

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CAUSES OF POOR PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN WESTERN DIVISION, TORORO  
MUNICIPALITY**

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**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND  
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UNIVERSITY**

**FEBRUARY, 2024**

**DECLARATION**


I, the undersigned, declare that this research report is my original work and has not been presented in any other university or institution for academic credit.

Signature...  ..... Date.. 10<sup>th</sup>/02/2024 .....

**AYEET AGNES**

### APPROVAL

This is to certify that this research report was compiled by Ayeet Agnes under the title “an investigation into the causes of poor performance in English language in primary schools in Western division Tororo Municipality” and has been under my supervision and it’s now ready to be submitted to the academic board of Busitema University.

Signature	
Name	MR. WANDA DUNCAN
Date	10.02.2024

## **DEDICATION**

To my children Angura Cedrick, Achom Charity, Angiro Rodney, uncle Obwana Gerald, and aunt Akuwamu Christine and other parties who supported me in this study.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The researcher acknowledges all scholars whose works have been used in this study. Great thanks are to Almighty God for sustenance and strength; He has accorded me to develop this proposal. I also extend thanks to my family members and colleagues for the services they have rendered towards this report and lastly, I am greatly indebted to my supervisor.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

EFA	Education for All
CPDCs	Continuous Professional Development Courses
UN	United Nations
US	United States
UPE	Universal Primary Education

## **ABSTRACT**

This study investigated the causes of poor English performance in government primary schools Western division, Tororo District. The study answered the following questions; does Pupil's attendance affect their performance in English in Primary Schools in Western division, Tororo Municipality ?, does teachers' attendance affect the pupil's performance in English in Primary Schools in Western division, Tororo Municipality?, does the coverage in English syllabus affect pupil's performance in English in Primary Schools in Western division, Tororo Municipality?, The study was guided by descriptive survey design and targeted a population of 6523 comprising of 7 head teachers, 98 teachers and 6403 pupil's. Both stratified and random sampling was applied to sample the respondents. The data was analysed according to the questions using tables, frequency, percentages, pie charts and standard deviations. It was found that pupil's attendance, teachers' attendance, syllabus completion was not always effective leading to poor performance of English and worse was with syllabus completion. Therefore, the study recommended absenteeism to be curbed by the effort of community and local government in primary schools.

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Introduction**

Performance in English in primary schools in Western Division Tororo Municipality is low. This is contrary to the performance in science, mathematics and social studies. This chapter dealt with the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, limitation of the study and definition of terms.

### **1.1 Background of the Problem**

The background of the study was structured into four perspectives namely; the historical, theoretical, conceptual and contextual dimensions.

Historically, English as a language in Uganda education system started as far back as the coming of the British colonist in 1800 where English language was taught and the British tightening their colonial grip on Uganda. English language began to be taught in schools and became the official language. The reason for this was partly because in Uganda there wasn't a common vernacular or local language. Although Uganda had local recognized language like Luganda that was approved for use in primary schools, it could not be used to serve the whole country. In 1965, English was therefore introduced in primary one as a subject contrary to its previous usage in primary three. By 1970, it was hoped that pupils had become used to English. It was therefore important to use English to teach other subjects.

Education for All (EFA) has been an Endeavour for the whole world since 1948 when the United Nations (UN) Universal Declaration for Human Rights was adopted which declared that everyone has a right to education. In 1990, the World Conference on Education for All was held in Jomtien Thailand with the objective of setting the global agenda for education and literacy. The World Education Forum met in Dakar Senegal in the year 2000 and set the EFA goals to be achieved by 2015 which was fully supported by the Millennium Development Goals (Muola, 2010).

Contextually, Pupil's performance has been an issue of great concern worldwide since the beginning of modern education. Majority of the countries have realized that in the heart of educational process are the pupils. Previous strategic attempts had been on the improvement of pupil's performance in English as media of instruction before changing local language(s).

Murray &Christison (2010), observed that many pupils think English is only a school subject and they don't see its significance for their prospective employment to work with multinational or national companies where English is employed. Susanna (2007), pointed out that the mismatch between the pupil's' conceptual or cognitive capacities and the learners' English proficiency level often cause problems for pupil's because the pupil's' learning style and teachers' teaching approach do not match and also the English course does not relate to the pupil's' needs and interests. Susanna (2007), also claimed that weak pupil's usually have poor strategies and give up easily when they find struggle. In addition, many studies have been conducted on pupil's' poor performance in learning the English language such as a study of Challenges of Learning English in Australia towards Pupil's Coming from Selected Southeast Asian Countries found that factors that affected the Asian pupil's' weakness in learning English because of the changing of learners' habits, cultures, and the structure of languages; for example, there were no strict rules for pronunciation of their mother language (Cao, 2011).

Therefore, it is paramount that schools emphasize on improving on methods of instruction to enhance English performance. This can be done through improved training of teachers which goes along way also in improving their attitude towards teaching the language. On the other hand, there are recommendations that schools should ensure they offer meticulous academic curricular for the pupil's Learning English with the intentions of making them succeed (Rebecca, 2005). The increase in the dropout rate among the Learners of English may be indicative of the academic

disconnect experienced by the minority and linguistic minority pupil's alike (Gandara, 2002). Proficiency in English gives confidence to the learners and enables them to interact freely even with the teachers. This consequently creates an enabling environment for learning.

In the African context, Orgunsiji & O. (2009) observed that as a means of instruction English language plays a fundamental role in Ugandan schools right from primary to the tertiary level. The comprehension of the contents of school subjects is transmitted to pupil's in all the levels of education using English language as the main medium of communication. As such, it is presumed that pupil's academic achievement is dependent to a large extent on their level of proficiency in English language. In a study by Orgunsiji and O. (2009), their findings indicated that English language proficiency significantly impacted the pupil's' overall academic achievement. Further they found a positive significant relationship between English language proficiency of the pupil's and their overall academic achievement.

