

**CAUSES OF ABSENTEEISM AMONG PUPILS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS  
IN BUTALEJA SUB COUNTY, BUTALEJA DISTRICT.**

**BY**

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**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND  
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## DECLARATION

I, Manakhe Esther declare that this research project titled "Causes of absenteeism among pupils in primary schools in Butaleja Sub County, Butaleja District" is my original work. It has never been presented in part or as a whole to any institution or University for any academic award. All persons, researchers and authors whose work was reviewed and used in the process of its development have been duly acknowledged and are henceforth, referenced in the respective sections.

Signature:.....

Date:.....21/3/2025.....

MANAKHE ESTHER

(RESEARCHER)

## APPROVAL

This is to certify that this research report was compiled by Manakhe Esther under the title “Causes of absenteeism among pupils in primary schools in Butaleja Sub County, Butaleja District”, and has been under my supervision and it’s now ready to be submitted to the academic board of Busitema University.

Signature:.....

Date:.....

**MS. NAMUKOSE SARAH**  
**(SUPERVISOR)**

## **DEDICATION**

Special dedication to my husband my husband Mr. Wadinda Abraham, children Kochwe Joseph, Amelia Jane Hope and Napote Joy Angella who supported me in this study.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Great thanks are to Almighty God for sustenance and strength; He has accorded me to develop this proposal. The researcher acknowledges all scholars whose works have been used in this study. I also extend thanks to my family members my husband Mr. Wadinda Abraham, children Kochwe Joseph, Amelia Jane Hope and Napote Joy Angella; and siblings Michael, Racheal, Beth, Eglash, and Johnwho supported me in this study.

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## ABSTRACT

The effects of pupils' school absenteeism rate on the academic performance of learners and education in general, is the concern of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The purpose of the study was to establish the relationship between the effects of the pupils' school absenteeism rate and the academic performance of learners in primary schools in Butaleja sub county. The objectives were to find out the effects of pupils' school absenteeism rate in primary schools in Butaleja sub county, Butaleja District; to find out the status of academic performance of learners in primary schools in Butaleja sub county, Butaleja District; to assess the relationship between the effects of pupils' school absenteeism rate and the academic performance of learners in primary schools in Butaleja sub county, in Butaleja District. The study used a cross-sectional survey research design, employing both qualitative, quantitative and, focused group discussion approaches. The study population of 10 teachers and 70 learners in government-aided schools participated in the study.

A structured questionnaire and interviews were the instruments for collecting data. A content validity index [CVI] was computed. For reliability, a test to retest method was used and a Cronbach Alpha was computed and used after pretesting and after the whole data is collected.

Conclusively, increased pupils' school absenteeism rate affected pupils due to rarely attending school. Consequently, this affected pupils' learning schedules and consistency in class. This resulted into poor academic performance of learners due to lack of the constant guidance by the teachers. There was a highly positive significant relationship between pupils' school absenteeism rate and the academic performance of learners at the one percent level two tailed. These results implied that as school closure due to pupils' school absenteeism rate contributed 69.4% to the status of the academic performance of learners and the remaining 30.6% was caused by other factors.

It was recommended that as school administrators observed the guide learners and sensitize them about the disadvantages of school absenteeism, it would adopt other means like online class so that pupils could attend school regularly, create discussion groups through WhatsApp, Zoom to increase on the contact time with other learners and encourage them not to absenteeism. Political authorities at the village, Sub County, district and nation enacted laws to streamline the system and protect pupils from common causes of absenteeism. The school administration and stakeholders should provide extra classes, incentives and bursaries and also provide extra support to those pupils that could not count using mental head effectively, divide effectively in math to improve the status of academic performance. Society should be sensitized about protection of pupils in school.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Introduction**

This chapter will comprise of the background of the study, problem of the study, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study and scope of the study which will be broken down into time, geographical and content scope, and the conceptual framework.

### **1.1. Background to the Study.**

The background to the study will be categorized into historical, conceptual, contextual and theoretical background.

#### **1.1.1. Historical background.**

Around the world, more than 129 million pupils are usually absent from school, including 32 million primary school-aged, 30 million lower secondary school-aged, and 67 million upper secondary school aged. The countries affected by conflicts, pupils are more than twice more likely to be out of school than pupils living in non-affected countries. The average literacy rate throughout the world is 79.9%, while for men it is 89.2%. India lingers behind at 62.3% for women as compared to 80% for men (UNICEF, 2021).

According to a World Health Organization report (2021), the overall status absenteeism rate decreased from 8.3% in 2010 to 5.1% in 2019. During this year the status absenteeism rate declined for 16 to 24 years old overall (16.7 to 7.7%), American Indian natives from (15.4 to 9.6 %), Blacks (10.3 to 5.6%), Whites (5.3 to 4.1%) and Asian (2.8 to 1.8%).

Many pupils in India are married at a young age and drop out of school after they complete their primary education due to societal pressures or early pregnancies. Child labor and lack of feminine hygiene products keep pupils from coming to school, and contribute to the literacy rates and continuous lack of education. As pupils remain uneducated, it is more difficult to enter the workforce, and consequently women find themselves in difficult financial situations (Mahalanabis S, 2021).

More than 49 million pupils are out of primary and secondary school in Saharan Africa, with 31 a million of them out of secondary education, under-mining their rights and limiting their opportunities. In addition, 40 % of pupils marry before age 18, and African countries account for 15 to 20 countries with the highest rate of child marriage globally (Marco &Hella, 2017).

According to Majd et al (2021), In Kenya, global citizen estimates that more than152, 000 teenage pupils became pregnant between March and May 2020 due to economic hardships in countries nationwide lockdown.

Education is not only a human right but also one of the millennium development goals which help to lay a foundation for a bright future for the young with good employment, socio-economic status and health in general. In Uganda, a low developing country, 57% of youths (15-24years) have not attained primary level education yet 28% do not complete secondary level education. Only 10% of the youths complete primary education and 2% complete secondary level education with higher rates of drop out at primary education level being higher (94%) in rural areas compared to 77% in the urban areas ( Banura M, 2019).

According to Kim J & Jun M (2022), school absenteeism is defined as any individual aged 6-19 years who had not completed and yet was attending primary or secondary school.

The incidence of school pupil drop out was not known during Missionaries time. This was because the Education curriculum in primary schools was made in such a way that every one's ability and interest were catered for. Scholastic materials like textbooks, pens and pencils were supplied by the government. Schools and parents could only buy uniform for the children (Kim J & Jun M, 2022).

Primary education was a pride for student, parents and society at large because a pupil at school was admired by all. Education was the only route for socio-economic mobility and this discouraged any form of school absenteeism. It was the educated one who was admired because he was the society's helper, hope and instrument. After the independence in 1962 when Uganda government took over education in the country, things began to change. Every child was required to pay school fees and even schools fees began to hike. By 1974, Uganda had 3154 primary schools with a total enrolment of 792 000 student taught by 26,000 teachers, which gave a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:30. This was a remarkable increase; however, the problem of lack of employment could have been the start of school absenteeism. Practical subjects and vocational courses had been dropped after 1960's which increased on the number of absentees. Pupils started seeing no future in education after primary seven. They went to school to learn reading, writing and arithmetic in lower primary after which they dropped to join the world of work (Kim J & Jun M, 2022).

As of now, the government has put in place Universal primary Education in Uganda and enforced school attendance of pupils through the regional security officers like the RDCs to curb down on absenteeism and improve academic performance.

