PEER INFLUENCE ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF FORM ONE STUDENTS IN GIRLS BOARDING SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN WATTUBA SUB COUNTY IN KIBOGA DISTRICT.

ΒY

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1153-07234-01434

A RESEARCH PROPOSAL TO BE SUBMITTED TO KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF EDUCATION OPEN DISTANCE AND E-LEARNING IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT OF THE AWARD OF BACHELORS' OF ARTS WITH EDUCATION OF KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

AUGUST 2018

APPROVAL

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

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17th August 2018

Signature

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this piece of work to my parents who have been part and partial during the completion of this work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are several people whose contributions, advice and guidance have enabled me complete this research project. It is not possible to enlist all of them here, but their contributions in terms of advice, peer review, expert review, providing reading materials and general support has contributed a lot towards preparation of this project. First to my supervisor madam Taligoola Deborah for his constant support, direction and feedback. My Lecturer Mr.Mwebesa Edson for teaching me research methods.

I also wish to thank my colleagues' in the year 2018 that we shared with a lot concerning our course in project planning and management, my typist madam Jovia who assisted me in typing my work and for her dedication and devotion showed while doing my work. My friend Mildred, who introduced me to this course and taught me the art of dreaming high Mr. Kigimu Vincent the coordinator of Wattuba centre who was always available for any assistance required. Mr Opicho Osbon for assisting me in Data analysis. All members of Wattuba staff namely Issa and Mark for their support during our lessons.Finaly my family members for their patient and inspiration.

ABSTRACT

It is a common belief that children will thrive if educated amongst better schoolmates, and this belief guides many parents in their choice of school. Many studies have tried to measure this peer-group effect, and this project was to extend this literature by looking at the influence of peer group on form one girl student's performance in end of year examinations in Kiboga District, Wattuba County. The study was guided by the following objectives, To establish how peer group prior achievements influence form one girl students academic performance in girls boarding secondary schools, To investigate how peer group composition influence form one girl students academic performance in girls boarding secondary schools and to examine the how peer group teaching environment influence form one girl students academic performance in girls boarding secondary schools. The study adopted a descriptive survey design with a sample size of 69 respondents comprising of 60 students and 5 teachers from the guiding and counseling department. Questionnaires were used to collect data. Validity of data collection tools was achieved through consultation with research experts and reliability of data collection instruments of this study was determined using the coefficient alpha (also known as Cronbach's alpha) before the actual collection of data. The data collected was analyzed using the chi-square test items and presented using APA table format. Peer group members who scored good marks in UCSE had positive influence to girl student academic performance in girl secondary schools. It was deduced that student's prior entry marks had more influence on girl student content mastery; therefore teaching could proceed faster in higher entry marks groups, or could start from a higher base-line when the group's prior attainments are higher. The findings showed that majority of respondents indicated that little pocket money spend per month had a positive influence to girl student performance. It was also deduced that a rich family background positively influenced girl student academic performance, it was deduced that students learning environment had a positive influence on girl student academic performance. The study recommends that Students and school stakeholders should be made aware of the benefits of peer group prior achievements as it greatly influences academic performance of students in secondary schools; Schools administration and other stakeholders should advise the parents on the amount of money to give to their daughters as pocket money as it has influence on the academic performance of the students in secondary schools and lastly the School administration and stakeholders should provide good teaching and learning environment in order to achieve good academic performance.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

- SQ Students Questionnaire
- TQ Teachers Questionnaire
- UCE- Uganda Certificate of Education

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CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

Peer groups are among the most influential social forces affecting adolescent behavior from mundane decisions concerning clothing, hairstyle, music, and entertainment, to more significant decisions concerning short and long-term education plans. During the formative adolescent years, peers are arguably even more important than parents, teachers, and counselors, and the peer-influenced decisions of youth can have long-lasting consequences Coleman (1966); Sewell, Haller and Portes(1969); Sewell, Haller and Ohlendorf (1970). Parents recognize the importance of peer groups and – through their choice of neighborhoods, schools, and activities Haynie, South and Bose (2006); Lareau (2003); Mouw and Entwisle (2006) – attempt to guide and direct their Children's friendship selections, which can be increasingly challenging during adolescence.