Studies carried out in Uganda established that pupil's English language achievement in National Examination has been poor for a long period of time. The major cause of the decline in academic achievement has been considered to be the proficiency in the language of instruction and also the general decline of the standards of education. Indeed, adeptness in the language of instruction is a pre-requisite factor in the attainment of successful performance in education. Fakeye and Ogunsiji (2009) observed that pupil's' success in school is based on being proficient in the language of instruction (LOI). In addition, according to Harb and El-Shaarawi (2006) a pre-requisite factor having positive effect on pupil's' performance has been considered to be competence in English. If the pupils are good in communication skills and are well versed in English, their academic performance is increased.

In Western Division Tororo Municipality English performance has not been good for many years. Many pupil's in PLE examination pass with passes while others with F9s and small number passing with credits. English as a language of instruction in upper classes determine the performance of other subject since they are set using English language. The low standards of this subject has been related to pupil's, teachers' and head teachers' presence at school.

Theoretically, task-based language learning theory postulated by Long (1985) defines task as any job undertaken by somebody for himself or for other people. It can be attending classes, teaching sessions or any work that require specified individual. Practicing or doing variety of tasks will enhance language learning and can be considered as successful task completion. It will also increase the communication skill of the pupils. Language is practiced for learning communication and not for the sake of the language. Doing the task should enhance language learning. Tasks can be done individually, in pairs or as a group activity. Ellis (2003) expects a task to be like a real work activity, which involves productive oral and written skills like any other language learning process. David Nunan (2007) defines a task as a classroom work, which helps pupils to understand, manipulate and communicate in the target language. Pupil's should acquire grammatical knowledge, while being involved in a task. And therefore, the element to be enhanced in pupil's is attendance of classes and complete English tasks. The completion activities output by learners is realized through completion of English syllabus, syllabus can be complete by ever present teachers and regular supervision as a task of ever-present administrators.

Indeed, ministry of education in Uganda has expressed concern over the apparent decline in the performance of learners in English at the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE). Education is considered to be a basic need and a basic right needed for the economic development of a country. Performance is ranked very highly on the national agenda, with educators and policymakers

focused on testing, accountability, curriculum reform, and teacher quality, school choice and related concerns. The one thing that has been conspicuously absent is an examination of the effect of school conditions on the teaching and learning process, despite the existence of extensive literature linking school facilities with the quality of education and to the teacher morale and teacher productivity (Mark, 2003).

Contextually, English Language as term has been used interchangeably with English subject to mean the curriculum area designated for learning of a foreign language as per the provision by the ministry of education (MoE) in the syllabus (Isutsa. E.L. (2015).

Pupil's performance, defined as, the ability of the pupils to do something while academic performance refers to the quality and quantity of knowledge, skills techniques and positive attitudes, behaviour and philosophy that learners achieve or acquire, (Ferguson, 2009). This ability is evaluated by the marks and grades that the pupils attain in a test or examination which is done at the end of a topic, school term, and year or education cycle. The scores and grades that each pupil obtains measure the degree of achievement. The quality of the grade and the number of candidates who pass in various grades determine the level of academic performance in a given class or institution in a given period in a particular examination, be it internal or public Ferguson, (2009). In western division, Tororo district, poor academic performance in the Primary Leaving Examinations (P.L.E.) has been attributed to factors such as; absenteeism of both teachers and pupil's, failure to complete syllabus. However, these factors differ depending on the critical region under study as well as school.

Absent teachers, defined as teachers who miss 18 or more days per year, account for 16% of the teaching workforce but account for 33% of total teacher absences (Nithya et al., 2014). In an

unrelated study of the largest metropolitan school districts in the country, Sawchuk (2014) also found that teachers had the same 16% chronic absence rate. Sawchuk also concluded that 16% of teachers missed three days or less with an average teacher absent rate of 11 days.

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

Monitoring or supervision of teaching processes enhances the teacher effectiveness towards teaching which promote pupil's academic performance. However, this is not the case with most schools in western division in Tororo District whose pupils have continued to report poor performance in English Language. It has affected most pupil's to be promoted to next classes hence creating low self-esteem in the subject. Teachers have tried to conduct remedials and extra lesson but still the performance is still low. This has affected the general schools' performance and further denying pupils to join secondary school hence creating drop outs who in turn are developing an illiterate community in the subcounty. And hence forth, the study on the causes of poor performance in English language at primary leaving examinations (PLE) in Western Division Tororo Municipality, to ameliorate the situation.

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

The aim of the study was to investigate the causes of poor performance in English language at primary leaving examinations (PLE) in Western Division Tororo Municipality

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

The study intended to:

- i. Examine the effect of pupil's attendance on their performance in English.
- ii. Establish the effect of teachers' attendance on the performance of pupil's in English.
- iii. Investigate the effect of the English syllabus coverage on pupil's performance in English.

## **1.5 Research Questions**

In view of the above objectives, the researcher was guided by the following research questions

- i. Does Pupil's attendance affect their performance in English in Primary Schools in Western Division Tororo Municipality?
- ii. Does teachers' attendance affect the pupil's performance in English in Primary Schools in Western Division Tororo Municipality?
- iii. Does the coverage in English syllabus affect pupil's performance in English in Primary Schools in Western Division Tororo Municipality?

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

### **1.6.1 Geographical Scope**

The research was carried out in Western Division Tororo Municipality. The division is bordered by Eastern division in North, Rubongi Sub County in South, Mukuju Sub county in the west and Osukuru sub county in the East. The study targeted the primary government school.

### **1.6.2. Content Scope**

The study investigated the causes of poor performance in English language at primary leaving examinations (PLE) in Western Division Tororo Municipality. The study established effects of pupil's attendance on their performance in English, effect of teachers' attendance on the performance of pupil's in English, and investigated the effects of the English syllabus coverage on pupil's performance in English

### **1.6.3 Time Scope**

The study took two months.