### **1.1.2. Conceptual background.**

The study will be about pupil behavior and its contribution towards school absenteeism. Expressiveness, attitude and devotion will be considered as sub variables under pupil behavior and school size, school location and school rules and regulations will be considered as sub variables under school absenteeism.

### **1.1.3. Theoretical background.**

The study will be carried out on behavior of pupil and school absenteeism.

Behavior of a pupil and school absenteeism as the major variables of the study will be best explained with the help of a theory.

Theory plays a vital role in research by providing explanation, understanding and meaningfulness to research. Theory helps to predict facts and to identify unexplored areas of research. A theory is a rational type of abstract thinking about a phenomenon or the result of such thinking. Research without a theory is less emphatic to establish the relationship between the variables. The rate of school absenteeism among pupils in primary schools is highly determined by their behavior.

### **1.1.4. Contextual background.**

The study will be about girl-child behavior and school absenteeism in Butaleja sub county, Butaleja District. Butaleja Sub County is comprised of Butesa P/S, Nakwasi P/S, Mabale P/S, and Bugosa P/S.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem.**

Absenteeism has erupted to be one of the leading causes of poor academic performance among pupils in primary schools in Butaleja district. When pupils are irregular in school attendance, they miss important segments of the syllabi and therefore cannot coalesce the confidence to enable them perform well in examinations. After poor performance in PLE, the pupils drop out of school and end up losing on their career prospects, hence becoming social misfits and society burden morally, financially, and culturally. Educating a pupil is very important in society today as it helps them to discover themselves as important to the community and empowers them by enabling them to acquire skills to participate in the labor market and also to get new ideas of being self-employed. As of now, the government has put in place Universal primary Education in Uganda and enforced school attendance of pupils through the regional security officers like the RDCs to curb down on absenteeism and improve academic performance. Sensitizing the community on the importance of pupil education can help to reduce the problem of pupils' absenteeism in school. The researcher therefore seeks to investigate the causes of school absenteeism and their effects on academic performance among pupils in Butaleja subcounty, Butaleja District.

## **1.3. Purpose of the Study.**

The purpose of the study will be to investigate the causes of school absenteeism among pupils in primary schools in Butaleja Sub County, Butaleja District.

## **1.4. Objectives of the Study.**

The study will be guided by the following specific objectives

- i. To investigate the causes of school absenteeism among pupils in primary schools in Butaleja Sub County, Butaleja District.

- ii. To explain the effects of school absenteeism among pupils in primary schools on their academic performance in Butaleja Sub County, Butaleja District.
- iii. To explain the strategies to reduce the rate of school absenteeism among pupils in primary schools in Butaleja Sub County, Butaleja District.

### **1.5. Research Questions.**

The study will be guided by the following research questions:

- i. What are the causes of school absenteeism among pupils in primary schools in Butaleja Sub County, Butaleja District?
- ii. What are the problems emerging from increased school absenteeism among pupils in primary schools on their academic performance in Butaleja Sub County, Butaleja District?
- iii. What are the strategies to reduce the rate of school absenteeism among pupils in primary schools in Butaleja Sub County, Butaleja District?

### **1.6. Scope of the Study.**

The scope of the study will be analyzed in three dimensions for instance content scope, geographical scope and time scope.

#### **1.6.1. Content scope.**

The proposed content scope will be contribution of girl-child behavior towards school absenteeism, with girl-child behavior as the independent variable and school absenteeism as the dependent variable. Expressiveness, Attitude and Devotion will be considered as sub-variable under the behavior of pupils while School size, school rules and regulations and school location will be considered as sub-variables under school absenteeism. The intervening variables will be parental care, role models, culture and drug abuse.

### **1.6.2. Geographical scope.**

The proposed study area will be Butaleja Sub County, Butaleja District.

Butaleja Sub County is comprised of four villages and four parishes. The primary schools in the area are Butaleja Sub County is comprised of Butesa P/S, Nakwasi P/S, Mabale P/S, and Bugosa P/S.

### **1.6.3 Time scope.**

The study will be carried out from Butaleja Sub County, Butaleja District.

The proposed study will be conducted within a period of three months from December 2024 to March 2025 to effectively gather information that effectively meets the study objectives. This will include the time for data collection, analysis, interpretation and preparation of the final report. The month of December will be for data collection, January and February for interpretation, analysis and preparation of the final report.

### **1.7. Significance of the study.**

The significance of the study will be the following:

The study will increase on the existing literature on girl-child behavior and school absenteeism, in Butaleja Sub County, Butaleja District, where little research has been done, hence creating more knowledge and information to future researchers and academicians.

The findings of the study will act as a benchmark to Butaleja District because it will provide the district officials with crucial data about the contributions of girl-child behavior towards school absenteeism and the need to reduce or stop school absenteeism in the district.

The study will help future researchers to form part of their reference material in the same or related research field.

The findings of the study will help the researcher to fully understand the underlying concepts of field research very well including; data collection, information compiling and gathering, and analysis skills.

The findings of the study will help the community of Butaleja Sub County to gain the knowledge of dangers of pupil dropping out of school.

The finding of study will also help the learners to understand the importance of continuing with education.

The findings of the study will help the school administrators of primary schools in Butaleja Sub county to come up with the strategies to reduce or stop pupil drop out of school.

As a result of his study, parents will gain the understanding of how important an educated child is to the community and country at large.

The study will help the researcher to obtain Bachelors' degree in Education, primary of Busitema University.

### **1.8. Justification of the study.**

The study will be justified on the ground that crucial information concerning the elimination of increased school absenteeism among primary school pupils in Butaleja Sub County in Butaleja District is going to be unveiled by the study.

The study will also be justified on the ground that it will reveal the importance of educating a pupil.

### **1.9. Limitations of the study.**

Some of the respondents may not be willing to take part in the study. However, the researcher will explain to them the purpose of the study.

Some of the respondents may want some payment before taking part in the study. The researcher however will explain to them that the study will be for academic purpose and not for business.

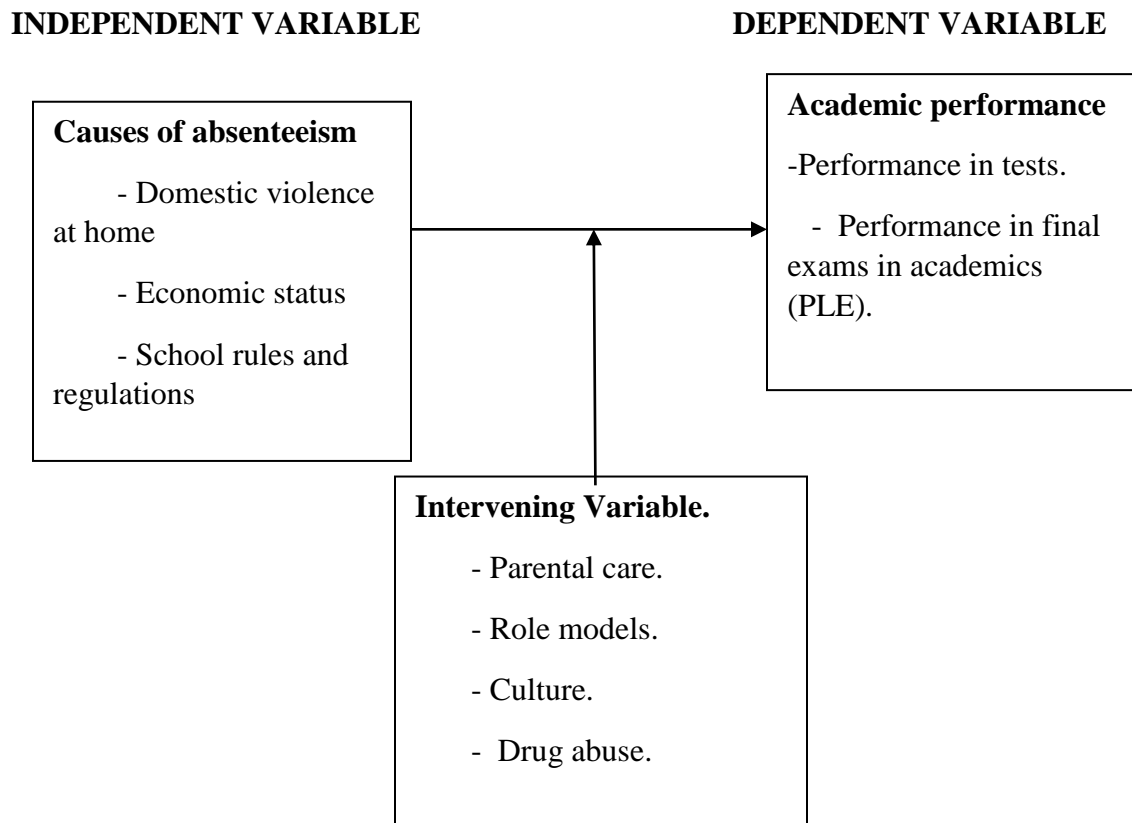
The researcher may also experience delays from the respondents in filling the questionnaires.