Regardless of socioeconomic status, parents want their children to be surrounded by the best possible social networks, especially during adolescence, when youth are increasingly independent from parents. During these formative years, educational goals take form, and youth make a series of decisions that shape their educational trajectories, even as their friendship networks gain influence upon these decisions. Unfortunately, the peer effects literature is lacking in two main areas. The first is that peer effects are assumed to be uniform across class, gender, and race and ethnicity. Race and ethnicity is especially likely to be important because adolescents are more likely to choose friends of the same racial and ethnic group Hamm, Brown and Heck (2005); Haynie, South and Bose(2006); Quillian and Campbell(2003), introducing the possibility that peers have differing effects by race and ethnicity.

The second problem is that few studies focus on academic decisions that are directly influenced by friends, such as course or track selection and college choices. Instead, most studies of peer effects focus on educational outcomes that are indirectly influenced by friends, such as early cognitive development, grades, promotion, and, most commonly, test scores Goux and Maurin, (2007); Hanushek (2003); Henry and Rickman (2007); Kang (2007); Zimmerman (2003). Hanushek et al. (2003) and others have pointed out that if innovations to behaviour form an important avenue through which peers affect outcomes, the inability to capture such behaviour might lead to a serious underestimation of peer influences. Thus, behavior decisions may lie at the intersection between peers and achievement effectively acting as a mediator through which the influence of peers passes prior to shaping student achievement.

Educational economists throughout the world have highlighted, in theoretical and empirical studies, the relevance of peer group quality to student performance Epple and Romano, (1998); Hoxby, (2000). According to the above researchers a peer group affects student achievement in several ways: members of a group interact in learning, help each other in their studies, share important information, and impose externalities on others by behaving well or badly (for example, a noisy student disrupts the study environment) or by allowing teachers to go deeper in subjects, contribute to the formation of values and aspirations, and so on.

More importantly, the nature of peer effects also has fundamental implications in a family's choice with regards whether parents consider that their offspring would benefit from schools which sort students according to their abilities. Starting from the classical study of Coleman (1966), a host of works have analyzed the effects of peer group on children's achievement and educational outcomes BettsandMorell, (1999); the main purpose was to investigate how peer group influence girl student in girls boarding schools in Wattuba County in Kiboga District

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The choice of form one students in girls secondary schools in Wattuba Sub County war based on the disparities in performance of UCE between boys and girls. Peer influence in Wattuba Subcounty in Kiboga District has constituted hindrances to the academic performance of form one girls. Lack of enough school materials, if the enough school materials are not provided for such students their performance may be poor considering the powerful influence of peer group. On the students and its importance of socialization there is no doubt that the academic achievement of the students can be hindered depending on the social climate in the school has a great impact on the girl's student's academic achievement. Lack of proper parental care of students by their parents may lead to poor educational performance. Adolescent stages among some girls which make them see and even believe that they are equal to their teachers also lead to poor educational performance. Equal opportunity is not given to the girls children by their parents in the education pursue which result to same children being withdrawn from school. The few there are allowed to school are subjected to child labour activities. Lack of enough teachers with the required skills lead to poor education performance of girls' students in Wattuba Subcounty in Kiboga District. High indispline cases among the students in girl's secondary schools in Wattuba Sub County lead to poor educational performance. The problem of early pregnancy especially during the holiday period lead to poor performance of the girls and school withdraws.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to establish peer group influence on form one girl students' Academic performance in girls boarding secondary schools in Kiboga District, Wattuba County.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1) To establish how peer group prior achievements influence form one girl student academic performance in girls boarding secondary schools in Wattuba County.

2) To investigate how peer group composition influence form one girl student academic performance in girls boarding secondary schools in Wattuba County.

3) To examine how peer learning environment influence form one girl student academic Performance in girls boarding secondary schools in Wattuba County.

1.4 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1) How does peer group prior achievements influence form one girl academic performance in girls boarding secondary schools in Wattuba County?

2) How does peer group composition influence form one girl academic performance in girls boarding secondary schools in Wattuba County?

3) How does peer group learning environment influence form one girl academic performance in

girls boarding secondary schools in Wattuba County?