## **1.7 Significance of the Study**

This study is intended to benefit the following stakeholders:

**Community:** It shall be used by the community as an awakening tool to get fully involved in school programs to improve on teachers, head teachers, and pupil's attendance.

**Administrators:** The study will serve as an eye opener to primary school administrators on the best practices that will help them improve performance of English in their schools. More so checking on their presence at school to effectively supervise daily routines of the school.

**Parents** shall develop positive attitude towards their schools for better school performance realization. Approval of the matter will be through enhancing children's daily presence at school.

**Teachers:** In the light of these findings, teachers may be able to plan their teaching in order to complete the recommended academic work within the affected term. It will further out the strategies that enable teacher.

**Government policy makers:** To come up with school language policies that will help in enhancing performance of English in primary schools.

**Researchers:** Finally, the study findings contribute to the existing literature and serve as a reference point to future scholars who might be interested in this area.

### **1.8 Justification of the Study**

The rationale for this study was to analyze low performance of English which is at high level caused by distinctive factors of pupil's attendance, teacher attendance and syllabuses. Scanty research has been made in relation to these factors and the need to create a new knowledge to curb the accruing situation. Furthermore, no study presented in the literature review applied descriptive survey as propose in this study.

### **1.9 Definition of Operational terms**

The following terms have been uniquely used by the researcher. They are hereby defined as follows;

**Performance** – Performance can be defined as the observable and measurable behavior of a pupil in terms of Grade Point Average score in Primary Leaving Examination.

**Attendance** has been used in this study to mean duty conscious of pupil's, teachers and administrators.

### **1.10 Conceptual Frame Work**

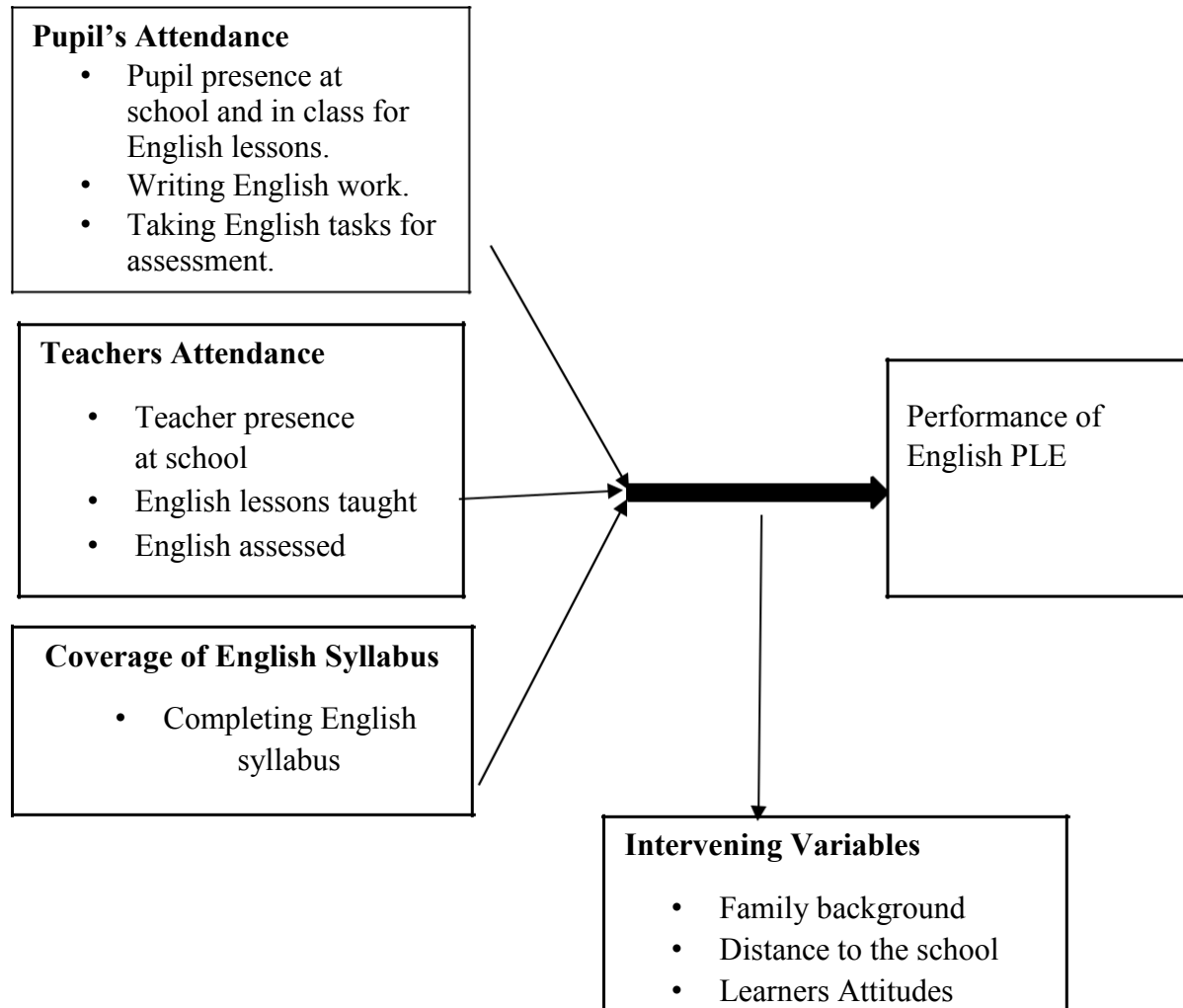
The frame work diagrammatized below has been suggested to help conceptualize the independent variable and dependent variable and their relation.