The researcher however will keep on reminding them until the questionnaires will be fully filled.

The researcher may also experience a challenge of finances to meet stationery, transport to the field and meals while in the field. However, the researcher will seek financial support from friends and relatives.

**1.10 The conceptual framework on causes of school absenteeism and the effect on academic performance.**

**Figure 1: showing conceptual framework**



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0. Introduction.**

This chapter will present literature that is relevant to the study giving reference to the study objectives, sub-divided into three sections. The first section will review related literature on the causes of school absenteeism, followed by the subsection which will review literature on the problems caused by the school absenteeism and the last sub section will review literature on the strategies to reduce the rate of school absenteeism.

#### **2.1. Theoretical review.**

The major variables of the study will be girl-child behavior and school absenteeism, with girl-child behavior as the independent variable and school absenteeism as the dependent variable. These variables can best be explained and understood by referring to a theory. This study will be guided by the Academics mediation theory. The Academic mediation theory examines the mediation effect of poor academic achievements on other factors such as deviant affiliation, personal deviance, family socialization and structural strains associated with school absenteeism. According to the theory, poor academic performance of a pupil makes him or her develop negative attitude towards schooling and therefore may develop other thoughts of early marriage, looking for casual jobs for a living among others, and therefore there is need to mediate the poor academic performance of pupils so as to stop school absenteeism. The Mediation theory was developed by at Rennes, France in 1960 by Professor Jean Gagnepian.

## **2.2. Causes of school absenteeism.**

According to Cook Jenna (2020), in his article of Educational Disparities among Pupils in India”,through education, individuals are enabled to acquire knowledge and skills that help them in all facets of their lives. Education empowers people to develop their capabilities in order to not only better their own lives, but also the lives of those around them. The educational opportunities that people have access to fluctuate based on many factors. In India, a range of disparities, such as economic or cultural factors, make access to education for pupils difficult to acquire (Cook Jenna, 2020).

Child marriage is one of the main reasons pupils in India are more likely to have inadequate access to education. In the year 2016, India had the highest number of child brides in the world with 223 million child brides, 102 million of which were married before the age of 15. In comparison, only 4% of males in India were married by the age of 18. The Indian government first started regulating child marriage in 1929 when they incorporated the Child Marriage Restraint Act. This act discouraged marriage for pupils under the age of 14 and boys under 18, but because it did not enact punishments, it failed to significantly decrease the number of underage marriages (Cook Jenna, 2020).

According to Koka AA (2019), due to cultural traditions, patriarchal values, and poverty, families often prioritize the marriage of their daughters over their education. Marriage is seen as a more urgent priority, causing many pupils to be married off before they are able to finish their education. The term Parayadhan is often used to describe pupils in India; the term refers to the view in society that pupils are a liability. *Paraya* means “not one’s own,” while *dhan* translates to property and wealth, reflecting the cultural belief that pupils are meant to be transferred from

the ownership of their father to that of their husband when they marry. Wives often need to drop out of school as the majority of the domestic responsibilities fall to them. Although they have the option of continuing with their education after marriage, this is a rare occurrence due to early pregnancies, strict gender roles, poverty, and the need for someone at home to do the domestic labor.

Koka AA (2019) further asserts that Mismanagement of menstrual hygiene is often a factor that prevents pupils from attending school. Due to both poverty and a lack of accessibility; some pupils struggle to obtain adequate supplies needed during their period. Additionally, many pupils lack the knowledge of what happens during their menstruation cycle, how to maintain health, and why they have a monthly period. Not only that, but due to the high chance of menstrual blood staining or leaking through their clothing, pupils often report staying home in order to avoid embarrassment. Every year, more than 23 million pupils in India drop out of school due to the lack of necessary products and hygiene education. In a study of pupils' school attendance in rural India, one out of five pupils said that they missed school during their period. In addition, 45% of the pupils that did attend school reported problems concentrating due to their period, and 36% said that they were scared of staining, smell, or losing the cloth or pad in school. Over 80% of the surveyed pupils were using cloths and did not have access to sanitary pads or tampons.

Child labor plays a major role in why pupils are inadequately educated .Child labor deprives them of opportunities for success, and harms their emotional, social, or physical development. Specifically, child labor interferes with a child's ability to enroll and fully participate in school. There are usually two kinds of child labor: labor that involves children in specific businesses for financial gain and domestic child labor which employs the child at home. India has one of the

highest numbers of child laborers in the world, with 10.1 million child laborers reported in India (Kumar p et al, 2023).

According to Kumar P et al (2023), while more boys than pupils generally work in vocations outside the home requiring learned skills, most pupils perform domestic labor, though it is not often seen as work. Domestic labor is widely accepted and legally permitted even when pupils are paid low wages and work long hours. If they are not employed elsewhere, they often work long hours at home attending to younger siblings while parents are working. Families often feel they must turn to their daughters to make ends meet.

According to Kim J & Jun M (2022), when Universal Primary Education was introduced in Uganda in 1997, among the challenges it faced was large numbers' and lack of parents/guardians support. Despite these problems, there were many more others such as inadequate school facilities and teachers' illness (absenteeism). Some teachers were unmotivated while others were negligent, pay did not seem to be a key factor but the researchers study revealed that teachers most wanted textbooks and other teaching materials.

Management and administration of a school are the basis of good discipline. Such routine things as morning cleaning, school assembly, class activities, Sunday services, parades, break time, games and sports, punctuality, uniform, teachers' smartness, meals and restraining from habits of drug abuse such as smoking and drinking are crucial in containing school organization as well as management. Therefore, there is need to reduce managerial loopholes that result into indiscipline of student ending up in dropping out of school (Kim J & Jun M, 2022).

According to Nabugoomu J (2019), Child-headship of families due to orphan-hood and broken marriages where the older children take on the responsibility of caring for their younger siblings is also perceived as a factor to dropping out of school. In addition, media influences at local shows or social media platforms in form of movies and music some of which are pornographic and/or sexually oriented entice and keep children away from school. Moreover, drug abuse of opium and marijuana keep learners mentally unstable and inadequate monitoring of students by community members are also cited as contributing to the high rate of dropping out of school in rural Uganda.

