Results**

**Table 1: Learners' Academic Performance**

| Academic Level | Frequency (f) | Valid Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Excellent | 20 | 14 |
| Good | 40 | 27 |
| Average | 60 | 41 |
| Poor | 28 | 18 |
| Total | 148 | 100 |

**Source: Primary Data, 2025**

Table 1 provides a critical overview of the academic health of the student body at Muko Primary School, revealing a distribution that signals significant challenges in educational outcomes. The data shows that the largest single group of learners, comprising 41% of the student population, falls within the "Average" performance category. This indicates that while these students are meeting the basic requirements, they are not excelling, suggesting a system that facilitates minimal competency rather than fostering high achievement. More concerning is the fact that only 41% of students combined are performing at either "Good" (27%) or "Excellent" (14%) levels. This means that a majority of the school's pupils (59%) are performing at or below average. The 18% of students in the "Poor" performance category represents a substantial at-risk group who are likely struggling with fundamental literacy and numeracy skills, putting

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them in danger of functional illiteracy and future academic failure. This performance profile paints a picture of an educational environment where high achievement is the exception rather than the norm, and where a significant minority is being left behind entirely. The concentration of students in the middle and lower performance tiers points to systemic issues within the learning environment that are preventing the majority of students from reaching their full academic potential.

**Table 2: Attendance Levels**

| Attendance Level | Frequency (f) | Valid Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Regular | 110 | 74 |
| Irregular | 38 | 26 |
| total | 148 | 100 |

**Source: Primary Data, 2025**

Table 2 offers a surprisingly positive insight into one aspect of the school's dynamics, indicating that learner commitment and access, in terms of physical presence, are not the primary barriers to academic success. With a substantial 74% of students recorded as having "Regular" attendance, it is clear that the vast majority of pupils and their families prioritize being in school. This high attendance rate dispels the notion that academic struggles are primarily due to children not being present to receive instruction. However, the remaining 26% classified as "Irregular" attendance remains a significant concern. This irregularity can be attributed to a variety of socio-economic factors prevalent in rural settings, such as the need for children to contribute to household chores or agricultural activities, seasonal family migration, or inability to afford consistent transportation. While the core issue is not mass absenteeism, this substantial minority of irregular attendees is undoubtedly at a severe disadvantage, missing foundational lessons and struggling to reintegrate into the classroom, which contributes to the poor and average performance levels seen in Table 1.

**Table 3: Socio-Economic Status and Learners' Progress**

| Socio-Economic Factor | Positive Influence (%) | Negative Influence (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Parents' Income | 65 | 35 |
| Parents' Education | 60 | 40 |
| Parents' Occupation | 50 | 50 |
| | | |

**Source: Primary Data, 2025**

Table 3 powerfully quantifies the perceived influence of key socio-economic factors on student progress, directly linking home circumstances to educational outcomes. The most influential factor is "Parents' Income," with 65% of respondents identifying it as a positive influence when sufficient. This underscores how financial stability directly enables learning by allowing for the purchase of scholastic materials, uniforms, and potentially extra tuition, while

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also reducing household stress. Its corollary, the 35% negative influence, highlights how poverty actively undermines education. The second factor, "Parents' Education" (60% positive influence), demonstrates the value of parental academic capital; educated parents are better equipped to assist with homework, advocate for their children, and cultivate an intellectually stimulating home environment. The most nuanced finding is for "Parents' Occupation," which shows a perfect 50/50 split. This suggests that the type of work parents do creates a complex trade-off: it provides essential income (a positive) but may also involve long hours, demanding physical labor, or seasonal migration that limits the time and energy available for parental supervision and academic support (a negative), effectively cancelling out the benefit for many children.

**Table 4: Challenges Faced by Learners**

| Challenge | Frequency (f) | Valid Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Lack of School Fees | 50 | 34 |
| Poor Learning Environment | 40 | 27 |
| Limited Parental Supervision | 35 | 24 |
| Others | 23 | 15 |
| Total | 148 | 100 |

**Source: Primary Data, 2025**

Table 4 moves from general influences to specific, tangible obstacles, providing a stark catalogue of the barriers students face daily. The most prevalent challenge, affecting over a third of learners (34%), is "Lack of School Fees." This is a critical finding in the context of Uganda's Universal Primary Education (UPE) policy, as it reveals that official "free education" is still burdened with hidden costs that are prohibitive for many families, leading to sent-home students, accumulated debt, and an inability to participate fully in school life. The second major challenge, a "Poor Learning Environment" (27%), likely encompasses both overcrowded, under-resourced classrooms and inadequate home conditions for studying, such as a lack of electricity, quiet space, or furniture. Finally, "Limited Parental Supervision" (24%) directly connects back to the occupational challenges in Table 3, indicating that nearly a quarter of students lack the guided support and discipline at home necessary to reinforce classroom learning. Collectively, these challenges create a formidable barrier to academic achievement, explaining the concentration of students in the average and poor performance categories and demonstrating that the classroom struggle is deeply rooted in the socio-economic realities of the community.