**Independent Variable**

*The Causes*

**Dependent Variable**

*Poor performance of English*



**Figure 1: Conceptual Frame work**

The researcher structured the independent variable as the causes to attendance of pupil's, attendance of teachers, and English syllabus coverage. The dependent variable, poor performance in English was structured into poor performance of English in PLE. These factors are hoped to result an organized school, lesson presentation and active learning if they are enhanced at school leading to better performance. The gaps prevail probable cause the poor performance of English

in Western Division, Tororo Municipality. However, there are factors that may cause poor performance of English but they are not within the scope of this study like the location of the school, the type of the school and teacher qualification

## **CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **2.0 Introduction**

This Chapter is related to the review of research work according to various studies and findings. For the purpose of this study, the researcher is concerned with poor performance of pupil's in examinations with specific reference to English in Western Division Tororo Municipality. The review of literature related to this study is done objective by objective.

### **2.1 Examine the impact of Pupil's attendance on their performance in English**

Pupil's class attendance and engagement plays an important role in contemporary higher education. Several previous studies have shown that class attendance is an important determinant of academic outcomes: Pupils who attend more classes earn higher final grades (Kirby and McElroy, 2003). However, differing results exist as well. In a recent study, no statistically significant relationship between class attendance and Pupil's performance was identified after adjusting for control variables that included gender and age (Eisen et al.2015).

In a study conducted in Saudi Arabia by Alghamdi and his team, the overall percentage of absenteeism was comparable to that of the studies carried out regionally and internationally. The study showed the performance GPA mean is influenced by low attendance rates (Alghamdi et al., 2016). In another study conducted by Bamuhair and her colleagues in College of Medicine, King Saud Bin Abdulaziz University for Health Sciences in The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, class attendance showed a positive effect on pupil's academic performance with stronger effect for lecture attendance compared to attendance in International Research Journal of Short Communication other teaching modalities (Bamuhair et al., 2016).

There is need to work on the causes of absenteeism to further increase the rate of attendance of all academic activities (Alghamdi et al., 2016). Many institutions adopt non-mandatory attendance

policy for their pupil's and researches have clearly shown the positive relation between non-mandatory attendance and pupil's performance.

Yusoff (2014) Mostly, studies on pupil's success reports that class attendance is a reliable predictor associated with better outcomes in terms of improving cumulative grade point average of the pupils who do best. When pupils are absent from lectures, they miss valuable information and do not clarify their concepts resulting in inadequate learning and compromised academic performance.

Bamuhair et al. (2016) Class attendance has an encouraging impact on pupil's academic achievements, and therefore, a mandatory attendance policy plays a significant role in accelerating academic success among the pupils.

## **2.2 Establish the Effect of Teacher's Attendance of the Performance of Pupil's in English in Primary Schools Western Division Tororo District.**

There are multiple ways in which teacher absence can affect pupil's achievement. When a teacher is absent, the teacher is usually replaced with a substitute for the day's instruction. The quality and availability of these substitute teachers affect pupil's achievement (Rothstein, 2010).

Additionally, substitute teachers are not necessarily licensed in the subject area for which they are substituting and are not expected to prepare lessons like a teacher would (Roby,2013) which also contributes to the potential of achievement loss. In rural areas, substitute teacher fill rates for absent teachers are 91% in medium-sized rural school districts. This results in no teacher being assigned to the classroom 9% of the time a teacher is absent.

Nationally, chronically absent teachers, defined as teachers who miss 18 or more days per year, account for 16% of the teaching workforce but account for 33% of total teacher absences (Nithya et al., 2014). In an unrelated study of the largest metropolitan school districts in the country, Sawchuk (2014) also found that teachers had the same 16% chronic absence rate. Sawchuk also

concluded that 16% of teachers missed three days or less with an average teacher absent rate of 11 days.

In a study of teachers in Chicago, Jacob (2012) analyzed the effects of new contract language the Chicago Teachers Association negotiated that grants principals the authority to dismiss teachers without cause or reason during a probationary period. The research concluded that principals make retention decisions based on the attendance of teachers in their probationary period and that the poor attendance is related to low achievement levels of its pupil's.

Related to administrative decision-making regarding teacher attendance, Grissom, Loeb, and Nakashima (2014) found that when teachers are involuntarily transferred, their absenteeism declines significantly in their new school. However, the achievement of their pupil's does not necessarily increase as a result of the transfer.

District administrators feel pressure for their pupils to perform well on standardized tests (Brown, Jones, & Schuenemann, 2012). However, when elementary school teachers miss 10 or more days of instruction per year, pupils suffer a significant loss in achievement (Miller, Murnane, & Willett, 2008). When reviewing the 30 highest and 30 lowest performing school districts in Ohio, the state where this study occurred, Roby (2013) found that teacher attendance was far better in high performing districts than in low-performing ones.

#### **2.4 Investigate on the Effect of the English Syllabus Coverage on Pupil's Performance in English**

Shikuku. B.N. (2021). Asserted that pupils who cover the syllabus, have a better mean score than those who fail to cover the syllabus. Pupils who cover the syllabus early in the year and spend more time on revision, have an even better mean score than those who cover the syllabus just

before KCSE examinations. To cover the syllabus early in the year, both pupil's and teachers have to put in extra time for which the parents pay handsomely. Some schools use team teaching to ensure all topics in the syllabus are understood by all pupils in the class who attend. They also ensure both teachers and pupils are present in school and actually attend lessons.

According to Bishop (1985), the integrated English syllabus is too wide hence most teachers lack sufficient time for studying and examining aspects of English and literature in a more practical way. Also, the increased workload for both teachers and pupil's do not allow them to have any spare time for extra practice outside the timetabled sessions in most schools a lot of teaching and learning time is lost at the beginning and at the end of every term as both the pupil's and teachers settles down and adjusts the timetables.