It is perceived that some learners in rural Uganda drop out of school due to poor performance, class repetition, high age for a given class, and poor attitude towards education preferring to be employed at a young age. Other learners fail to cope with knowledge disseminated at school and are termed as 'slow learners' by study participants. For others, stakeholders think of them as being disrespectful to their parents and refusing to continue with school. (Nabugoomu J, 2019).

It is perceived that poor payment of teachers demotivate them such that they give inadequate moral support to help children stay in school. In addition, poverty among parents also fails them to financially support their children such that students are kept home when sent home by school authorities to bring given school requirements. This also increases the rate of drop outs from school (Nabugoomu J, 2019).

Child labor and a temptation for daily money paid from cheap employment for example at sugarcane farms, and a mentality that the government should fully provide free education including meals and scholastic materials are also perceived as economic factors associated with dropping out of school ( Nabugoomu J, 2019).

According to Banura M (2019), Curricula have a significant impact on students' performances and school attendance. For example, an inaccessible or unfriendly curriculum predisposes students to high rates of high school absenteeism. The curriculum affects students learning in many ways. An unfavorable curriculum leads to poor academic performance, grade retention, or unnecessary punishments for example low expectations and bullying. Students who drop out of high school find the curriculum less connected to their learning needs. Usually, these students do not see education as interesting, valuable, and worth their investment and/or sacrifice, especially when taking high-stakes tests. In addition, the high stakes testing policies that mandate grade repetition and high school exit exams are the tipping points for students who struggle academically. These extra demands push these students out of school.

Moreover, some well-established schools push out students deemed weak or having behavioral issues .Conversely, high-performing schools attract many students. This happens because families often look for schools that will enhance their children's learning and possibilities of passing examinations and transitioning to better colleges or careers. While improvements in school performance lead to improved success for many students, the pressure for schools to maintain high scores and the best position in the region often works against struggling learners. Schools experiencing pressure to improve their overall performance or accountability score usually pursue this increase at the cost of other student outcomes, including the absenteeism rate (Banura M, 2019).

In conclusion school drop outs should be eliminated because education is not only a human right but also one of the millennium Development goals which help to lay a foundation for a bright future for the young with good employment, socio-economic status and health in general.

### **2.3. Problems emerging from increased school absenteeism.**

Absenteeism continues to be a concern for all youth because the education and related skills required to compete in today's global economy have made high school completion necessary for many forms of success in adulthood. On this score, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) reported an international comparison of 29 nations concerning the percent of students who graduated in 2012 within the amount of time normally allocated for completing secondary school. Overall, 72% of students completed secondary school on time (Kokemuller N, 2018).

In America, school absenteeism make up nearly half the heads of households on welfare. High school absenteeism are likely to live in poverty and have their families in poverty. This is because of limited opportunities and their vulnerabilities to harmful environments in adulthood. Limited opportunities for advancement mean that high school absenteeism experience poverty-related issues such as "higher levels of alcohol consumption, poorer mental and physical health, and increased likelihood of committing criminal acts and of becoming dependent on welfare and government programs than people with higher educational attainment (U.S. Bureau of Labor, 2021).

One way in which people are affected by their decision to drop out of high school is a greater chance of being unemployed. The unemployment rate for young high school absenteeism was roughly 54 percent in 2017, according to a report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Bureau also reported in March, 2018 that that the unemployment rate for those who merely completed high school was significantly lower than those that didn't complete high school.

Students graduating high school had an unemployment rate of 4.6 percent while the rate for high school absenteeism was at 6.5 percent (U.S. Bureau of Labor, 2021).

Incarceration in some sort of correctional facility, such as a jail or juvenile detention center, is also a more likely scenario for high school absenteeism. According to the U.S. Program for the Study of International Assessment for Adult Competencies (PIAAC) Survey of Incarcerated Adults, 30 percent of imprisoned adults had dropped out of high school. More specifically, male African American high school absenteeism are incarcerated at a nearly 70 percent higher rate than high school graduates.

The consequences of school absenteeism place a heavy toll on societies. For example, in the U.S., the economic costs are about \$250,000 per absenteeism as a result of lower tax contributions, greater reliance on government programs including welfare, and higher criminal activity. Thus, in aggregate, the 2.6 million status absenteeism identified in 2012 could cost the U.S. about \$650 million during the lifetimes. School absenteeism can also adversely affect local communities. For instance, absenteeism show lower civic and political participation and areas with high concentrations of absenteeism can experience community-level impacts such as declining tax revenues (Van L. 2022)

According to Van L (2022), antisocial behaviors also predict academic problems and school absenteeism. For instance, school absenteeism tend to have higher rates of misbehavior, aggression, and suspensions than do students who graduate from high school. They are also more likely to smoke tobacco and marijuana and use other illicit drugs. Teen parenthood is a powerful predictor of absenteeism and only 50% of teen mothers earns a high school diploma by age 20. In some cases, youth may need or desire to assume adult behaviors and responsibilities (e.g.,

full-time employment, parenthood). However, as a group, absenteeism are not yet socially or cognitively mature and the earlier youth assume these adult roles, the more problems they are likely to experience during their lifespan.

#### **2.4. Strategies to reduce school absenteeism.**

Since 1986, the National Absenteeism Prevention Center/Network (NDPC/N) has conducted and analyzed research; sponsored workshops and national conferences; and collaborated with researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to further the mission of reducing America's absenteeism rate by meeting the needs of youth in at-risk situations, including students with disabilities. There are different reasons for dropping out of school, and therefore the strategies differ (Wilson SJ, 2011).

According to Wilson S J (2011), active learning and student engagement strategies engage and involve students in meaningful ways as partners in their own learning. These strategies include student voice and choice; effective feedback, peer assessment, and goal setting; cooperative learning; thinking critically, creatively, and reflectively; and micro-teaching, discussion, and two-way communication. To be most effective, teachers must provide students with tools and strategies to organize themselves and any new material; techniques to use while reading, writing, and doing math; and systematic steps to follow when working through a task or reflecting upon their own learning.

After-School/Out-of-School Opportunities. Many schools provide after-school, before-school, and/or summer academic/enhancement/enrichment opportunities for example tutoring, credit recovery, acceleration, homework support that provide students with opportunities for assistance and recovery as well as high-interest options for discovery and learning. These opportunities

often decrease information loss and can inspire interest in arenas otherwise inaccessible. Such experiences are especially important for at-risk students because out-of-school “gap time” is filled with constructive and engaging activities and/or needed academic support (Wilson S J, 2011).

**Alternative Schooling.** Alternative schooling options and delivery model options for example alternative times and environments, blended learning, virtual learning, competency-based credit opportunities, extra provide alternative avenues to credit earning and graduation, with programs paying special attention to the student’s individual and social needs, career goals, and academic requirements for obtaining a high school diploma and transitioning successfully to life beyond graduation ( Wilson S J, 2011).

**Service-Learning.** Service-learning connects meaningful community service experiences with academic learning. This teaching/learning method promotes personal and social growth, career development, and civic responsibility and can be powerful vehicle for effective school reform at all grade levels (Wilson S J, 2011).

According to Bena C et al (2021), a systemic approach and process for ongoing and continuous improvement through a shared and widely communicated vision and focus, tightly focused goals and objectives, Selection of targeted research-based strategies and interventions, ongoing monitoring and feedback, and data-based decision-making help to prevent high school absenteeism. Systemic renewal requires the alignment of school policies, procedures, practices, and organizational structures and continuous monitoring of effectiveness.