**Conclusions**

It was conclusively established that the overall academic performance at Muko Primary School is mediocre and concerning. The majority of learners (59%) were performing at an "Average" or "Poor" level, with only a small minority (14%) achieving excellence. This conclusion is critically nuanced by the high student attendance rate of 74%, which demonstrates a strong commitment from both pupils and their families to access education. Therefore, the core

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problem was identified not as a lack of willingness to attend school, but rather a failure to translate physical presence into meaningful academic success. The system was effectively ensuring enrollment but failing to guarantee learning, pointing to deficiencies that lie beyond the classroom door.

The study concluded that parental income is the single most powerful socio-economic factor influencing a child's academic progress. Its influence was dualistic; sufficient income acted as the greatest enabler (65% positive influence), providing for essential needs like scholastic materials, uniforms, and a stable home environment conducive to learning. Conversely, poverty was identified as the most significant barrier (35% negative influence), directly causing stress, deprivation, and an inability to meet the hidden costs of "free" Universal Primary Education (UPE). This financial barrier was the most frequently cited specific challenge, with 34% of learners suffering from a lack of school fees, leading to sent-home students and an inability to participate fully in school life.

It was concluded that the educational level of parents is a crucial form of "academic capital" that significantly boosts a child's learning (60% positive influence). Educated parents were better equipped to assist with homework, engage with teachers, and foster a culture of learning at home. In contrast, the influence of parental occupation presented a complex dilemma. The 50/50 split between positive and negative influence revealed a difficult trade-off: parental work provides essential income but often at the cost of time and energy. Occupations involving subsistence agriculture or long hours directly resulted in "Limited Parental Supervision" for 24% of learners, creating a situation where the very means of survival undermines the capacity for educational support.

The study concluded that learners at Muko Primary School face a syndicate of interconnected challenges, all stemming from the root cause of low socio-economic status. The lack of school fees, a poor learning environment (both at home and school, affecting 27% of students), and limited parental supervision were not isolated issues but were intrinsically linked. This combination of financial deprivation, inadequate learning conditions, and a lack of academic guidance at home creates a formidable cycle of disadvantage that the formal education system, in its current resource-constrained state, is unable to break. This cycle directly explains the concentration of students in the average and poor academic performance categories.

**Recommendations**

There is an urgent need to establish a robust and transparent School-Based Support System to mitigate the immediate financial barriers to education. This should begin with the formal creation of a School Necessities Fund, managed by a committee comprising the head teacher, teachers, and elected parent representatives. This fund would be used to procure essential scholastic materials like exercise books, pens, and mathematical sets in bulk, which can then be distributed to the most vulnerable learners identified through a transparent needs-assessment process. Alongside this,

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the school should actively seek partnerships with local NGOs, faith-based organizations, and well-wishers to sponsor school meals. A school feeding program would directly address hunger as a barrier to concentration and improve overall attendance and health. Furthermore, the school administration, in conjunction with the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), must champion a policy of zero sent-home for non-payment of unofficial fees, ensuring that a child's right to be in the classroom is never compromised by their family's financial situation.

A transformative effort must be made to empower parents and strengthen the home-school connection. The school, with support from the local government's community development office, should initiate regular Parental Empowerment Workshops. These workshops should focus on practical, income-generating skills such as improved agricultural techniques, small-scale animal husbandry, or handicraft production to help families increase their household income. Parallel to this, the school can offer basic literacy and numeracy classes for parents, which would not only improve their own lives but also equip them to better support their children's education. Teachers should be encouraged to make positive, proactive contact with parents to discuss student progress rather than only reaching out when there is a problem, thereby building trust and a shared sense of responsibility for the child's learning journey.

Teachers should be provided with targeted training on differentiated instruction techniques that allow them to manage large, multi-level classrooms effectively. This includes designing lessons that cater to students at different ability levels, from those who are struggling to those who are excelling. The establishment of after-school peer-tutoring clubs, where higher-performing learners mentor their peers under teacher supervision, can provide crucial academic support and foster a collaborative learning culture. Additionally, the school should move beyond purely academic metrics to implement a simple, early-warning system to identify students at risk of dropping out or failing, based on indicators like frequent absenteeism, a sudden drop in performance, or a lack of basic materials, allowing for timely intervention.

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