



**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHER-PUPIL RATIO AND LEARNERS’
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN MALERA SUB COUNTY,
BUKEDEA DISTRICT.**

BY

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**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND
EDUCATION IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
AWARD OF A BACHELORS DEGREE IN EDUCATION PRIMARY OF
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Declaration

I Okwalinga Samson do declare that this piece of work has been out of my own initiative and effort. It is original and authentic and has never been presented to any institution of higher learning for any award whatsoever.

Signature:..... Date:.....

Approval

This is to certify that OKWALINGA SAMSON undertook a research study entitled; “the relationship between teacher-pupil ratio and learners’ academic performance in Malera sub county, Bukedea District was done under my supervision and guidance. This work is ready for submission for examination with my approval.

Signature; Date;

Name: Mr. Anthony Wanyama

Dedication

This research is dedicated to my wife Imuto Kevin and to all my children; Asio Jemmima, Okwalinga Justine, Apoo Esther Grace, Opio Emma, Atianga Tabisa, Otialuk Prospers Joyce, Akareut Constance Rhoda and Okwalinga Samson for their continuous love and support not forgetting my dear friends who coped with all hardships of moral, emotional distress and financial support while I was pursuing this course

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Abstract

The study aimed to investigate the relationship between teacher-pupil ratios and learners' academic performance in Malera Sub County, Bukedea District. Specifically, the research sought to establish this relationship, identify the optimal teacher-pupil ratio for improved academic performance, and examine stakeholders' perceptions of the ratio's impact on education. A descriptive research design was adopted, involving surveys and interviews as data collection methods. Surveys were conducted with head teachers and teachers, while interviews were held with parents and learners to gather diverse perspectives on the influence of teacher-pupil ratios on academic outcomes.

The findings revealed that a majority of respondents (74%) disagreed that reducing the teacher-pupil ratio directly improved pupils' performance in reading and mathematics. Additionally, 75% disagreed that a ratio exceeding 1:40 hinders personalized instruction, while 64% strongly agreed that a ratio of 1:15 was optimal for improving academic performance. A majority (56%) of stakeholders considered maintaining a ratio of 1:20 or lower as essential for quality education. However, opinions were mixed regarding the impact of larger class sizes, with divided responses on the negative effects of class sizes exceeding 1:40.

In conclusion, the study demonstrated a complex relationship between teacher-pupil ratios and academic performance. While optimal ratios such as 1:15 were considered beneficial, there was no consensus among respondents on the direct correlation between reduced class sizes and academic improvement. The study recommended increasing teacher recruitment, establishing clear policies on optimal ratios, providing classroom management training, and boosting education budgets to address challenges caused by high teacher-pupil ratios, especially in rural and under-resourced schools.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

This chapter states the background of the study statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, and the scope of the study, the significance of the study, limitations and delimitations.

1.1 Background of the study

The background of this research report was presented in four ways, i.e. the historical background, conceptual background, theoretical background and contextual background.

1.1.1 Historical background to the study

Malera Sub County in Bukedea District, Uganda faces challenges in providing quality education, with a high teacher pupil ratio being a significant concern. The sub county has a large number of learners per teacher, exceeding the recommended ratio by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES). This has raised concerns about the impact on learners' academic performance. Research has shown that a high teacher-pupil ratio can lead to: Reduced individual attention to learners (Kewalramani, 2019), increased workload for teachers (MCEE, 2019), Decreased learner engagement and motivation (Kumar et al., 2020) and poor academic achievement (UNESCO, 2019). Despite these findings, there is limited research on the specific context of Malera Sub County. This study aims to investigate the relationship between teacher-pupil ratio and learners' academic performance in the sub county, providing insights for policy makers and educators to improve education quality.

1.1.2 Conceptual background

A relationship in an educational context refers to the dynamic connection or interaction between individuals, such as between teachers and pupils, pupils and peers, or between various educational stakeholders. This can involve aspects of communication, collaboration, and influence that affect the educational environment and learning outcomes (Hughes, 2012).

According to UNESCO (2018), the teacher-pupil ratio refers to the number of pupils assigned to one teacher in a given classroom or educational setting. It is a key indicator of the teaching

environment's quality and often used to assess the adequacy of resources and teacher availability in schools.

Learners' academic performance refers to the level of achievement or proficiency that pupils demonstrate in educational assessments, exams, and other evaluations in relation to established learning goals and standards (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2010).

1.1.3 Theoretical background

Piaget's theory, developed by the Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget in the 20th century, emphasizes the stages of cognitive development in children and how these stages affect their learning and interaction with the environment (Piaget, 1936).. His theory posits that learning is an active process where children construct knowledge based on their interactions and experiences. In the context of education, Piaget's theory suggests that effective learning occurs when the educational environment is aligned with the child's developmental stage. The strength of Piaget's theory lies in its focus on the cognitive processes of children, stressing the importance of learning environments tailored to their developmental needs. When applied to teacher-pupil ratio, the theory supports the idea that smaller class sizes allow teachers to interact more effectively with individual learners, fostering deeper engagement and cognitive growth.

This relationship ensures that teachers can provide developmentally appropriate instruction, which is critical for the child's learning journey. However, a weakness of Piaget's theory is its underestimation of the role of social and environmental factors, such as peer interaction and teacher influence. In cases of larger teacher-pupil ratios, the theory does not sufficiently address how these external factors might mitigate or hinder learning outcomes. Additionally, the theory assumes uniformity in children's developmental progress, which may not account for diverse learning needs in classrooms with high teacher-pupil ratios (Piaget, 1936). Piaget's theory contributes to educational practice by highlighting the importance of personalized attention in classrooms, which directly correlates with teacher-pupil ratios. The theory supports the notion that lower teacher-pupil ratios can lead to enhanced academic performance, as teachers can cater to individual developmental stages and provide appropriate cognitive challenges.

1.1.4 Contextual background.

In Malera Sub County, Bukedea District, Many primary schools in the area have a significantly high teacher-pupil ratio, with some schools reporting ratios as high as 1 teacher to 100 pupils. This imbalance in the number of teachers to pupils has severely impacted learners' academic performance, as teachers are unable to give adequate attention to each pupil, especially those with learning difficulties. Large class sizes make it difficult for teachers to provide personalized instruction, manage the classroom effectively, and assess each student's progress accurately. As a result, learners in overcrowded classrooms often perform poorly in exams and struggle to grasp key concepts, particularly in subjects like mathematics and science, which require close guidance.