Lack of syllabus coverage has resulted to poor performance since learners are usually ill prepared and less confident to handle the examinations. However, to be able to cover the wide syllabus the teacher should work hand in hand with the pupil's and arrange for extra lessons, because the more the hours allowed in instruction in a subject the higher the achievement (Bishop, 1985).

Lilian Michere Macharia, (2013) found that 70% of schools in Kikuyu District were able to cover the syllabus last year and only 30% were not able to complete the syllabus. Although many schools were able to finish the syllabus, the results were still wanting and there was no correlation between finishing the syllabus and good performance. However, it is professional to complete the syllabus as designed by curriculum developers to prepare learners either for the next class or level of learning.

Lilian, (2013) asserted only 28% of teachers were available/ready/willing to give and mark the assignment always, and only 43.5% of pupil's would have their homework/assignment marked, the probability that a teacher will give and mark assignment and, a pupil's will have his/her

assignment marked always is  $0.28 \times 0.435 = 0.1218$  (that is, only 12.18% of pupil's will get and do assignment, and have it marked always). This is dangerous for pupil's who will need regular guidance and encouragement. The study further revealed that, 80% of teachers do not give test weekly which may have resulted to some sought of laxity in masterly of subject content. It is important to have more tests frequently so that pupils would master the subject content.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter explains research design, target population, sample size, description of research instruments, sampling technique, data collection instruments to be applied, validity and reliability of research instruments, data collection procedure, data source, description of data analysis procedure and ethical consideration that was employed in the field study.

### **3.1 Research Design**

The design used in this study was descriptive survey. It was applied because it permitted the researcher to study small sample and later generalized the findings to the whole population. Osuala, (2001) was of the view that in survey research small sample is studied and the findings generalized to the population.

### **3.2 Area of Study**

Tororo Municipality is within Tororo district and it is made up of 4 divisions. The district is bordered by Manafwa in the North, Busia district in south, Kenya in the east, west of the sub county is found is Bugiri district. The municipality has been preferred in this study as most as most pupils are performing poorly in English.

### **3.3 Target Population**

The research study targeted a population of 6523 in 7 government primary schools in the sub county. The population of teachers and pupil's were obtained from respective schools present in Western Division Tororo Municipality as shown in the table below;

**Table 3:1 Target Population**

<b>Government Primary Schools Western Division</b>	<b>Head teacher</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Pupil's</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>School A</b>	1	18	1239	1258
<b>School B</b>	1	15	907	923
<b>School C</b>	1	17	1141	1159
<b>School D</b>	1	13	978	992
<b>School E</b>	1	10	580	191
<b>School F</b>	1	15	933	948
<b>School J</b>	1	10	625	635
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>6403</b>	<b>6523</b>

### 3.4 Sampling Size

The sample size was selected basing on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining sample size as shown below;

**Table 3:2 Sample Size**

<b>Government primary schools in Western Division</b>	<b>Head teacher</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Pupil's</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>School A</b>	1	7	78	86
<b>School B</b>	1	8	65	74
<b>School C</b>	1	7	80	88
<b>School D</b>	1	8	57	66
<b>School</b>	1	6	45	52
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>368</b>

### 3.5 Sampling Technique

Both simple random sampling and stratified random sampling technique was used in selecting the sample for this study. This is because it permitted the researcher to have representation from both

the teachers and the pupils. The head teachers were automatically selected to participate in the study.

### 3.6 Research Instruments

The researcher used questionnaires as instruments for the collection of data for this study. The questionnaire comprised of demographic questions and questions on variables of the study. The questions asked were both closed and open ended.

Document analysis was carried out in this study. The researcher analyzed administrative record pertaining pupil's performance, attendance of teachers, pupil's, the head teachers and the current coverage of the English syllabus.

### 3.7 Reliability of Research Instruments Results

To measure the reliability of the data collection instruments, an internal consistence technique using Cronbach's Alpha was applied. The coefficient difference of less than or equal to 0.1 was considered reliable. In Table 3.3, the Cronbach alpha test showed values ranging from as low as 0.821 to as high as 0.912. These results showed that instruments had a high reliability standard and therefore data collected from pilot study were reliable and obtained acceptable values of internal consistency.

<b>Reliability Aspects</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
Pupil's Attendance	0.821
Teachers' Attendance	0.912
English Syllabus Completion	0.881
Average Value	0.871

### **3.8 Validity of Research Instruments Results**

Validity of a research instrument is the appropriateness of the research instrument to measure what is intended to establish results given the context in which it's applied. The instruments were amended according to the experts' comments after the pilot study and recommended dates before being administered. In this study the researcher sought help from the supervisor specialized in this particular area of assessment to weigh in possible improvements and thus covering the required content in the study. Then pilot test was conducted on a population similar to the target population in Western Division to test the validity of the instruments

### **3.9 Data Collection Procedure**

The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the Department of Education, Faculty of Science and Education, Busitema University to obtain permission of the respondents in the schools chosen through their respective head teachers. Thereafter, permission was granted, she visited and explained the purpose and benefits of the research to the respondents from respective schools. The researcher requested the respondents to provide responses voluntarily which are relevant to the study and informed them of voluntary withdrawal from the study in case of any misunderstandings. Questionnaires were completed by teachers and pupil's while the interview schedule was be completed by head teacher. Thereafter, the researcher perused through school documents like registers, approved record of schemes of work and lesson plan, teachers' attendance books and pupil's attendance books. The researcher spent at least three days in each school collecting data from the respondents and document reviews.

### **3.10 Data Analysis Procedure**

The data collected was analyzed using frequency and simple percentage. The data was presented in tables and pie charts.

An SPSS version 21 was used to analyze the data.