Research consistently finds that family engagement has a direct, positive effect on youth's achievement and is one of the most accurate predictors of student's success in school. Critical elements of this type of collaboration rely on effective, ongoing, and multi-dimensional, two-way communication as well as ongoing needs assessments and responsive family supports and interventions (Bena C et al, 2021).

According to Rincon G & Sandra B (2023), instructional Technology can effectively support teaching and learning while engaging students in meaningful, current, and authentic efforts, dressing multiple intelligences, and adapting to students learning styles. Educational technology can effectively be used in individualized instruction and can not only help prepare students for the workforce, but can empower students who struggle with self-esteem. Effective use of technologies depends upon the timely response to an application of the rapidly expanding choices and matches to identified student need.

Furthermore, Rincon G & Sandra B (2023) stress that providing a child additional enrichment can enhance brain development. The most effective way to reduce the number of children who will ultimately drop out is to provide the best possible classroom instruction from the beginning of school through the primary grades.

Safe, orderly, nurturing, inclusive, and inviting learning environments help students realize potential as individuals and as engaged members of society. All students need to be safe, physically and emotionally, to be expected to achieve, to be recognized and celebrated equitably for accomplishments; and to feel genuinely welcomed and supported. A safe and orderly learning environment provides both physical and emotional security as well as daily experiences, at all grade levels that enhance positive social attitudes and effective interpersonal skills. A

comprehensive discipline plan and violence prevention plan should include conflict resolution strategies and should deal with potential violence as well as crisis management. A safe, nurturing, and responsive learning environment supports all students, teachers, cultures, and subgroups; honors and supports diversity and social justice; treats students equitably; and recognizes the need for feedback, innovation, and second chances (Tahmasebi S, 2023).

Tahmasebi S (2023) also argues that adults who work with youth at risk of dropping out need to be provided ongoing professional learning opportunities, support, and feedback. The professional learning should align with the agreed upon vision and focus for the school/agency, the agreed upon instructional framework of high leverage research-based practices and strategies, and the identified needs of the population served. The professional learning opportunities provided should be frequently monitored to determine the fidelity of implementation and need for additional support and feedback.

Many schools provide after-school, before-school, and/or summer academic/enhancement/enrichment opportunities (for example, tutoring, credit recovery, acceleration, homework support, extra) that provide students with opportunities for assistance and recovery as well as high-interest options for discovery and learning.

These opportunities often decrease information loss and can inspire interest in arenas otherwise inaccessible. Such experiences are especially important for at-risk students because out-of-school “gap time” is filled with constructive and engaging activities and/or needed academic support.

Make a positive school climate and positive relationships high priorities in the school and in the classroom. Students need to feel attached to school as a supportive community that recognizes their individuality and that cares about and promotes their success (Tahmasebi S, 2023).

In conclusion, there is no one magical, quick fix solution to the absenteeism problem. The problem is complex and requires a complex array of solutions. Absenteeism have dissimilar characteristics and therefore need different kinds of programs which respond to their individual circumstances and needs. Programs, to be effective, need to provide one-on-one intensive attention to at-risk students, who often must be convinced that they are competent and can be successful in school.

The curriculum should include basic educational skills, social skills, and experiential education. In addition, the interrelated causes and multiple problems associated with dropping out call for Comprehensive communitywide, multi-service approaches and multi-component programs Children at-risk need to be identified at a young age (as early as preschool) so that early sustained intervention can be applied. Success in the elementary grades diminishes the possibility of later dropping out in high school. The key to reducing the absenteeism rate is helping youth to overcome their sense of disconnectedness. It is imperative not to isolate or alienate any students from the school. Not all factors related to absenteeism reduction are school controllable, and solutions to the complex problem of absenteeism cannot be achieved by the schools alone. It is a national problem which must be addressed by the whole society. It requires resources that go beyond the school, and solutions require a team approach-;the combined efforts of students, parents, teachers, administrators, community-based organizations, and business, as well as the federal, state, and local governments.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0. Introduction.**

This chapter comprised of the research design, area of the study, study population, sample size, sample selection, sources of data, data collection instruments, procedure of data collection, data quality control, data processing and analysis, ethical consideration, and study constraints

#### **3.1. Research Design.**

The design of the study was descriptive research design. The choice of the design enabled the researcher to provide an accurate description of the subject under study. The approach of the study was purely qualitative. The choice of quantitative approach enabled the researcher gain deeper understanding of topic under study.

#### **3.2. Study Population.**

Population of the study was 80 respondents which included school going pupils, teachers, women and men in the labor force and political positions, the pupils who dropped out of school and parents at home.

#### **3.3. Sample Size Determination.**

The sample size was 66 respondents and this was determined using the Morgan and Krejcie formula of sample size determination.

According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), in their study about sample size determination, Business research methods, sample size was determined based on the following formula;

$$S = \frac{X^2 NP(1-P)}{(N-1) + X^2 P(1-P)}$$

Where;  $S$  = required sample size.

$X^2$  = the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level (0.05 = 3.841).

$N$  = the population size.

$P$  = the population proportion (assumed to be 0.50) since this provided the maximum sample size.

$d$  = the degree of accuracy expressed as proportion (0.05).

### **3.4. Sampling Techniques.**

A convenience sampling technique was used to select the sample. A convenience sample was a type of non-probability sampling method where the sample was taken from a group of people easy to contact or to reach.

### **3.5. Sources of Data.**

Both Primary data and secondary data were used in this study. The researcher used self-administered questionnaires to collect data related to role of girl-child behavior in contributing to school absenteeism in Butaleja Subcounty, Butaleja District.

### **3.6. Data Collection Instruments.**

The study used a five-point Likert scale questionnaire to collect quantitative data on the contribution of girl-child behavior towards school absenteeism in Butaleja Subcounty, Butaleja District

### **3.7. Method of Data Collection.**

The study used survey questionnaires to collect quantitative data. The questionnaires was given to the respondents and collected after an agreed period of time.

### **3.8. Procedure of Data Collection.**

Ethically, the researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the Dean, Faculty of education and science, Islamic University in Uganda, to conduct research. The letter was taken to respective heads of various institutions like schools, homes, political offices to give the researcher authority to collect data.

#### **3.9.1. Validity.**

Validity determines if the research instrument truly measures that which it was supposed to measure (Kothari, 2011). To ensure content validity, the tools developed were given to the expert judges to score the relevance of each question in providing answers to the study. After the expert opinion, a content validity index (CVI) was computed as indicated in the formula below;

$$\text{CVI} = \frac{\text{No of item declared valid by the judges}}{\text{Total No of items on the questionnaire}}$$

#### **3.9.2. Reliability.**

Reliability indicates the stability of measures administered at different times to the same individuals or using the same standard or the equivalence of sets of items from the same test or of different observers scoring a behavior or event using the same instrument (Saunders et al, 2009). Reliability was established by carrying out a pilot study to see if the instrument gives consistent results.

### **3.10. Data Processing and Analysis.**

The data was analyzed using the Pearson's correlation analysis. Pearson's Correlation analysis helped to test the strength and the direction of the relationship between the variables.

### **3.11. Ethical Consideration.**

The researcher obtained informed consent from each research participant. This was obtained in writing after the participant had the opportunity to carefully consider the risks, benefits and to ask any pertinent question. Informed consent was seen as an ongoing process, not a singular event or a mere formality.

The researcher observed privacy and confidentiality of the respondents. In this case, the researcher agreed with the respondents on the appropriate time and a place convenient for the respondents so as to enhance free interaction. The respondents assured that the responses that were got from them was treated with the outmost confidentiality it deserves and further that it was strictly for academic purpose.