The government of Uganda has made efforts to address this issue by recruiting more teachers through the Universal Primary Education (UPE) program and improving teacher training. Additionally, infrastructural development in some schools has been undertaken, with classroom expansions and provision of teaching materials. Despite these initiatives, the problem persists due to the rapid population growth in Bukedea District, which continuously increases the number of pupils enrolling in schools without a proportional increase in teachers. Budgetary constraints also limit the ability to hire sufficient teaching staff or provide additional classrooms, leaving many schools under-resourced and struggling to manage large student populations effectively.

This persistent issue underscores the need for more strategic interventions from the government, such as increasing teacher recruitment, improving infrastructure, and ensuring better resource allocation to rural schools like those in Malera Sub County.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

In Malera Sub County, Bukedea District, Many primary schools in the area have a significantly high teacher-pupil ratio, with some schools reporting ratios as high as 1 teacher to 100 pupils. This imbalance in the number of teachers to pupils has severely impacted learners' academic performance, as teachers are unable to give adequate attention to each pupil, especially those with learning difficulties. Large class sizes make it difficult for teachers to provide personalized instruction, manage the classroom effectively, and assess each student's progress accurately. As a

result, learners in overcrowded classrooms often perform poorly in exams and struggle to grasp key concepts, particularly in subjects like mathematics and science, which require close guidance.

Despite efforts to improve education quality, Malera Sub County in Bukedea District, Uganda continues to face challenges in providing effective learning environments, particularly in terms of teacher-pupil ratio. The sub county has a high teacher-pupil ratio, exceeding the recommended ratio by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES).

This has led to concerns about the impact on learners' academic performance, with reports of: Poor academic achievement in national exams (Uganda National Examinations Board, 2020), high dropout rates (Bukedea Education office, 2020), and low learner engagement and motivation (Malera sub county Education Office). The specific problems to be addressed in this study are: Is there a significant relationship between teacher-pupil ratio and learner's academic performance in Malera sub County? what is the optimal teacher pupil-ratio for improved academic performance in the sub county?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between teacher-pupil and learners academic performance in Malera sub county, Bukedea District.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of the study.

- 1).To establish the relationship between teacher-pupil ratio and learners' academic performance in Malera sub County
- 2) To find out optimal teacher-pupil ratio for improved academic performance in the sub county.
- 3) To examine perceptions of the stakeholders on the impact of teacher-pupil ratio on academic performance.

1.5 Research Questions

- 1).What is the relationship between teacher-pupil ratio and learners' academic performance in Malera sub County?
- 2).What is the optimal teacher-pupil ratio for improved academic performance in the sub county?
- 3) What are the perceptions of the stakeholders on the impact of teacher-pupil ratio on academic performance?

1.6 Scope of the Study

1.6.1 Subject scope

The study was to investigate on the relationship between teacher-pupil ratio and learners' academic performance in Malera Sub County in Bukedea District.

1.6.2 Time scope

The research was conducted from April to August, 2024

1.6.3 Geographical Scope of the Study

The study was carried out in the five selected schools in Malera sub county Bukedea district. This area is selected because they rank among the worst in performance.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This research was expected to inform evidence-based policy decisions on teacher deployment and resource allocation enhance learners' academic performance and the overall quality of education and contribute to the body of knowledge on teacher-pupil ratio and academic performance. The research findings will be used for further research in the same field and help researchers to verify other findings.

1.8 Limitations

The researcher met some of the limitations of which some of these may include;

1. Some respondents hide some important information making it difficult to present and analyze data
2. In addition, meeting the respondents as agreed in a particular place and time was be difficult because of different individual's programs.
3. Analyzing results was difficult since the gathered information was in depth.

1.9 Delimitations

1. There will be adequate preparation before going for the study, that is to say designing appropriate tools for data collection
2. Consultation with respondents will be made before travelling to agreed venue to avoid disappointment.
3. Data will be accurately presented to aid analysis and interpretation

1.10 Conceptual framework

(Independent Variable)

Teacher pupils ratio

- Classroom Size
- Teacher Workload
- Student Engagement

(Dependent Variable)

Academic Performance

- Level of class performance
- National performance (PLE)
- Age
- Quality of education

Source: (UNESCO, 2020)

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines related studies that had been conducted or under taken by various scholars in relation to teacher pupil ratio and learners academic performance in Malera sub county, Bukedea District.

2.1 The relationship between teacher-pupil ratio and learners' academic performance

In a landmark study conducted by Krueger (2003), the Tennessee STAR (Student-Teacher Achievement Ratio) project revealed that pupils in smaller classes (with a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:15) performed better academically than those in larger classes. The study demonstrated long-term benefits of smaller classes, especially in the early grades, where pupils showed higher achievement levels in reading and math. The research emphasizes that a favorable teacher-pupil ratio allows for more individualized instruction, which is crucial for improving academic performance.

Research by Blatchford et al. (2011) highlighted similar findings in the UK. The study found that reducing the teacher-pupil ratio positively influenced student achievement, particularly in primary schools. Smaller class sizes enabled teachers to manage classroom behavior better and focus more on individual pupils' needs. The study also noted that smaller classes were particularly beneficial for disadvantaged pupils, who tend to require more one-on-one attention.

In a study on the relationship between teacher-pupil ratio and learning outcomes in Kenya, Njoroge and Kioko (2020) found that schools with a high teacher-pupil ratio (averaging 1:60) faced significant challenges in delivering quality education. The study revealed that large class sizes overwhelmed teachers, reducing their ability to offer personalized instruction, resulting in lower academic performance. The authors recommended that governments invest in recruiting more teachers to improve the quality of education in public schools.

A study conducted by Banerjee et al. (2016) in India demonstrated that the teacher-pupil ratio is a key determinant of student learning outcomes. In rural schools where teacher-pupil ratios were high (over 1:50), pupils performed significantly worse in both literacy and numeracy tests

compared to schools with lower ratios. The study also highlighted the role of teacher absenteeism, exacerbated by high pupil numbers, which further contributed to poor academic outcomes.

In a Nigerian study by Ololube et al. (2016), it was found that a teacher-pupil ratio exceeding 1:40 negatively impacted academic performance in primary schools. Teachers reported being unable to cover the syllabus effectively, and pupils received little to no individual attention. The authors argued that this disproportionate ratio is a barrier to the implementation of effective teaching strategies, thus reducing learners' overall academic achievements.

Finland, known for its exemplary educational system, maintains a low teacher-pupil ratio (approximately 1:20), as highlighted by Sahlberg (2015). The study attributed Finland's consistently high performance in global assessments, such as PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment), to its small class sizes, which allow teachers to engage deeply with pupils, identify their individual needs, and provide tailored support.