### **3.11 Ethical Considerations**

The researcher observed and adhered to standard ethics as set by the university research committee; considered helpful for smooth process in data collection in this study. The researcher considered the followings ethics in order to establish rapport with the respondents:

**Informed Consent.** In doing research, the researcher ensured that she seeks permission from the respondents to participate in her research. The researcher picked an authorization letter from the university (Busitema University) permitting her to collect data in the field. The respondents received clear information about the purpose of the study to voluntarily accept or refuse to participate and or withdraw at any stage.

**Confidentiality and Privacy.** The researcher observed respondents' confidentiality during the data collection process. The researcher didn't allow the respondents to mention their names and the data obtained from the respondents were treated purely for academic purposes.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents, and discusses the findings on the causes of poor performance in English language in primary schools in western division, Tororo municipality. The sources of information for this study were the head teachers, teachers and pupils. The findings are presented and discussed accordingly in relation to the research questions stated. Data presentation was done using frequency tables and percentages.

### 4.2 Questionnaire Return rate

**Table 4.1 Questionnaire Return Rate**

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Targeted sample</b>	<b>Number collected</b>	<b>Percentage return rate</b>
<b>Head teachers</b>	5	5	100%
<b>Teachers</b>	36	31	86.1%
<b>Pupil's</b>	327	320	97.86
<b>TOTAL</b>	368	361	95.81%

The researcher distributed a total of 368 questionnaires and a total of 361 were returned, giving a 95.81% return rate. According to Nachmias and Nachmias (2009), 80 to 90 per cent return rate is enough for a descriptive research study. Seven pupils who failed to return the questionnaires were absent and came from both school A and E hence affecting the researcher to realize 100% return of questionnaires within the scheduled period for collecting data from the respondents.

### 4.3 Presentation of the Findings

#### 4.3.1 Demographic Information of the Respondents

The study sought to determine the respondents' gender, age, level of education and their experience in their current jobs. Table 4 shows the distribution of the responses from teachers and head teachers on their demographic information.

**Table 4.2 Demographic Information for Teachers and Head teachers**

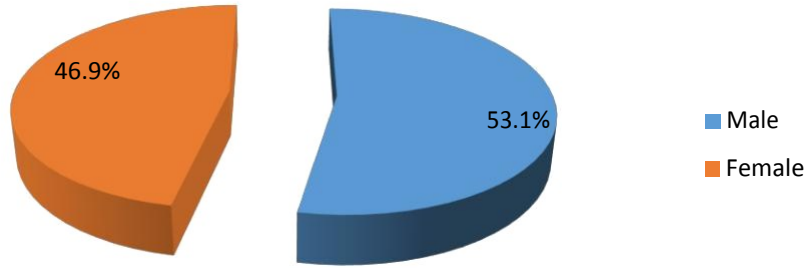
Demographic Information	Description	Teachers		Head teachers	
		F	%	F	%
Gender	Male	19	61.29	3	60
	Female	12	38.81	2	40
Age	20-29	2	6.45	0	0
	30-40	4	12.90	2	40
	40-50	20	64.52	2	40
	50-60	7	22.58	1	20
Level of Education	GIII Teacher	15	48.39	0	0
	Diploma	10	32.26	1	20
	Bachelor's degree	6	19.35	3	60
	Master's degree	0	0	1	20
Experience in current job	1-5 years	5	16.13	0	0
	6-10 years	4	12.90	3	60
	11-15 years	11	35.48	1	20
	Above 15 years	11	35.48	1	20

Table 4 shows that 42(61.18%) of the teachers were male while 28(38.82%) were female; the male head teachers were 4(66.67%), female head teachers were also 2(33.33%). This meant that both sexes were represented well in the study.

The researcher sought to establish the age bracket of the teachers and head teachers in Western division; Table 4 shows that 10.29% of the teachers were in the age bracket between 20-29 years, 47.06 % were in the age bracket between 30-40 years of age, 33.82% were between 40-50 years, 8.82% were between 50-60years of age, 83% head teachers were between 40-50 years and 16.67% of them were between 50-60 years of age.

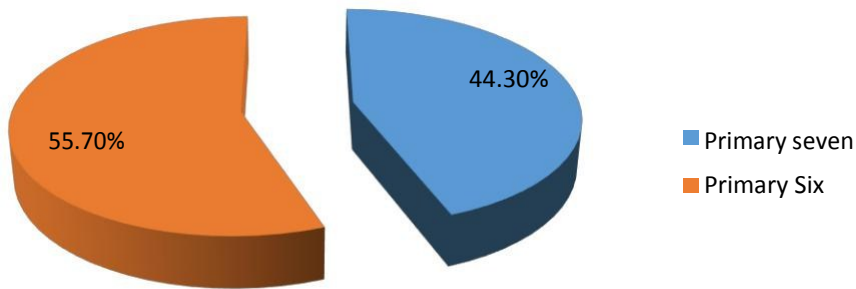
The researcher also sought to establish the education level of the teachers and head teachers and Table 4 showed that majority 31(45.59%) of the teachers had diploma, 20(29.41%) were GIII teachers, 17(25%) of them had bachelor degree and none had masters degree. For the head teachers none had certificate or diploma as highest qualifications, 5(83.33%) had Bachelor's degree and 1(16.67%) had a master's degree.

The researcher also investigated the length of experience of the teachers in their job. From Table 4, 7(10.29%) of the teachers had been in the teaching profession for a period between 1-5 years, 17(25%) were between 6-10 years, 23(33.82%) were between 11-15 years and 21(30.88%) were above 15 years. For the head teachers, 2 (33.3%) had an experience period of 6-10 years, 1(26.67%) had served for 11-15 years and 3(50%) had an experience of 16 years and above.



**Figure 1: Gender of the Pupil's**

Figure 2 shows that 51.2% of the pupils were female while 48.8% were male. The study findings showed more female pupil's than male pupils who participated in the study. The results meant that both sexes were well represented in the study. The study was conducted in mixed day school where results of learners categorized according to sex.