1.5 scope of the study

The purpose of the study was to establish peer group influence on form one girl students' Academic performance in selected girls boarding secondary schools in Kiboga District, Wattuba County, with focus on establishing how peer group prior achievements influence form one girl student academic performance in girls boarding secondary schools in Wattuba County, investigating how peer group composition influence form one girl student academic performance in girls boarding secondary schools in Wattuba County and examining how peer learning environment influence form one girl student academic performance in girls boarding secondary schools in Wattuba County. The study was conducted from April 2018-July 2018.

1.6 Significance of the Study

It was hoped that the findings of the study would be of great importance to researchers as it would help develop new literature in the area of peer influence on girl students' performance in Uganda certificate of secondary examinations in Uganda.

It was also hoped that the study findings would benefit the government of Uganda in developing and implementing policies that promote girl student performance in relation to peer influence.

The study findings would also assist schools to eradicate negative peer influence on girls' performance in U.C.E

1.7 Limitation of the Study

The study on this topic, peer group influence on girl student academic performance in Kiboga, a case of Wattuba County, was limited by the inadequate time however the researcher keenly followed the time frame. The respondents were also shy about giving information thinking it was for commercial purposes but they were assured of confidentiality. Lastly it was not easy to get some respondents to respond to the questions but the researcher was patient and made several trips to collect the questionnaire.

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

This study was carried out in five public girls boarding secondary schools in, Wattuba County in Kiboga tied on the period 2012-2013.

1.9 Basic Assumptions of the Study

The study was based on the following assumptions, that the responses that the respondents gave constituted a true record of their opinion and views. The respondents were able to fill all the questionnaires without interacting with one another. It was also assumed that all the questionnaires would returned on time and that those that were to be interviewed were available and willing to participate and provided honest, accurate, complete answers, and that the researcher had adequate time to complete the study.

1.10 Definition of Significant Terms as Used in the Study

Academic performance: Scores attained in form one end of year examination.

District: An area or region marked by distinguishing features.

County: A territorial division of a country

Girl : A female school going girl aged between 14-20 years.

National Examination: An examination set by the national examining body and administered in Secondary schools

Peer group: A group of girl students in the same class.

Peer pressure: Influences from students in the same class.

Peer : Students of the same age, status.

Student: Form one girl students in boarding public secondary schools.

1.11 Organization of the Study

This study was divided into five chapters as follows: Chapter one gave the background of the study and introduced the problem statement describing the specific problem addressed in the study, as well as the purpose, objectives, research questions, significance of the study,

delimitations of the study and limitations of the study. Chapter two presents a review of literature basing on the three objectives of the study, giving theoretical foundation of the study and the conceptual frame work. Chapter three presents the methodology, the target population, sample size and sampling procedure, data collection instruments, piloting of the instruments, validity and reliability of the research instruments and operational definition of variables. Chapter four contains data analysis, presentation, interpretation and discussion of the findings. Chapter five presents a summary of the findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviewed the literature related to the study on the topic discussed under the various study objectives, how peer group prior achievements influence girl student performance in national examination, how peer group composition influence girl student performance in national examination, how peer learning environment influence girl student performance in national examination. A theoretical and conceptual framework was used to operationalize the variables and lastly the gaps in literature were summarized.

2.1 Peer group prior achievements and girl student academic performance

Schools seem often to be judged on the kind of children they enroll, rather than on the quality of their teaching or the other facilities they offer. This observation has led many to argue that the background and abilities of a pupil's school-mates must have an important influence on his or her own achievements at school. Motivated by this, a rich international literature has evolved to try to model and measure the consequences of social interactions between pupils – so called 'peer-group effects' spanning the economics, education, sociological and psychological fields.

The issue is a critical one in respect of current educational policy which favors expansion of school choice, because choice based on peer-group quality can, in theory at least, leads to a high degree of sorting across schools along lines of prior ability Epple and Romano,(2000). This will exacerbate educational inequalities if peer-group quality has real impacts on personal achievement. An understanding of peer effects is also important because they can mean that educational interventions that appear beneficial to the individual pupil may be even more effective when rolled out to the population (Glaeser, Sacerdote, 2003). Our paper extends the evidence base by providing estimates of the influence of innovations to a pupil's peer-group at the time when they transfer from Primary to Secondary schooling in Uganda.