In China, a study by Liang et al. (2019) found that reducing the teacher-pupil ratio had a positive impact on pupils' academic performance, particularly in rural schools. The study highlighted that in overcrowded classes, pupils' opportunities to participate in class discussions and receive feedback were limited, leading to poorer performance compared to pupils in smaller classes.

2.2 Optimal teacher-pupil ratio for improved academic performance

The teacher-pupil ratio is a critical factor in determining the quality of education and the academic performance of pupils. Numerous studies conducted across the globe have demonstrated that there is an optimal ratio at which pupils receive the most benefit from instructional time, leading to improved academic outcomes.

The Tennessee Student-Teacher Achievement Ratio (STAR) experiment, conducted in the 1980s and early 1990s, remains one of the most comprehensive studies on class size and its effect on student performance. According to **Krueger (1999)**, the STAR project found that pupils in classes with a teacher-pupil ratio of **1:15** showed significantly better performance in reading and mathematics than those in larger classes (1:25 and above). The long-term benefits were especially evident for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, indicating that smaller class sizes (low teacher-pupil ratios) positively impacted student engagement and academic success.

A study by **Blatchford et al. (2002)** in the UK found that an optimal teacher-pupil ratio ranged from **1:15 to 1:20** in primary schools. This study, part of the Class Size and Pupil Adult Ratio (CSPAR) project, indicated that lower ratios are particularly important in early years education (Reception through Year 2). The research concluded that reducing class size not only improved academic performance but also facilitated better classroom management, increased teacher-pupil interactions, and allowed for more individualized teaching.

Finland is frequently cited as having one of the most successful educational systems globally, largely due to its consistently high performance in the **Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)** rankings. According to **Sahlberg (2015)**, Finland maintains a teacher-pupil ratio of about **1:18** in primary schools, which is considered optimal for fostering student achievement. This lower ratio, along with Finland's student-centered teaching methods, allows for more personalized attention, frequent feedback, and a strong emphasis on cooperative learning. The study attributes Finland's success to maintaining small classes, which help in catering to individual learner needs and enhancing performance.

In Kenya, the introduction of **Universal Primary Education (UPE)** led to a surge in school enrollments, significantly increasing the teacher-pupil ratio. A study by **Orodho (2014)** found that the optimal teacher-pupil ratio in Kenyan public schools should be around **1:25** to improve academic performance. However, many schools in rural areas had ratios as high as 1:60, which overwhelmed teachers and led to poor academic outcomes. The study recommended government intervention in hiring more teachers to achieve a ratio conducive to better learning environments and improved student performance.

A study conducted by **Banerjee et al. (2016)** in rural India focused on the relationship between class size and student achievement. The study found that schools with teacher-pupil ratios of **1:30 or less** performed better in literacy and numeracy assessments compared to schools with higher ratios. The authors concluded that a ratio between 1:20 and 1:30 is optimal for academic success, particularly in low-resource settings where pupils benefit more from direct interaction with teachers.

A study by **Liang et al. (2019)** examined the effects of class size in rural China, where teacher-pupil ratios were often extremely high, sometimes exceeding **1:50**. The study found that reducing

the teacher-pupil ratio to **1:20 to 1:30** significantly improved pupils' academic outcomes, especially in terms of reading and mathematics performance. Smaller classes allowed teachers to focus more on individual pupils and adjust teaching strategies to meet diverse learning needs. This finding emphasized the need for policy reforms to lower class sizes in underserved regions.

In Nigeria, **Adeyemi (2008)** conducted a study on the impact of teacher-pupil ratios on academic achievement in primary schools. The study found that an optimal ratio of **1:25** or lower was necessary to ensure academic success. However, most Nigerian public schools operated with ratios exceeding 1:40, leading to overcrowded classrooms and diminished student performance. The research recommended that the government hire more teachers to reduce class sizes, improve teaching quality, and boost overall student achievement.

2.3 Perceptions of the stakeholders on the impact of teacher-pupil ratio on academic performance.

The teacher-pupil ratio has long been considered a significant factor in shaping educational outcomes. Stakeholders—including teachers, parents, school administrators, policymakers, and pupils—play a crucial role in shaping and responding to perceptions of its impact. This literature review explores studies conducted worldwide on how different stakeholders perceive the effects of teacher-pupil ratios on academic performance.

According to Blatchford and Russell (2005), teachers in the United States express strong opinions on the importance of maintaining a favorable teacher-pupil ratio. In surveys conducted in public schools across various states, the majority of teachers believed that smaller class sizes allowed for more individualized attention, which significantly impacted student performance, particularly in foundational skills such as literacy and numeracy. Teachers noted that when the ratio increased above **1:25**, it became difficult to offer personalized learning, manage classrooms effectively, and address student needs.

A study by **Campbell et al. (2003)** investigated how parents in the United Kingdom viewed the teacher-pupil ratio in their children's schools. Many parents felt that a lower teacher-pupil ratio (around **1:20**) was vital for quality education. They associated smaller class sizes with better communication between teachers and pupils, more thorough academic support, and a more

positive school experience overall. Parents also believed that smaller class sizes promoted better classroom management, which in turn positively affected their children's academic performance and behavior.

In Finland, where educational reforms have led to consistently high academic performance, **Sahlberg (2010)** documented the perceptions of policymakers regarding teacher-pupil ratios. Finnish policymakers emphasized the value of small class sizes (average of **1:18**) as a crucial element in ensuring high academic performance. They believed that smaller teacher-pupil ratios allowed teachers to focus on holistic child development, rather than merely academic achievement, which led to better long-term educational outcomes.

The introduction of **Universal Primary Education (UPE)** in Kenya resulted in an increase in school enrollments, which dramatically affected the teacher-pupil ratio. A study by **Orodho (2014)** found that teachers and school administrators were concerned about the rising teacher-pupil ratios, sometimes as high as **1:60** in public schools. Teachers reported feeling overburdened and unable to offer quality education due to the large number of pupils. Administrators expressed concern that the government's efforts to provide free primary education were not matched by corresponding investments in hiring more teachers, thereby compromising academic performance.

In rural India, a study by **Banerjee et al. (2016)** explored how community members, including parents and local leaders, perceived the impact of teacher-pupil ratios on academic performance. Communities felt that smaller class sizes were critical for improving learning outcomes, particularly in under-resourced rural schools. They observed that when the ratio exceeded **1:40**, teachers struggled to manage classrooms, leading to diminished student engagement and lower test scores. Parents and local stakeholders advocated for government intervention to hire more teachers and reduce class sizes in rural areas.