About the privacy of the data that was got from the respondents, the researcher made the best use of pseudonyms for the purpose of the study instead of the actual name of the respondents.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.0 Introduction

In this chapter the results of the study are presented and discussed. The purpose of the study was to establish the relationship between the increased pupil school drop out rate school closure and the academic performance of learners in primary schools in Butaleja Sub County. The data were analysed around key objectives of the study; To find out the increased pupil school drop out rate school closure in primary schools in Butaleja Sub County, Butaleja District; To find out the status of academic performance of learners in primary schools in Butaleja Sub County, Butaleja District; To assess the relationship between the increased pupil school drop out rate and the academic performance of learners in primary schools in Butaleja Sub County, in Butaleja District.

#### 4.1 Demographic Characteristics

##### Response rate

**Table 1: Response rate**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Target sample	80
Received samples	58
Difference	22

**Source: Primary data (2023)**

The response rate shows that 80 questionnaires were issued to teachers and 58 were returned making a difference of 22 questionnaires. The returned questionnaires were enough to be analysed for the study.

## Qualification of respondents

**Table 2: Qualification of respondents**

### Qualification

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Certificate	23	40.0	40.0	40.0
License	35	60.0	60.0	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Source: Primary data (2023)

Table 2 show that majority (60%) of the respondents' qualification licensed teachers as opposed to the 40% who were certificate holders. This finding showed that at least most of the primary schools are taught by qualified teachers.

## Gender of respondents

**Table 3: Gender of respondents**

### Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	46	80.0	80.0	80.0
Female	12	20.0	20.0	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Source: Primary data (2023)

Findings in Table 3 indicate that majority of the respondents were male (80%) and 20% were female, implying that the primary schools in the study had more male teachers as opposed to female.

### Class taught by respondents

**Table 4: Marital status of teachers**

#### Class taught

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Upper primary (P.5-P.7)	58	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Source: Primary data (2023)**

Table 4 show that all the respondents were upper primary (P.5 – P.7) teacher which is evident that the study was carried out on the upper primary section.

### Age group of respondents

**Table 5: Age group**

#### Age group

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0-11	35	60.0	60.0	60.0
12-14	23	40.0	40.0	100.0
Total	58	100.0	100.0	

**Source: Primary data (2023)**

Table 5 indicates that 60% of the learners were in the age group of 0-11 year while the other 40% were in the age group 12-14 years. This finding shows that the primary schools in the study area had girls studying while still young and school going age.

## Marital status of respondents

**Table 6: Marital status of the teachers**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Single	58	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Source: Primary data (2023)**

Table 6 shows that all (100%) the teachers interviewed in the study were single probably because they have just finished school and still establishing themselves.

## The increased pupil school drop outrate school closure in primary schools

The research objective one was to find out the causes increased pupil school drop outrate in primary schools and to achieve this, the questionnaire had five items was issued. Following a scale where 5= strongly agree (SA), 4= agree (A), 3= undecided (U), 2= disagree (D) and 1= strongly disagree (SD).

**Table7: Alcoholism increased pupil school drop outrate**

**My female pupils rarely attend school due to increased pupil school drop outrates**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	11	20.0	20.0	20.0
Strongly Agree	47	80.0	80.0	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Source: Primary data (2023)**

Findings in Table 7 shows that 80% of the respondents agreed that some female pupils rarely attend school due to alcoholism by parents and girls leading to increased pupil school drop out rate while 20% disagreed. Majority of the respondents agreed with the statement implying that pupils rarely attended school due to alcoholism of parents and children pupil school drop out rate and its associated factors.

**Table 8: There was early pregnancy leading to increased pupil school drop out rate**

**Early pregnancy leads to increased pupil school drop out rate**

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Valid	Agree	35	60.0	60.0	60.0
	Disagree	23	40.0	40.0	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Source: Primary data (2023)**

Findings show that 60% of the respondents agreed that early pregnancy can lead to increased pupil school drop out rate while 40% disagreed, implying that early pregnancy caused increased girl' child school drop out rate in the primary schools in the study.

**Table 9: Effect of Domestic violence in the family leads to increased pupil school absenteeism rate**

*Domestic violence in the family leads to increased pupil school absenteeism rate*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	35	60.0	60.0	60.0
Agree	23	40.0	40.0	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Table 9 indicates that 60% of the respondents agreed that domestic violence had led to increased pupil absenteeism from school opposed to 40% who disagreed, implying that most of the respondents resounded the fact that domestic violence is pivotal in orchestrating drop out of girls in the respective primary schools.

**Table 10: Effect of poverty on pupil absenteeism rate in primary schools**

Poverty in families increases pupil absenteeism rate in primary schools

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid disagree	12	20.0	20.0	20.0
Agree	23	40.0	40.0	60.0
strongly agree	23	40.0	40.0	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Source: Primary data (2023)**

Findings in Table 13 revealed that 80% of the respondents agreed that poverty in families led to increased pupil school absenteeism rate, while 20% disagreed with the same. This implies that

pupils' were directly affected by the family income, whereby those from poor homes had more absenteeism than those from rich homes.

**Table 11: Effect of Peer pressure on pupil absenteeism rate from primary schools in Butaleja Sub County in Butaleja district.**

Peer pressure leads to pupil absenteeism rate from primary schools

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	12	20.0	20.0	20.0
Agree	34	60.0	60.0	80.0
Strongly Agree	12	20.0	20.0	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Source: Primary data (2023)**

Table 11 shows that 80% of the respondents agreed that peer pressure had direct influence on the pupil increased absenteeism rate from schools, but 20% of the respondents disagreed. This was indicative that peer pressure had direct influence on the pupil increased absenteeism rate from schools.

### **Status of academic performance of learners in primary schools**

The second research objective was to find out the status of academic performance of learners in primary schools and to achieve this, a questionnaire with eight items was issued. Following a scale where 5= strongly agree (SA), 4= agree (A), 3= not sure (U), 2= disagree (D) and 1= strongly disagree (SD).

**Table12: Female Pupils can count properly**

**My female pupils can count properly**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	47	80.0	80.0	80.0
Strongly Agree	11	20.0	20.0	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Source: Primary data (2023)**

Findings in Table 12 revealed that all the respondents in the study agreed that their pupils can count properly. This shows a good academic performance of learners in the primary schools.

**Table13: Effect of poor attendance on female Pupils' ability to count using mental head effectively**

**My female pupils who attend irregularly can count using mental head effectively**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	35	60.0	60.0	60.0
Agree	23	40.0	40.0	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Source: Primary data (2023)**

Table 13 shows that 60% of the respondents disagreed with the statement while 40% agreed, implying that pupils cannot count effectively using their mental head. Hence an indicator of the poor status of the academic performance of female learners in the primary schools who usually miss school. This consequentially leads to poor performance, poor attitude towards school and finally absenteeism by learners.

**Table14: Effect of poor attendance on Pupils ability to do subtractions effectively**

**My pupils can do subtractions effectively**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid agree	11	20.0	20.0	20.0
strongly agree	47	80.0	80.0	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Source: Primary data (2023)**

Findings show that all respondents agreed that their pupils can do subtractions effectively, hence an improved status of the academic performance of learners the primary school under study. This therefore, psychologically affects the learners leading to eventual absenteeism from school.