The potential for peers to affect individual achievement is central to many important policy issues in elementary and secondary education, including the impacts of school choice programs, ability tracking within schools, "mainstreaming" of special education students, and racial and

economic desegregation. Vouchers, charter schools and other school choice programs may benefit those who remain in traditional public schools by engendering competition that leads to improvements in school quality, but may also harm those left behind by diminishing the quality of their classmates (Epple and Romano 1998; Caucutt 2002). Grouping students in classrooms by ability can likewise have significant impacts on student achievement, depending on the magnitude of peer influences (Epple, Newlon, and Romano 2002). The effect of desegregation policies on achievement depends not only on potential spillovers from average ability, but on whether different peers exert different degrees of influence on individual outcomes (Angrist and Lang 2004; Cooley 2007; Fryer and Torelli2005). Earlier analyses of peer effects were based on simple econometric models regressing students outcomes on their own individual characteristics (measures of ability, family background and so on) and on their peers' outcomes or characteristics. As shown by Manski (1993), this kind of regression is plagued by two main econometric problems, which raise doubts about the causal interpretation of the coefficient measuring peer group effects. The first problem, known as "self-selection" bias, depends on the fact that groups of peers are often not exogenously determined, but individuals typically choose the other people they will associate with. Therefore, the characteristics of each student contribute to determining the choice of his/her peers and, if some of these characteristics are not observable, an endogeneity problem arises.

2.2 Peer group composition and girl student academic performance

Peer groups are among the most influential social forces affecting adolescent behavior from mundane decisions concerning clothing, hairstyle, music, and entertainment, to more significant decisions concerning short and long-term education plans. During the formative adolescent years, peers are arguably even more important than parents, teachers, and counselors, and the peerinfluenced decisions of youth can have long-lasting consequences (Coleman. 1966; Sewell, Haller and Portes 1969; Sewell, Haller and Ohlendorf 1970). Parents recognize the importance of peer groups and – through their choice of neighborhoods, schools, and activities (Haynie, South and Bose 2006; Lareau 2003; Mouw and Entwisle 2006) – attempt to guide and direct their Children's friendship selections, which can be increasingly challenging during adolescence. Regardless of socioeconomic status, parents want their children to be surrounded by the best

possible social networks, especially during adolescence, when youth are increasingly independent from parents.

During these formative years, educational goals take form, and youth make a series of decisions that shape their educational trajectories, even as their friendship networks gain influence upon these decisions. Unfortunately, the peer effects literature is lacking in two main areas. The first is that peer effects are assumed to be uniform across class, gender, and race and ethnicity. Race and ethnicity is especially likely to be important because adolescents are more likely to choose friends of the same racial and ethnic group (Hamm, Brown and Heck 2005; Haynie, South and Bose 2006; Quillian and Campbell 2003), introducing the possibility that peers have differing effects by race and ethnicity.

The second problem is that few studies focus on academic decisions that are directly influenced by friends, such as course or track selection and college choices. Instead, most studies of peer effects focus on educational outcomes that are indirectly influenced by friends, such as early cognitive development, grades, promotion, and, most commonly, testscores (Goux and Maurin 2007; Hanushek, 2003; Henry and Rickman 2007; Kang 2007; Zimmerman 2003). Hanushek (2003) and others have pointed out that "If innovations to behaviour form an important avenue through which peers affect outcomes, the inability to capture such behaviour might lead to a serious underestimation of peer influences". Thus, behavior decisions may lie at the intersection between peers and achievement effectively acting as a mediator through which the influence of peers passes prior to shaping student achievement.

Peer-group effects are a distinct class of influences arising from 'social interactions' abroad term which encompasses any type of individual behavior that involves interdependency with the behavior or characteristics of others. Economists have long shown an interest [Becker (1974)], but there has been a rapid growth in the field since the 1990s with contributions in theory and empirical work. Theoretical research seems motivated by a desire to widen the scope of economic thought to encompass aspects of behavioral modeling more commonly attributed to sociology and psychology.