In South Africa, **Spaull (2013)** conducted research on how government officials and school leaders perceived teacher-pupil ratios in relation to student outcomes. Policymakers acknowledged that overcrowded classrooms, with teacher-pupil ratios of up to **1:45**, negatively affected pupils' academic performance. However, budgetary constraints prevented the hiring of additional teachers, especially in rural and disadvantaged areas. School leaders reported that smaller class

sizes were necessary to improve teaching quality and student achievement, but there was a lack of political will to address the problem.

In Nigeria, **Adeyemi (2008)** surveyed parents, teachers, and educational policymakers on the impact of teacher-pupil ratios on academic performance. Parents strongly believed that smaller teacher-pupil ratios were key to academic success, particularly in primary education. Teachers echoed this sentiment, stating that larger class sizes (1:40 or higher) made it difficult to provide adequate instruction and maintain discipline. Policymakers recognized the problem but noted that financial limitations and rapid population growth made it challenging to maintain smaller class sizes.

A study by **Liang et al. (2019)** in rural China examined the perspectives of both parents and teachers regarding the teacher-pupil ratio. Parents were concerned that large class sizes, which often exceeded **1:50**, were detrimental to their children's academic progress. Teachers agreed, pointing out that managing such large classes was difficult and led to lower student engagement. Both groups advocated for more government support to reduce class sizes, particularly in rural areas where resources were limited.

Research by **Hattie (2012)** in Australia explored teachers' views on class size and its impact on academic performance. Australian teachers believed that an optimal teacher-pupil ratio of **1:20 to 1:25** allowed for effective teaching and better student outcomes. They pointed out that smaller classes provided more opportunities for formative assessments, individualized attention, and differentiated instruction, all of which contributed to higher academic achievement.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presented the methodology that was applied while conducting this study. It focused on the research design, study population, sample size, sampling techniques, and data collection techniques.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive design. A descriptive approach was deemed appropriate because the researcher wanted to establish the grounded facts regarding the impacts of teacher-pupil ratio on academic performance in Malera Sub County, Bukedea District. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) gave the purpose of descriptive survey research as determining and reporting the way things are. Borg and Gall (1989) also noted that descriptive survey research was intended to produce statistical information about aspects of education that interested policymakers and educators. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were also used in this study. The qualitative aspects of the study aimed at obtaining data expressed in non-numerical terms (Amin, 2005), while the quantitative aspects aimed at measuring and analyzing variables with statistical procedures (Creswell, 2000 in Bakkabulindi, 2008).

3.3 Target Population

Population refers to the entire group of people, events, or things of interest that the researcher wished to investigate (Sekaran, 2003). The study population of this academic research included head teachers, teachers, parents, and learners of the four selected schools in Malera Sub County, Bukedea District.

Table I Target population

School	Target population				Total
	Head teachers	Teachers	Parents	Learners	
Malera Primary School	01	09	215	782	1007
Kachonga Primary School	01	12	141	719	873
Kacoc Primary School	01	15	361	861	1238
Malera-Okouba School	01	09	255	739	1004
Grand total	04	45	972	3101	4122

3.4 Sampled population

Stevenson (2007) describes a sample as a subset of the population and it comprises of some selected members who were referred to as subject. They were individuals that took part in giving needed information as required by the study. It was selected from the target population,

Table II Sampled population

Population	Target population	Sampled population
Head teachers	05	05
Teachers	45	10
Parents	972	15
Learners	3101	50
Total	4122	80

3.5 Sampling Techniques

Sampling is a process of selecting part of the population from the target or study population. The researcher selected a representative sample of 80 respondents using simple random sampling and purposive sampling. Simple random sampling gave respondents an equal chance to be selected and was used to select parents and learners.

Amin (2005) defines purposive sampling as a technique of non-probability sampling where the researcher consciously selected particular elements or subjects for inclusion in a study to ensure that the elements had certain characteristics pertinent to the study. It normally targeted a particular group of people who were said to have the information required. This technique was used to select head teachers and teachers.

3.6 Data Collection Methods

The researcher used two categories of data collection methods: questionnaires and interview. The questionnaires was used to collect data from head teachers, teachers and pupil. On the other hand, the interview method was used to collect data from parents.

3.7 Data Collection Instruments

The instruments used for the survey method were self-administered questionnaires, while those for the interview method were interview guides. Gay (2006) defines questionnaires as instruments that attempted to obtain comparable data from all members partaking in the sample, given that the same questions had to be answered by all participants. The main reason for using this tool was that it helped cover a large number of respondents in a short time and generated reliable data since respondents answered the questions, minimizing bias from the researcher. The responses were rated on a five-point Likert scale, with 1 denoting strongly agree, 2 representing agree, 3 neutral, 4 disagree, and 5 strongly disagree. The interview guide mainly contained open-ended items.

3.8 Procedure of Data Collection

The following procedure was observed for data collection:

- The research proposal was prepared by the researcher under the supervision of the supervisor.
- The tools for data collection were prepared and tested.
- The researcher obtained an introductory letter from the department of education at Busitema University, which was presented to relevant authorities of the selected primary schools in Bukedea district.
- After seeking permission to collect data from relevant authorities, the researcher proceeded to make appointments to meet respondents to agree on the time and venue of data collection.
- This was followed by the presentation of data.
- Discussion of the findings was done, leading to a conclusion, and the final report was submitted to the board of examiners of the department of education for the award of a Bachelor in Education Primary at Busitema University.

3.9 Data Presentation and Analysis

After collecting data from the field using the specified research instruments, the researcher presented information using frequency tables, and the figures arrived were finally analyzed qualitatively through identification and categorization of common items from respondents' descriptions of their experiences with reference to the objectives of the study.

Chapter Four

Data Presentation and Analysis

4.0 Introduction:

This chapter presents data from analyzed questionnaires.