**Figure 2: Class Level of the Pupil's**

Out of 320 pupils who participated in the study, 55.7% were in Primary six while 44.3% were in Primary seven. The two classes were chosen for reference in this study because they are end focus of the primary level which determine the performance of schools.

**Table 4.3 : Descriptive Statistics for Age of Pupil's**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
What is your age?	320	14.64	1.321

The minimum age of the pupil's was 12 years while the maximum age was 18 years; the mean age was 14.64 years, with a standard deviation of 1.321. The study revealed that minimum age of pupil's was 12 years and maximum was 18 years. Pupil's at different ages perceive environment differently which affect their school attendance hence affecting their performance in English.

#### **4.3.2 Effects of Pupil's Absenteeism on English Performance in Primary Schools.**

**Table 4.4 Results for Pupil's Absenteeism**

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Frequency(f)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Missed lessons hence low performance	41	100
Difficulty in attempt assignments	39	95.12
Failure to conceptualize content	41	100
Failure to express in English Language	35	85.37

According to the table above on pupil's absenteeism is very high with 41(100%) hence leading to poor performance in English in western division as compared with other divisions in the Municipality. The findings are in relation with Bamuhair et al. (2016) who observed that Class attendance has an encouraging impact on pupil's' academic achievements, and therefore, a mandatory attendance policy plays a significant role in accelerating academic success among the pupils.

The findings from the field also revealed that as learners continue absenting, they tend to experience difficulties in attempting English assignment 39(95.12%). This makes them to obtain results that are relatively low.

The research also found that learners' absenteeism leads to failure of content conceptualization 41(100%).

Failure to express in English Language 35(85.37%) was due to rampant absenteeism among pupils. This makes learners to get low grades since they can't read understand concepts during exams. Similarly, Alghamdi et al., (2016) their study showed the performance GPA mean is influenced by low attendance rates.

#### 4.3.3 Effects of Teacher Absenteeism on English Performance in Primary Schools.

**Table 4.4 Results for Teachers Absenteeism**

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Frequency(f)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Teachers report of absenteeism cases negatively affect English regularly	34	82.93
Inadequate assessment leading to low academic performance	40	97.56
Un stead progress of performance in English	41	100
Low grade score obtained	40	97.56

According to the table above teachers report of absenteeism cases negative affect English regularly was rated 34(82.93%). Similar findings are of Miller, Murnane, & Willett, (2008) who concluded in their study that when elementary school teachers miss 10 or more days of instruction per year, pupil's suffer a significant loss in achievement (Miller, Murnane, & Willett, 2008).

To confirm effects of teacher's absenteeism, it was found that inadequate assessment leading to low academic performance 40(97.56%) of the respondents. Generally, teachers do not assess English regularly indicating that pupil's miss most of English concepts required to be achieved. Similar findings are those of Lilian, (2013) who asserted that only 28% of teachers were available/ready/willing to give and mark the assignment always, and only 43.5% of pupil's would have their homework/assignment marked, the probability that a teacher will give and mark assignment and, a pupil's will have his/her assignment marked always is  $0.28*0.435=0.1218$  (that is, only 12.18% of pupil's will get and do assignment, and have it marked always).

For teachers report on unstead progress of performance in English school to regularly to monitor pupil's learning in English was rated never by 41(100%). The findings are in line with Nithya et al., (2014) who found that chronically absent teachers, were defined as teachers who miss 18 or more days per year, account for 16% of the teaching workforce but account for 33% of total teacher absences.

Generally, the study shows that teachers' absenteeism has indeed led to low grades as reported by 40(97.56%) of the respondents.

#### 4.3.4 Effects of English Syllabus Completion English Performance in Primary Schools

**Table 4.5 Results for English Syllabus Completion**

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Frequency(f)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Pupil's come to school daily enabling them to learn English	24	58.5
Teachers cover termly syllabus hence steady progress	32	78.05
Low content coverage leads decreased performance	41	100
Pupil's attend English remedial to gain lost opportunities for performance elevation	32	78.05
Wide content coverage for increased performance	41	100

According to the table, pupil's come to school daily enabling them to learn English was rated by 24(58.5%) of the respondents. The results indicated that little is achieved by learners due to their absenteeism and steady teaching-learning process.

For teachers cover termly syllabus hence steady progress was reported by 32(78.05). The results showed that learners failed to benefit from recommended syllabus. The findings are in line with, Bishop (1985), who found that integrated English syllabus is too wide hence most teachers lack sufficient time for studying and examining aspects of English and literature in a more practical way.

From the above, low content coverage leads decreased performance was disclosed by 41(100%). This indicates that teachers that pupil's low performance is highly affected by partial syllabus coverage in most schools in the division.

Pupil's attendance to English remedial classes to gain lost opportunities for performance elevation was reported by 32(78.05). The pupil's performance in English have been affected since pupil's fail to turn up for organized remedials.

Wide content coverage for increased performance was reported by 41(100%) the record of work covered to disclose systematic coverage of the English syllabus leads to higher achievement in English. The findings are related to Lilian, (2013) who asserted that only 28% of teachers were available/ready/willing to give and mark the assignment and record always, and only 43.5% of pupil's would have their homework/assignment marked, the probability that a teacher will give and mark assignment and, a pupil's will have his/her assignment marked always is  $0.28 \times 0.435 = 0.1218$  (that is, only 12.18% of pupil's will get and do assignment, and have it marked always).