Empirical work –constrained by the data –is generally concerned with finding evidence for the existence of such effects, rather than the precise pathways by which they occur. The term 'peer-groups' usually indicates social interactions of children or young adults with people of

similar age, rather than broader 'neighborhood' effects or interactions with superiors, family or teachers. We continue to use the term in this way. The range of outcomes that have interested researchers is diverse, including smoking. Alexander(2001); Ellickson(2003), joke-telling Angelone and, Hirschman (2005), sexual behavior Selvan and, Ross (2001), purchase of a retirement plan Duflo and Saez (2000) and – more commonly – education. On reflection, it seems very likely that many decisions are linked to similar decisions by a friend or other associate (in same cases fairly explicitly, like the decision to have sex, be in a gang or play tennis), and many consumption decisions rely on other consumers participating (e.g. video phones). However, the more interesting possibility is that group behaviour or attributes can modify individual actions in relation to important social and economic decisions that will affect their life chances – especially achievement in education.

Starting from the classical study of Coleman (1966), a host of works have analysed the effects of peer group on children's achievement and educational outcomes Betts and Morell, (1999); Hoxby, (2000); Angrist and Lang, (2004); Hanushek. , (2003) and on college students' grades and choices of fields of study Sacerdote, (2001); Zimmerman, (2003); De Giorgi,Pellizzari and Redaelli, (2006); Foster, (2006), but several problems and controversies are still unresolved. Some of these studies show that peer effects are statistically and economically significant in a variety of educational contexts and that students tend to perform better if the quality of their peer group is higher .Ding and Lehrer, (2006); Zimmerman, (2003); Vandenberghe,(2002); Hoxby,(2000); Sacerdote,(2001); Zimmer and Toma, (2000). Moreover, a number of these studies show that peer effects are often non-linear, implying that students of middle abilities are particularly affected by the negative influence of weak students Sacerdote, (2001); Zimmerman,(2003). However, the significance and size of peer effects often changes in relation to the sample used. Other studies, in fact, find no significant (or minor) peer effects Angrist and Lang, (2004); Arcidiacono and Nicholson, (2005); Foster, (2006)

2.3 Peer group learning environment and girl student academic performance

Students belonging to the same class tend to study and revise the subject together, so generating important externalities. However, this kind of relationship does not develop between all the members of a class, since, even though attending courses together, some students may not interact with each other. In order to overcome this problem and build a peer group measure

(called Peer Exam) based on this type of interaction, which we believe particularly relevant, we consider as members of the same group students who sit an exam on the same date. Anecdotal evidence suggests that students who study together tends to take exams together (Coleman. 1966). Educational economists have highlighted, in theoretical and empirical studies, the relevance of peer group quality to student performance Epple and Romano,(1998); Hoxby, (2000). A peer group affects student achievement in several ways: members of a group interact in learning, help each other in their studies, share important information, impose externalities on others by behaving well or badly (for example, a noisy student disrupts the study environment) or by allowing teachers to go deeper in subjects, contribute to the formation of values and aspirations, and so on.

Understanding the nature and the magnitude of peer group effects in education is crucial for the "productivity" of educational processes and the organizational design of school systems. For example, in order to improve student outcomes, it is important to know which inputs influence their performance most and the relative importance of peer effects compared to other inputs, such as teacher quality or school resources. If peer effects are at work, educational outcomes are affected by how students are arranged across classes and the desirability of comprehensive schools (which mix students of different abilities together) or stratified schools (which tend to aggregate students according to their abilities) depends on the magnitude and non-linearity of peer effects. Furthermore, the selectivity of university admission policies produces different results in the presence of peer effects. More importantly, the nature of peer effects also has fundamental implications in a family's choice with regards whether parents consider that their offspring would benefit from schools which sort students according to their abilities (Foster, 2006).

Apart from peer effects related to the classroom environment, students belonging to the same class tend to study and revise the subject together, so generating important externalities. Clearly friendly relationships do not involve all members of a class: some students might attend course together, but their interaction might still be limited. We are able to address this problem by considering a measure of peer group which weights peers in relation to the number of exams taken together. In fact, students who continually do exams in the same session as one another are often students, who study together, sharing course material and information. We look at all the students passing an exam on the same date and we use this information to define a second measure of peer group quality, which weights the abilities of each student according to the number of exams taken together (Epple and Romano, 1998). We are aware that these definitions may be affected by self-selection problems since students choose other people to collaborate with in studying. In order to overcome possible self-selection problems, we use Two-Stage Least Squares estimation and instrument peer groups through the random (and compulsory) assignment of students to different teaching classes during their First Level Degree course (Foster, 2006).