4.1 Socio Demographic Data of the respondents

Table 1 : socio demographic characteristics of the respondents (n=80)

Responses	Frequency (n=80)	Percentage (%)
Age		
17-20	3	3
21-25	7	9
26-30	12	15
31-40	19	24
40 and above	39	49
Total	80	100
Sex		
Male	39	49
Female	41	51
Total	80	100
Religion		
Muslim	23	29
Christian	57	71
Pagan	-	-

Total	80	100
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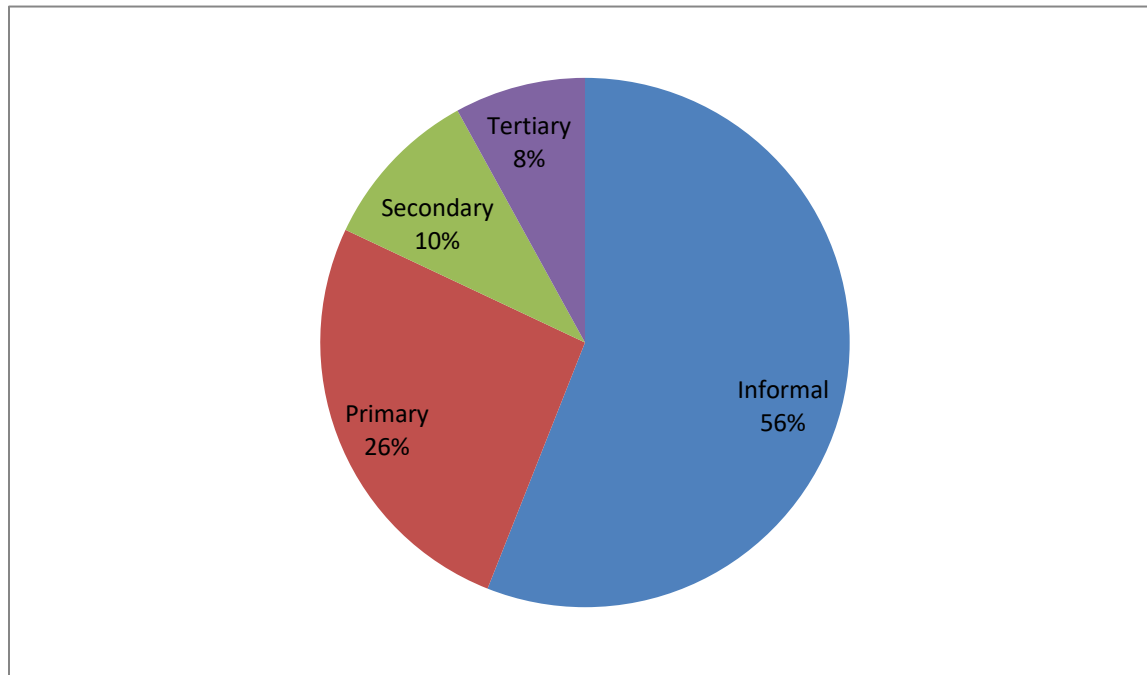
Source : Primary data,(2024)

The age distribution of the respondents showed that the majority were aged 40 and above, accounting for 49% (39 respondents). The age group 31-40 comprised 24% (19 respondents), followed by the age group 26-30 with 15% (12 respondents). The age group 21-25 represented 9% (7 respondents), while the youngest group, aged 17-20, constituted 3% (3 respondents). This indicated that nearly half of the respondents were in the oldest age category, suggesting that the study population was predominantly older adults.

The sex distribution of the respondents revealed a fairly balanced representation between males and females. Males made up 49% (39 respondents), while females constituted 51% (41 respondents). This near-equal distribution ensured that both male and female perspectives were adequately represented in the study.

Regarding religious affiliation, the majority of respondents identified as Christian, making up 71% (57 respondents). Muslims accounted for 29% (23 respondents). There were no respondents identified as Pagan. This data reflected a predominantly Christian sample with a significant Muslim minority.

Figure 1: showing education level



Source: Primary data, (2024)

The educational levels of the respondents indicated that a significant portion had informal education, comprising 56% (45 respondents). Those with primary education accounted for 26% (21 respondents), secondary education for 10% (8 respondents), and tertiary education for 8% (6 respondents). This distribution highlighted that the majority of respondents had limited formal education, with a small proportion having attained higher levels of education.

4.2 The relationship between teacher-pupil ratio and learners' academic performance

Table 3: The relationship between teacher-pupil ratio and learners' academic performance

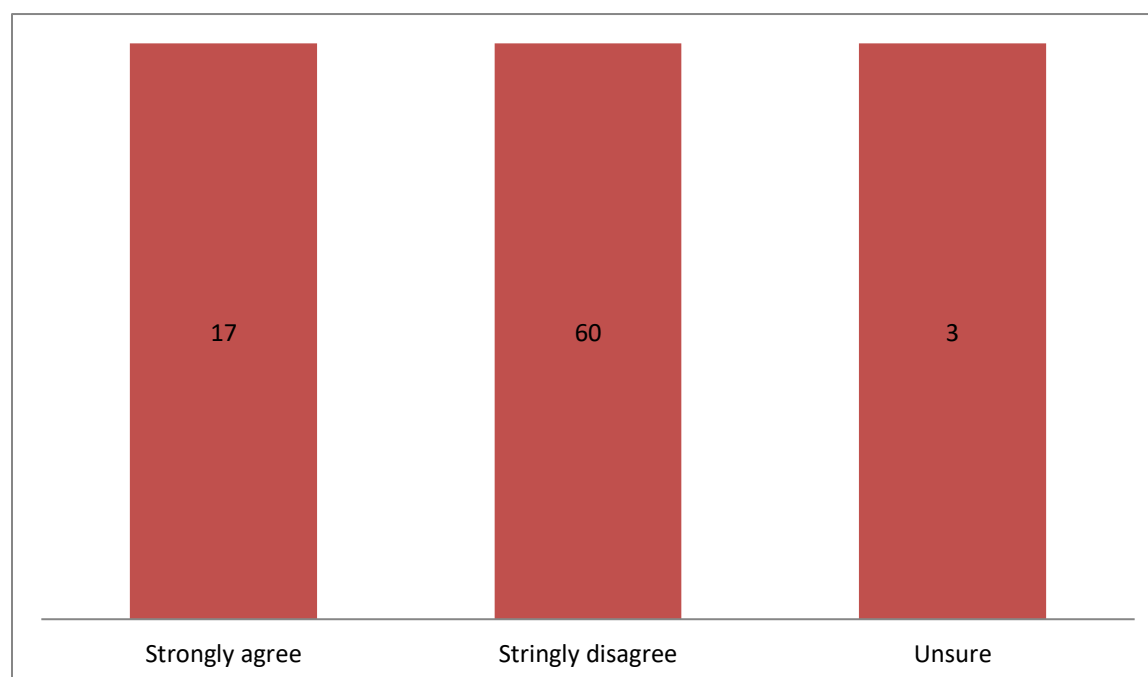
Responses	Frequency (n=80)	Percentage (100%)
Do you agree that reducing the teacher-pupil ratio positively impacts pupils' academic performance in reading and math		
Strongly agree	21	59
Strongly disagree	59	74
Total	80	100
Do you believe that a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:60, negatively affects the quality of education		
Strongly agree	36	45
Strongly disagree	35	44
Not sure	9	11
Total	80	100
How likely is it that pupils in smaller classes (teacher-pupil ratio of 1:15) will achieve higher academic performance compared to pupils in larger classes		
Very likely	41	51
Unlikely	24	30
Neutral	15	19
Total	80	100

Source: Primary data, (2024)

.A significant majority, 74%, strongly disagreed that reducing the teacher-pupil ratio positively impacted pupils' performance in reading and mathematics, while only 59% agreed with the opposite.