#### 4.3.5 Pupil's Response on Causes of Poor Performance in English

**Table 4.6 Results for Pupil's rating of main variables**

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>low</b>	<b>average</b>	<b>High</b>
Level of performance in English	101(31.57%)	200(62.50%)	19(5.93%)
Learners' attendance at school	10(3.13%)	153(47.81%)	157(49.06%)
English Teachers' attendance	7(2.19%)	153(47.81%)	160(50%)
Performance of English teacher	50(15.63%)	120(37.50%)	150(46.88%)

In table 4.6 above, the rating of English performance was 101(31.57%) as low, 200(62.50%) and low 19(5.93%)high respondents, learners' attendance at school was rated 10(3.13%) low 153(47.81) average and 157(49.06%) was rated high, English teachers' attendance was rated 7(2.19%) low, 153(47.81%) average and 160(50%) high and performance of English teacher.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

The chapter mainly dealt with summary, conclusions of findings, and recommendations based on the conclusions made. This was handled by the researcher systematically following the research questions. does Pupil's attendance affect their performance in English in Primary Schools in Western Division, Tororo Municipality? does teachers' attendance affect the pupil's performance in English in Primary Schools in Western Division, Tororo Municipality? does the coverage in English syllabus affect pupil's performance in English in Primary Schools in Western Division, Tororo Municipality? The study was guided by descriptive survey design. The target population was 6523 from 10 primary schools. Morgan and Krejcie (1970) sampling technique was adopted to determine the sample size. The researcher used simple random sampling to select 5 head teachers and 36 teachers and 327 pupils who participated in this study.

#### **5.2 Summary of the Findings**

This section presents the summary of the findings of the study according to the research questions.

##### **5.2.1 The Absenteeism of Pupils and Poor Performance of English in Primary Schools of Western Division Tororo Municipality.**

Based on the findings of the study, the response ranged from 35(85.37%) to 41(100%) indicated pupil's attendance was not good and greatly affected their performance in English since consistent relation of English concepts were not achieved by learners.

### **5.2.2 The Teachers' Absenteeism and Poor Performance of English in Primary Schools of Western Division Tororo Municipality.**

On the second objective, the rating ranged from 34(82.93%) to 41(100%) revealed that teachers were not always present to help pupil's in learning English hence contributing low performance of English in the division.

### **5.2.3 The Completion of English Syllabus and Poor Performance of English in Primary Schools in Western Division Tororo Municipality.**

Based on this objective, the rating ranged from 24(58.5%) to 41(100%). this variable highly contributed to poor performance of English in primary schools as compared to other variables. The syllabus coverage cannot be achieved when teachers and pupil's are always absent from school.

## **5.3 Conclusions**

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made:

From the findings of the first objective, the study concludes that pupil's attendance has a relation with performance of English. The low performance of English was as a result of absenteeism cases practiced by pupils.

According to the second objective, there was habitual absenteeism realized among teachers as a cause of low performance in English.

From the findings of the third objective, administrators were found to irregular session of close supervision due absenteeism cases among them leading to low English performance.

Finally, the findings of the fourth objective, syllabus coverage variable was the lowest rated in the sampled schools where the respondents participated in the study. This was due absenteeism of teachers and administrators hence leading to poor performance of English.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the study made the following recommendations:

The department of Primary school in the Ministry of Education through the government should enact laws that reduces absenteeism among head teachers and teachers for example paying according to days attended or permanent deletion of individuals who have perpetual absenteeism.

The local councils should sensitize parents on children attendance at school. And further, collaboratively draft community-based laws concerning Education to minimize absenteeism among pupils to better academic especially in English subject.

The local councils should work hand in hand with the District Education officers to deal with the pupil's, teachers and head teachers to enhance regular teaching and learning of English. This can be achieved through CPDCs and regular inspection of schools in the Division.

#### **5.5 Recommendations for Further Research**

The study recommended the following areas for further research:

- The level of head Teachers' commitment in improving English performance in Western Division Tororo Municipality.
- Effects of English language practice on pupil's academic performance in Western Division Tororo Municipality.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEAD TEACHERS

Kindly answer all the questions by ticking in the appropriate box or filling in the spaces provided.

1. Identify your gender

Male ( )      Female ( )

2. What is your age range?

15-20 years ( ) 21-30 years ( ) 31-40 years ( ) 40 years and above ( )

3. Education level

Grade three ( ) diploma ( ) degree ( ) masters ( )

4. How long have you served as a head teacher. 1-5 years ( ) 6-10

years ( ) 11-15 years ( ) 16-25 years ( )

#### Section B: Questions on independent variables

5. How has pupil's absenteeism affected their English performance.

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6. What are the effects of teachers' absenteeism on pupil's performance in English?

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7. How has English syllabus coverage affected the performance of pupil's?

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.....  
**APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS**

Kindly answer all the questions by ticking in the appropriate box or filling in the spaces provided.

**Section A: Personal Profile**

1. Identify your gender  
Male ( )      Female ( )
2. What is your age range?  
15-20 years ( )      21-30 years ( )      31-40 years ( )      40 years and above ( )
3. State your designation  
Classroom teacher ( )      senior teacher ( )      deputy head teacher ( )
4. Education level  
Grade three ( )      diploma( )      degree ( )      masters ( )

**Section B: Questions on independent variables**

5. How has pupil's absenteeism affected their English performance.  
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6. What are the effects of teachers' absenteeism on pupil's performance in English?  
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.....
7. How has English syllabus coverage affected the performance of pupil's?  
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### APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PUPIL'S

Kindly answer all the questions by ticking in the appropriate box or filling in the spaces provided.

1. Identify your sex

Male ( )          Female ( )

2. What is your age?

.....

3. Which class are you?

P.5 ( )          P.6 ( )          P.7 ( )

4. State your level of performance in English?

Low ( )    average ( )    high ( )

5. What is your attendance level at school?

Low ( )    average ( )    high ( )

6. What is the attendance level of your English teacher in terms of teaching?

Low ( )    average ( )    high ( )

7. Rate the performance of your English teacher in terms of syllabus completion

Low ( )    average ( )    high ( )

## APPENDIX VI: KREJCIE AND MORGAN SAMPLING TABLE

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970