Their estimations show that peer group abilities have considerable, positive effects on students' academic performance. These effects are not brought about by self-selection and are robust to a variety of definitions of peer group and several measures of abilities (Epple and Romano, 1998). In our preferred Instrumental Variable specification, we find that an increase of one standard deviation in peer group quality (measured as the average ability of students attending the same course) produces an increase in student performance of 0.19 (the OLS estimates show a smaller effect equal to 0.13). This is quite a large effect, since the effect produced by an increase of one standard deviation in the student's own ability generates an increase of 0.54(Foster, 2006). Effects are slightly higher when we consider our second measure of peer group quality, based on repeated interaction at exams, implying that this measure is able to take into account some relevant interaction taking place among students.

These results suggest that student quality is an important input in tertiary education and that, in order to improve their students' performance, colleges and university should attract high quality students. Our results are consistent with selection policies adopted by many Ugandan universities aimed at admitting only the best students. They also support the idea that students applying for highly reputable institutions evaluate not only the high quality of instructors provided, but also the highquality of peers. Moreover, if student performance is determined, at least in part, by his/her effort then is rational to subsidize good students for the positive externalities they produce (Foster, 2006).

2.4 Theoretical Framework

Weidman's (1989) model of socialization in learning institutions is perhaps the most appropriate theoretical model with which to investigate and interpret peer group influence. My adaption of Weidman's model follows similar studies of peer effects by Dey (1996, 1997) and Milem (1998).

Weidman conceptualizes the major influences on student change in learning institutions to be pre-learning institutions or student background characteristics, the academic and social normative context of an institution, and the impact of parental and non-college reference groups. Normative contexts are particularly important in Weidman's model for influencing change in personal orientations during college. However, Weidman also made three points about the role of the interpersonal environment and interpersonal processes in socialization. First, he cites Homans (1950, 1961) and argues that the socialization process dependented on interpersonal interaction and the sentimental intensity of the relationship associated with interaction. Second, he notes that frequency of interaction was also critical. Lastly, he underscored a conclusion made by a number of researchers, that the long-term academic impacts of learning institutions are not the result of classroom experiences, but of informal forms of social interaction with students and faculty.

By focusing on peer group influences, this study concentrated on two parts of Weidman's model, the normative context of informal peer groups and implicitly, the socialization process of interpersonal interaction. To isolate these elements of the socialization process in learning institutions, was borrowed from the conceptual and methodological models of college impact of Astin (1984, 1993), models that are also implicit in Weidman's (1989) framework. Astin's (1993) model of college impact emphasized the intercorrelated nature of student pre-college characteristics (inputs) and environmental elements of the college experience. This relationship becomes problematic when trying to isolate the unique contribution of the educational environments and outcomes because student inputs are frequently related to both environments and outcomes. In other words, qualities of the student may explain their eventual outcome (smart students will get high grades) and may also determine the types and nature of their educational experiences (math majors will take more math courses). In the statistical implementation of Weidman's socialization model, therefore, I made an effort to properly control the confounding relationship of inputs to friendship group measures.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

This study was guided by the following conceptual framework, which was used to explain the interrelationship between the variables. A conceptual framework is a scheme of variables a researcher operationalizes in order to achieve the set objectives Oso&Onen (2002). Mugenda and

Mugenda(1999) argued that independent variable attempts to indicate the total influence in the study. As shown in the figure below.



It was hypothesized that the independent variable with its components peer group prior achievements, peer group composition and peer group teaching environment directly influenced the dependent variable girl student academic performance. The interpretation of the above conceptual framework was that there was a relationship between the independent variables indicators, grades, subject choice, family background, pocket money spent and teacher/student relationship and the dependent variable girl student performance. The extraneous variables comprising of moderating variables and intervening variables were also taken into account during operationalization of the variables as they acted as catalysts of the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables.