**Table15: Effect of poor attendance in school on female Pupils’ ability to divide effectively in class exercises**

*Poor attendance in school reduces female Pupils’ ability to divide effectively in class exercises*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	47	80.0	80.0	80.0
Agree	11	20.0	20.0	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Source: Primary data (2023)**

Table 15 revealed that 80% of the respondents disagreed that female absentee pupils can divide effectively in maths while 20% agreed with the statement. This finding implies that pupils in the primary schools under study cannot divide effectively in classroom exercises indicative of poor academic performance of learners. The persistently poor academic performance orchestrates stigma; likely leading to absenteeism from school.

**Table 16: Effect of Female Pupils absenteeism on social economic crisis due to unwanted pregnancies and unplanned families**

Female Pupils absenteeism leads to social economic crisis due to unwanted pregnancies and unplanned families

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Valid	Disagree	11	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Agree	47	80.0	80.0	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Table 16 revealed that 80% of the respondents agreed that Female Pupils absenteeism leads to social economic crisis due to unwanted pregnancies and unplanned families; while 20% of the respondents disagreed with the same. This shows that the society is affected socially and economically as a result of early absenteeism of female pupils from schools.

**Table17: Effect of Early absenteeism by female pupils on population growth and rapid spread of diseases.**

*Early absenteeism by female pupils leads to rapid population growth and rapid spread of diseases.*

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Valid	Disagree	11	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Agree	47	80.0	80.0	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Findings in Table 17 revealed that 80% of the respondents agreed that female pupils who absenteeism early from school leads to rapid population growth and spread of diseases while 20% disagreed. This finding implies that increased absenteeism early from school leads to rapid population growth and spread of diseases in society.

**The relationship between the increased pupil school drop outrate school closure and the academic performance of learners in primary schools**

**Table 18: Correlation**

**Correlations**

		Dependent	Learners' academic performance
Dependent	Pearson Correlation	1	.594**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	130	130
Learners' academic performance	Pearson Correlation	.594**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	130	130

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

Table 18 shows Pearson’s correlation co-efficient index  $r = 0.594^{**}$  sig = 0.000 less than 0.05. This suggests that there is a highly positive significant relationship between effects of increased pupil school drop outrate school closure and the academic performance of learners at the one percent level two tailed. These results implied that as school closure due to increased pupil school drop outrate is available the poorer is the status of the academic performance and the reverse is true.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of the study, conclusions and recommendations based on the study findings.

#### 5.1 Discussion

##### 5.1.1 The increased pupil school drop outrate school closure in primary schools

Findings on this objective revealed that increased pupil school drop outrate affected both pupils and teachers since pupils could rarely attend school, pupils' contact time with other learners was reduced and also pupils face to face interactions with teacher was reduced. Consequently, this affected pupils' discussion and learning schedules.

These findings are supported by Pokhnel and Chhetri (2021) who opined that increased pupil school drop outrate created the largest disruption of education systems in human history, affecting nearly 1.6 billion learners in more than 200 countries. While Bozkurt, Karaya, Castellanos-Reyes (2022) reported that the rapid and unexpected onset of the pupil school drop outrate generated a great degree of uncertainty about the future of education and required teachers and students alike to adopt to anew normal to survive in the new educational ecology. Pokhnel and Chhetri (2021) further noted that through this experience, educators learned many lessons including how to navigate through the uncertainty by recognising their strength and vulnerabilities, shifting educational roles, digital pedagogy or emergency remote education. However, this study was done in more countries yet the current study will be carried out in ButalejaDistrict.

Further, Huck (2021) collaborates the above study saying that the education system was affected at all levels and forced to respond to the crisis to transition emergency modes since the pandemic was a phenomenon with many unknowns. Meanwhile, Moyini and Habib (2023) argued that schools and universities being shut down as a preventive response to contain the pandemic impacted more than 1 billion and 575 million students in 188 countries worldwide. Moyini and Habib further noted that more than 17.5 million students were sent home during the lock down. Moyini and Habib equally claim that education being that important had to continue. As such, e-learning had to be adopted and how it could be achieved, remained problematic in many primary and secondary schools. However, this study was made in higher education while the current study was carried out in primary schools.

Tel et al. (2020) also examined the potential academic impact of COVID 19 on primary school learners and postulate that, the students learning gains in Mathematics, reduced by 44 – 63% due to the disruptions caused by the pandemic. They also emphasized that the importance of targeted interventions and equitable access to learners, to mitigate the adverse effects on learning outcomes. Lee (2020) in discussing the psychological effects of COVID 19 pandemic on primary learners revealed that the pandemic included stress, fear and detrimental effects on the health, of students, depression and, reduced motivation for learning. Asif et al. (2020) suggested that a shift to virtual learning due to increased pupil school drop out rate created significant challenges for primary school learners, including limited access to technology, internet connectivity, and difficulty in adapting to online educational platforms.

### **5.1.2 Status of academic performance of learners in primary schools**

Findings on this objective showed a poor status of the academic performance of learners since a given percentage of pupils could not count using mental head effectively, could not divide effectively in maths, scored poor grades and could not proficiently pronounce words. Consequently, this was an indicator to a poor status of the academic performance of learners. However, a small percentage of pupils could count properly, could subtract effectively, could effectively read and also construct meaningful sentences.

These are in line with studies by Further, Bugwek (2023) who postulates that factors such as personal conditions, study habits, home related factors and lecturer factor, have low impact on the academic performance of elementary teacher education students. Bagwek continues to argue that on the other hand, school related factors have moderate impact on the academic performance of elementary teacher education students. While Husain and Shukor (2023) observe that students' academic performance is vital for assessing students' standing within University and, that it makes it possible for academic staff , educational administrators and decision makers to precisely evaluate students taking various courses throughout the semester. Husain and Shukor maintain that additionally, it serves as a cautionary tale for the students to assess their performance level and make subsequent improvements.

Further, Armitage and Nellums, (2020) examined the academic performance of primary school students in Turkey through various indicators. These researchers collected data from a sample of students and analyzed the results to understand the factors that influence academic performance. While Noemy, Ines, Izquierday and Ajenjo (2017) opine that academic performance has always been associated to the evaluation tests results, which are those corresponding to students' IQ and

leaving aside other personal characteristics. Among such characteristics, the importance of emotional intelligence is worthy high lighting.

## **5.2 The relationship between the increased pupil school drop outrate school closure and the academic performance of learners in primary schools**

Findings on objective three shows Pearson's correlation co-efficient index  $r = 0.594^{**}$  sig = 0.000 less than 0.05, hence suggesting that there is a highly positive significant relationship between effects of increased pupil school drop outrate school closure and the academic performance of learners at the one percent level two tailed. These results implied that as school closure due to increased pupil school drop outrate contributed 59.4% to the status of the academic performance of learners and the remaining 40.6% was caused by other factors.

These findings were supported by studies of Li, Kang, Miles and Khan (2023), who pointed out that understanding the factors that affected academic performance of students due to the increased pupil school drop outrate school closures helped design effective interventions for improving students' academic performance during emergencies as well as, during regular academic environments. Li and others also contend that students who spent more time studying on college work were less likely to have poor academic performance. In addition, UNICEF (2023) reported that education system was already failing our children even before dropping out. UNICEF maintains that pupil school drop outrate only exacerbated this learning crisis and children in almost every country have fallen behind in their learning.

Furthermore, Andersen, Leon, Patel, Lee and Simanton (2022) reported that the increased pupil school drop outrate, medical students at Kirk Kerkorian School of medicine at UNLV demonstrated decreased examinations performance, study more at home and have

poor relationships with their peers and faculty. Andersen et al, argue that looking at all the variables, it is likely, relationships existed between them and that for example, increased pupil school drop out rate, early pregnancies and relationships may contribute to academic performance. Ocana et al. (2021) further reported that the field of education has not been exceptional and the management of the situation seems to have caused an increase in the level of perceived stress among students and that, students were exposed to various situations that did not only affect their academic performance but also their mental health during the lockdown.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

School closure due to increased pupil school drop out rate affected both pupils and teachers since pupils could rarely attend school, pupils' contact time with other learners was reduced and also pupils face to face interactions with teacher was reduced. Consequently, this affected pupils discussion and learning schedules.