Furthermore, when asked about the negative effects of a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:60 on the quality of education, 45% strongly agreed, indicating a general concern among stakeholders about high ratios. Interestingly, regarding the likelihood of pupils in smaller classes (with a ratio of 1:15) achieving better academic outcomes, 51% believed it was very likely, while 30% thought it was unlikely.

Figure 2: Do you think that a teacher-pupil ratio exceeding 1:40 negatively affects teachers' ability to offer personalized instruction to pupils (Frequency)



17 (21% strongly agreed, 60 (75%) of respondents strongly disagreed with the idea that a teacher-pupil ratio exceeding 1:40 hinders teachers' ability to provide personalized instruction, suggesting that many did not see a direct correlation between class size and personalized teaching and 3 (4%) were n sure. Overall, the data highlighted a significant skepticism about the impact of lower teacher-pupil ratios on academic performance, despite some acknowledgment of their potential benefits.

4.3 Optimal teacher-pupil ratio for improved academic performance:

Table 4: Optimal teacher-pupil ratio for improved academic performance:

Response	Frequency (n=80)	Percentage (100 %)
Do you agree that a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:15 is optimal for improving student performance in reading and mathematics		
Strongly agree	51	64
Strongly disagree	29	36
Total	80	100
Do you believe that maintaining a teacher-pupil ratio of approximately 1:18, contributes positively to student achievement		
Strongly agree	75	94
Strongly disagree	5	6
Total	80	100

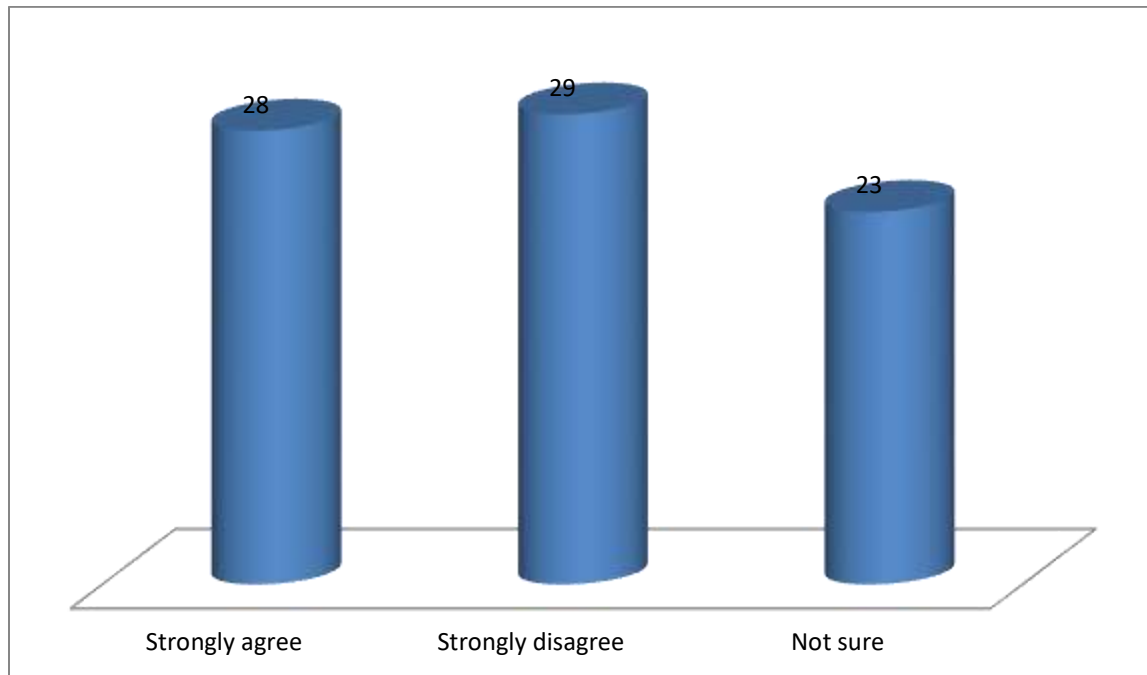
Source: Primary data, (2024)

Table 4.3 indicated a strong consensus among respondents regarding the optimal teacher-pupil ratio necessary for enhancing academic performance. A significant 64% of respondents strongly agreed that a ratio of 1:15 was optimal for improving student performance in reading and mathematics, while only 36% disagreed.

The perception of a teacher-pupil ratio of approximately 1:18 contributing positively to student achievement was even more pronounced, with 94% of respondents strongly agreeing with this

statement and only 6% expressing disagreement. However, opinions were more varied when it came to the likelihood of reducing the teacher-pupil ratio to between 1:20 and 1:30 enhancing academic performance in low-resource settings.

Figure 3: How likely is it that reducing the teacher-pupil ratio to between 1:20 and 1:30 can enhance academic performance in low-resource settings, according to studies conducted in rural areas (Frequency)



Here, 28 (35%) strongly agreed, 36 (36%) strongly disagreed, and 23 (29%) were unsure, indicating some uncertainty among stakeholders regarding the effectiveness of reducing ratios in specific contexts. Overall, the data suggested a strong belief in the benefits of smaller teacher-pupil ratios for academic success, particularly in foundational subjects.

4.4 The perceptions of stakeholders regarding the impact of teacher-pupil ratio on academic performance:

Table 5: The perceptions of stakeholders regarding the impact of teacher-pupil ratio on academic performance:

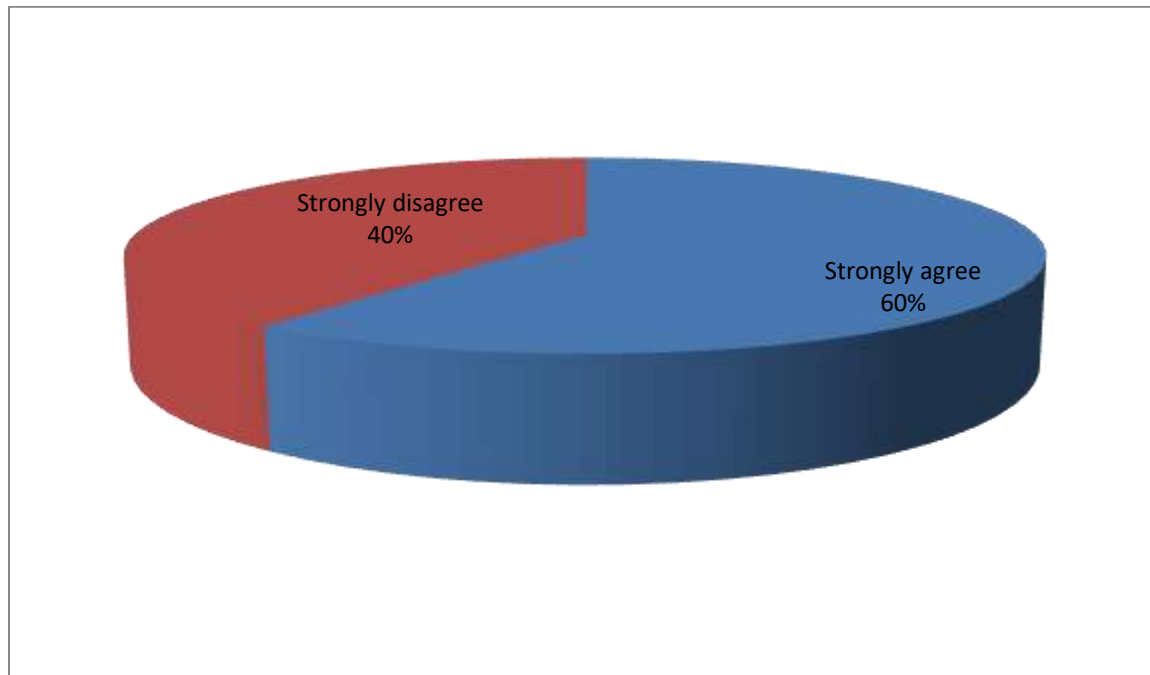
Responses	Frequency (n=80)	Percentage (%)
How important do you think maintaining a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:20 or lower is for ensuring quality education.		
Very important	45	56
Not important	35	44
Total	80	100
Do you believe that larger class sizes (above 1:40) negatively impact student engagement and academic performance		
Strongly agree	27	34
Strongly disagree	28	35
Not Sure	25	31
Total	80	100

Source: Primary data, (2024)

The perceptions of stakeholders about the impact of teacher-pupil ratios on academic performance, as shown in Table 4.4, illustrated a significant divide in opinions. A majority of respondents (56%) considered maintaining a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:20 or lower to be very important for ensuring quality education, while 44% felt it was not important.

Additionally, responses to the question about larger class sizes (above 1:40) negatively impacting student engagement and academic performance were mixed; 34% strongly agreed with this statement, while 35% strongly disagreed, indicating that opinions were nearly evenly split on this issue.

Figure 4 :In your opinion, do parents feel that a favorable teacher-pupil ratio facilitates better communication between teachers and pupils



When asked about whether parents believe a favorable teacher-pupil ratio facilitates better communication between teachers and pupils, 60% strongly agreed, demonstrating a positive perception of smaller ratios among stakeholders. The data collectively highlighted a strong belief among some stakeholders regarding the importance of maintaining lower teacher-pupil ratios for improving educational quality and facilitating effective communication in the classroom, despite notable dissent in other areas.

Chapter Five

Discussion of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendation

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of findings, conclusion and recommendation of the study, the chapter also suggests areas for further research, conclusion were drawn based on the content analysis, research questions and objectives of the study as well as the findings of the study thereof, recommendations were made based on content analyzed and the findings of the study

5.1 Discussion of Findings

5.1.1 Discussion of the Findings on the Relationship between Teacher-Pupil Ratio and Learners' Academic Performance

A significant majority (74%) strongly disagreed that reducing the teacher-pupil ratio positively impacted pupils' performance in reading and mathematics. These findings disagreed with a study conducted by Krueger (2003) in the Tennessee STAR (Student-Teacher Achievement Ratio) project, which revealed that pupils in smaller classes (with a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:15) performed better academically than those in larger classes. Similarly, research by Blatchford et al. (2011) in the UK highlighted that reducing the teacher-pupil ratio positively influenced student achievement, particularly in primary schools. Furthermore, when asked about the negative effects of a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:60 on the quality of education, 45% of respondents strongly agreed, indicating a general concern among stakeholders regarding high ratios. Interestingly, 51% believed it was very likely that pupils in smaller classes (with a ratio of 1:15) would achieve better academic outcomes, while 30% thought it was unlikely. A study conducted by Njoroge and Kioko (2020) in Kenya also found that schools with a high teacher-pupil ratio (averaging 1:60) faced significant challenges in delivering quality education. Their research revealed that large class sizes overwhelmed teachers, reducing their ability to offer personalized instruction and leading to lower academic performance. The authors recommended that governments invest in recruiting more teachers to improve the quality of education in public schools.

Additionally, 75% of respondents strongly disagreed with the idea that a teacher-pupil ratio exceeding 1:40 hinders teachers' ability to provide personalized instruction, suggesting that many

did not see a direct correlation between class size and personalized teaching. These findings disagreed with a study conducted in Nigeria by Ololube et al. (2016), which found that a teacher-pupil ratio exceeding 1:40 negatively impacted academic performance in primary schools. Teachers reported being unable to effectively cover the syllabus, and pupils received little to no individual attention. The authors argued that this disproportionate ratio acted as a barrier to the implementation of effective teaching strategies, thus reducing learners' overall academic achievements.

5.1.2 Discussion of the Findings on the Optimal Teacher-Pupil Ratio for Improved Academic Performance

A significant 64% of respondents strongly agreed that a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:15 was optimal for improving student performance in reading and mathematics. These findings were in agreement with Krueger (1999), whose STAR project showed that pupils in classes with a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:15 demonstrated significantly better performance in reading and mathematics compared to those in larger classes (1:25 and above). The long-term benefits were particularly evident for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, indicating that smaller class sizes (lower teacher-pupil ratios) positively impacted student engagement and academic success.

The perception that a teacher-pupil ratio of approximately 1:18 contributed positively to student achievement was even more pronounced, with 94% of respondents strongly agreeing. These findings were in agreement with a study conducted by Sahlberg (2015), which highlighted Finland's maintenance of a teacher-pupil ratio of about 1:18 in primary schools. This lower ratio, along with Finland's student-centered teaching methods, allowed for more personalized attention, frequent feedback, and a strong emphasis on cooperative learning. The study attributed Finland's success in education to maintaining small class sizes, which helped cater to individual learner needs and enhance academic performance.

