

Address contradictions in govt ban on public display of exam results

The release of the 2025 Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) and Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) results has once again drawn national attention. Families celebrated success, schools analysed performance, and education stakeholders reflected on the state of learning in Uganda. However, beyond the statistics and congratulatory messages lies a glaring contradiction that cannot be ignored.

Last year, during the official release of national examination results, Minister of Education and Sports Janet Museveni issued a strict warning to all heads of institutions. Schools were directed not to display individual learners' results on notice boards, social media platforms, or any public forum. The directive emphasised the protection of learners' privacy, dignity, and emotional well-being. School administrators were reminded that examination results constitute personal data and should only be communicated privately to candidates and their parents or guardians. The message was clear: Protect the child.

Yet, one year later, following the release of the 2025 PLE and UCE results by the Uganda National Examinations Board (Uneb), we have witnessed widespread publication of detailed results across some newspapers, television, online platforms, and social media

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Gloria Kyarisiima
Education

including platforms affiliated with government media.

Names, grades, school breakdowns, and even photographs of candidates have been circulated publicly. Screen shots of result slips have flooded social media. In some cases, entire lists of top performers have been printed and shared widely. This raises an important and uncomfortable question: If schools were warned not to display results publicly, why are public platforms doing the same? Who is to blame? And more importantly who is responsible for implementation?

Policy consistency is a cornerstone of good

governance. When directives are issued but not uniformly applied, they lose authority. If school heads risk reprimand for displaying results on a notice board, then media houses, especially those aligned with government should equally adhere to the same standards. The responsibility is collective but begins at the top. The ministry must ensure that its directives are consistently enforced and clearly interpreted. Uneb, as custodian of examination data, must safeguard candidate information and strengthen secure dissemination systems.

Celebrating academic excellence does not require exposing individual data. National performance trends can be shared. Success stories can be highlighted responsibly. Policy discussions can be conducted without publishing personal grades. The intention behind last year's directive was noble to protect learners from stigma, pressure, and public comparison. That intention remains valid today. What Uganda needs now is not silence, but consistency.

If we are serious about protecting our children, then regulations must apply equally to all stakeholders schools, parents, media houses, and government institutions alike.

The credibility of our education system depends not only on the results released, but on the integrity with which we handle them. Let this moment prompt honest reflection and unified action.

Ms Gloria Kyarisiima is an educationist and consultant.

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