There was a poor status of academic performance of learners since a given percentage of pupils could not count using mental head effectively, could not divide effectively in maths, scored poor grades and could not proficiently pronounce words which was an indicator of poor status of academic performance of learners.

There was a highly positive significant relationship between effects of increased pupil school drop out rate school closure and the academic performance of learners at the one percent level two tailed. These results implied that as school closure due to increased pupil school drop out rate contributed 59.4% to the status of the academic performance of learners and the remaining 40.6% was caused by other factors.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

It was recommended that as school administrators observed the SOP's, it would adopt other means like online class so that pupils could attend school regularly, create discussion groups through Whatsapp, Zoom to increase on the contact time with other learners

The school administration and stakeholders should provide for extra classes and also provide extra support to those pupils that could not count using mental head effectively, divide effectively in maths to improve the status of academic performance.

#### **5.5 Areas for further research**

Due to constraints of time and a wide scope of the study variables, this study was done on effects of pupil absenteeism on academic performance of pupils in primary schools in Butaleja Sub County, Butaleja district. However, there are other factors that may affect academic performance like school environment, family type, school policy, etc. which may need attention of future researchers to investigate how this affect performance.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

#### SECTION A: Demographic information

Please tick (✓) where applicable

##### A1. Gender

1) Male

2) Female

##### A2. Marital status

1) Single

2) Married

3) Widowed

4) Divorced

##### A3. Level of education

1) Primary

2) Secondary

3) Tertiary

## SECTION B: School Absenteeism

Please indicate by ticking, the extent to which you agree to the following statements, where (1) = strongly disagree, (2) = disagree, (3) = not sure, (4) = agree; and (5) = strongly agree

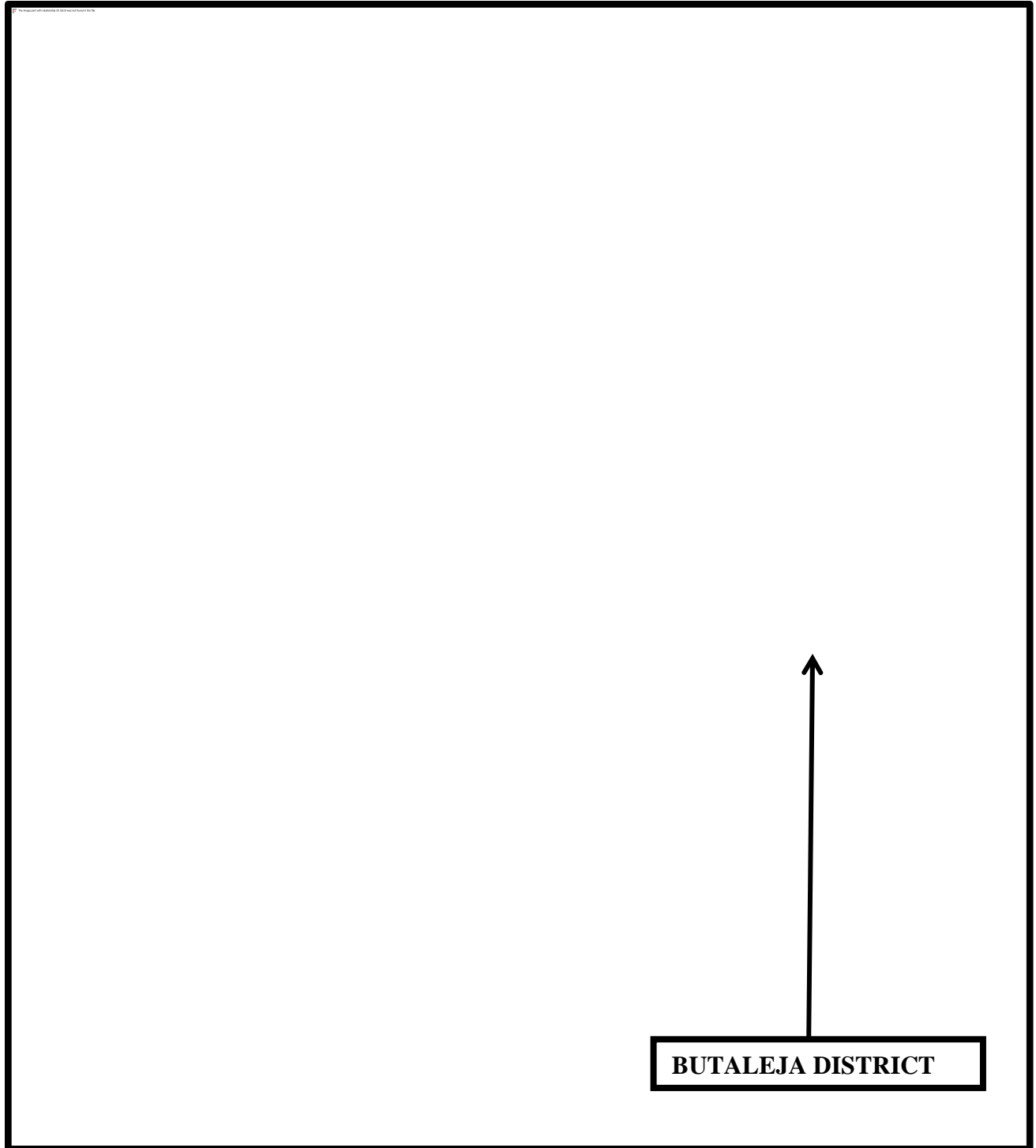
	ITEM	1	2	3	4	5
	<b>Causes of School absenteeism</b>					
<b>CD1</b>	Menstrual health discourages pupils from attending school					
<b>CD2</b>	Culture disrupts pupils from completing school					
<b>CD3</b>	Early pregnancy forces pupils out of school					
<b>CD4</b>	Attitude of pupils makes them to stop schooling					
	<b>Problems emerging from increased school absenteeism</b>					
<b>PD1</b>	School absenteeism lead to unemployment					
<b>PD2</b>	School absenteeism result into economic stagnation					
<b>PD3</b>	School absenteeism increase crime rate					
<b>PD4</b>	School absenteeism affect political participation					
	<b>Strategies to reduce school absenteeism</b>					
<b>SD1</b>	Active learning prevents the rate of school absenteeism					
<b>SD2</b>	Family engagement helps to reduce the rate of school absenteeism					
<b>SD3</b>	Early child hood education prevents school absenteeism					
<b>SD4</b>	Safe learning environment helps to prevent school absenteeism					

## APPENDIX II: BUDGET

<b>PARTICULARS</b>	<b>QUANTITY</b>	<b>UNIT COST IN UGX</b>	<b>TOTAL COST IN UGX</b>
Typing and printing			600, 000
Reams of paper	5	20,000	100, 000
Pens	12	500	6000
Transport			200,000
Field research expenses			700,000
Binding proposal	5	3,000	15,000
Binding report	5	12,000	60,000
Miscellaneous			600, 000
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>2,281,000</b>

*Source: self-developed.*

**APPENDIX III: A MAP OF UGANDA SHOWING BUTALEJA DISTRICT**



**APPENDIX IV: LETTERS OF INTRODUCTION TO THE FIELD**