5.1.3 Discussion of the Perceptions of Stakeholders Regarding the Impact of Teacher-Pupil Ratio on Academic Performance

A majority of respondents (56%) considered maintaining a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:20 or lower to be very important for ensuring quality education, while 44% felt it was not important. These

findings were in agreement with a study by Campbell et al. (2003), which investigated how parents in the United Kingdom viewed the teacher-pupil ratio in their children's schools. Many parents felt that a lower teacher-pupil ratio (around 1:20) was vital for ensuring quality education. They associated smaller class sizes with better communication between teachers and pupils, more thorough academic support, and a more positive school experience overall. Parents also believed that smaller class sizes promoted better classroom management, which in turn positively affected their children's academic performance and behavior.

Additionally, responses regarding whether larger class sizes (above 1:40) negatively impacted student engagement and academic performance were mixed, with 34% strongly agreeing and 35% strongly disagreeing. These findings contradicted a study conducted in rural India by Banerjee et al. (2016), which explored how community members, including parents and local leaders, perceived the impact of teacher-pupil ratios on academic performance. Communities felt that smaller class sizes were critical for improving learning outcomes, particularly in under-resourced rural schools. They observed that when the ratio exceeded 1:40, teachers struggled to manage classrooms, leading to diminished student engagement and lower test scores. Parents and local stakeholders advocated for government intervention to hire more teachers and reduce class sizes in rural areas.

5.2 Conclusion

The study revealed a complex relationship between teacher-pupil ratio and learners' academic performance, highlighting both positive and negative effects depending on the class size. A majority of respondents disagreed with the notion that reducing the teacher-pupil ratio directly improves academic performance, although evidence from other studies, such as the Tennessee STAR project and research conducted in the UK and Kenya, suggests otherwise. The findings indicate that high teacher-pupil ratios, especially those exceeding 1:40, negatively impact the quality of education, primarily due to teachers' inability to offer personalized instruction. However, respondents showed mixed opinions about the direct effect of teacher-pupil ratios on teaching quality, with many not perceiving larger class sizes as problematic.

Optimal teacher-pupil ratios were generally considered to range between 1:15 and 1:18, aligning with global studies from Finland and other developed countries that emphasize the importance of

small class sizes in enhancing student performance, particularly for disadvantaged learners. Stakeholders, including parents and community members, also recognized the importance of maintaining lower ratios for quality education, better student engagement, and improved academic outcomes. Nonetheless, perceptions were divided on the impact of class sizes exceeding 1:40, with some stakeholders advocating for increased government intervention to address teacher shortages in under-resourced areas.

5.3 Recommendations

1. **Recruitment of More Teachers:** To address the challenges posed by high teacher-pupil ratios, particularly in public and rural schools, governments should invest in recruiting more teachers. This would reduce the burden on existing educators and allow for more personalized instruction, which has been shown to improve academic performance, particularly in reading and mathematics.
2. **Policy on Teacher-Pupil Ratios:** Education policymakers should establish clear guidelines that set optimal teacher-pupil ratios, particularly for primary schools, to ensure quality education. Based on the findings, a ratio of 1:15 to 1:18 is recommended, especially in disadvantaged communities where learners require more attention.
3. **Classroom Management Training:** Teachers should receive training in managing larger class sizes effectively, focusing on innovative strategies that ensure all pupils are engaged despite the high teacher-pupil ratio. This would help mitigate some of the negative effects of large classes on student performance.
4. **Increase in Education Budget:** Governments should increase their education budgets to cater to infrastructure development, teacher recruitment, and training. Adequate resources will ensure that class sizes remain manageable, contributing to improved academic performance.
5. **Community Involvement:** Schools should encourage more active involvement from parents and the community in educational matters. Creating awareness about the importance of manageable class sizes and fostering better communication between teachers and parents can further enhance student engagement and performance.

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APPENDIX II:

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEADTEACHERS , TEACHERS AND PUPILS

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am student of Busitema university pursuing degree in Primary education .Iam conducting a research on the “relationship between teacher –pupil ration on learners academic performance . Findings from this research will hereafter be submitted Busitema university as a partial fulfillment of the award of a degree in Primary education. The information required is purely for academic purpose and will be treated with strict confidentiality. I therefore request you to spare some of your valuable time to fill this questionnaire.

Thank you.

.....

SECTION A: Bio Data of Respondent

Age

- a) 17-20
- b) 21-25
- c) 26-30
- d) 31-40
- e) 40 and above

Sex

- a) Male
- b) Female

Religion

- a) Muslim
- b) Christian
- c) Pagan

Level of Education

Informal

Primary

Secondary

Tertiary

Section B: The relationship between teacher-pupil ratio and learners' academic performance

Do you agree that reducing the teacher-pupil ratio positively impacts pupils' academic performance in reading and math?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Do you believe that a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:60, negatively affects the quality of education?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

How likely is it that pupils in smaller classes (teacher-pupil ratio of 1:15) will achieve higher academic performance compared to pupils in larger classes?

- Very likely

- Likely
- Neutral
- Unlikely
- Very unlikely

Do you think that a teacher-pupil ratio exceeding 1:40 negatively affects teachers' ability to offer personalized instruction to pupils,?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Section C: Optimal teacher-pupil ratio for improved academic performance:

1. Do you agree that a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:15 is optimal for improving student performance in reading and mathematics?
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
2. Do you believe that maintaining a teacher-pupil ratio of approximately 1:18, contributes positively to student achievement?
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
3. How likely is it that reducing the teacher-pupil ratio to between 1:20 and 1:30 can enhance academic performance in low-resource settings, according to studies conducted in rural areas?

- Very likely
- Likely
- Neutral
- Unlikely
- Very unlikely

SECTION D: the perceptions of stakeholders regarding the impact of teacher-pupil ratio on academic performance:

1. How important do you think maintaining a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:20 or lower is for ensuring quality education?
 - Very important
 - Important
 - Neutral
 - Unimportant
 - Very unimportant
2. Do you believe that larger class sizes (above 1:40) negatively impact student engagement and academic performance?
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
3. In your opinion, do parents feel that a favorable teacher-pupil ratio facilitates better communication between teachers and pupils?
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
4. How confident are you that reducing teacher-pupil ratios would lead to improved academic performance in schools?

- Very confident
- Confident
- Neutral
- Not confident
- Not at all confident

END

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS

1. Do you feel that the teacher is able to give your child enough attention in the classroom?

.....

.....

2. How do you think the teacher-pupil ratio in class affects their academic performance?

.....

.....

3. Have you noticed any changes in your child's academic performance in classes with smaller or larger groups of pupils?

.....

.....

Do you feel that the teacher has enough time to help your child during class?

.....

.....

How does the number of pupils in class affect your child's learning?

.....

.....

END