2.6 Conclusion

The purpose of the review of the above literature was to avoid unnecessary and unintentional duplication of the framework from which research findings were interpreted and also demonstrated the researcher's familiarity with existing knowledge. The researcher reviewed literature related to the study on the topic of peer influence on girl student academic performance

in national examinations and what other researchers had said in relation to the study objectives. Peer group prior achievements, peer group composition and peer group teaching environment. Although the literature on peer effects in education dates back to 1960s with the publication of the famous Coleman Report (1966), the importance of peer-group effects is still disputed. Some very bold claims have been made about the potency of peers in child development [Rich Harris (1999)], yet the results of numerous studies are very mixed, finding strong, weak or non-existent effects across a wide range of outcomes. This reflects the difficulty in defining the peer-group, isolating causal peer-group effects from other influences, lack of appropriate data, and different identification methodologies adopted by researchers. Indeed, as Manski (1993) and Moffit (2001) argue, the empirical analysis of social interactions is plagued by conceptual and data problems. It is a common belief that children will thrive if educated amongst better schoolmates, and this belief guides many parents in their choice of school. Many studies have tried to measure this peer-group effect, and our current study sought to find out the effects of peer influence on form one girl student academic performance in secondary schools in Wattuba Sub County in Kiboga District.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The chapter describes the research design as well as the methods that were used to sample the population and the target population bringing out the sample size. The chapter further looked at methods of data collection, research instruments, their validity and reliability, operational definition of variables and methods of data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive survey design, which is a type of research undertaken with the aim of describing characteristics of variables in a situation. According to Best and Khan (2009),

descriptive survey design is concerned with conditions or relationships that exists, opinions that are held, processes that are going on, effects that are evident, or trends that are developing. (Kerlinger, 1969).The descriptive survey design enabled collection of data without manipulating the research variables .The descriptive survey design optimized on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative research methodology. The survey method allowed collection of data from a large sample population and generated findings that were a representation of the whole population at a lower cost (Saunders, 2007).

3.2 Target Population

The target population of the study was form one girl students in boarding girl secondary schools inKiboga District, Wattuba Sub County. The target population was 905 in total, comprising of 900 girl students, 5 teachers in charge of guidance and counseling in 5 boarding girls secondary schools inKiboga District, Wattuba sub County.

3.3 sample size and selection Techniques

3.3.1 Sample size

A sample is a smaller group of subjects obtained from the accessible population (Mugenda and Mugenda 2003). The study employed Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) recommended sample size

of 10% of the target population. Using the above formula to determine the sample size for the 900 respondents; Sample size was 18 respondents from each school making a total of 90students plus five teachers in charge of guidance and counseling making a total 95 respondents.

3.3.2. Sampling Procedure

Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the

individuals selected represent the large group from which they were selected Mugenda and Mugenda, (1999). The study employed random sampling technique to select the sample size from individual schools. A sampling frame was developed per school that listed all the units in the population. The units were picked randomly until the desired sample size was attained. This enabled every member of the accessible population to have equal chance of participating in the study.

3.4 Data Collection methods and instruments

Instruments Bourke (2005) simply states that questionnaires are used to obtain two different types of information: First the background information on students, teachers, or others, such as age, gender, amount of schooling, and secondly attitudinal information about some specific events, way of behaving, quality of life, other persons. In the first case, even though the same information could also be gathered in other ways. from institutional records, a questionnaire is simply a convenient way of obtaining the information. In the second case, a number of items are asked about each attitude or opinion in an attempt to tap various aspects underlying beliefs or feelings which gives rise to the attitudes. Similarly, Oppenheim (1996) affirms that the questionnaires are one way of obtaining a measure of 24 attitude. The attitudes have two components: beliefs (cognitive) and feelings (emotional or affective). Responses to questionnaire items are what respondents say their belief or say they would do, which are taken as indicators of their beliefs, attitudes and likely behavior. According to Burns (1994) the use of questionnaires in research is based on one basic underlying assumption: that the respondent will be both willing and able to give truthful answers. He explains three kinds of items which are generally used in the construction of questionnaires, namely, closed items, open-ended items, and scale items. The close items allow the respondents to choose from two or more fixed alternatives, for example, the dichotomous items which provide two alternative only: yes or no. The open-ended items

simply supply a frame of reference for respondents' answer, couple with a minimum of restraint or command on their expression. Thus, in open-ended items, respondents provide the answers in their own words. The scale is a set of items to which the respondents respond by indicating degrees of agreement or disagreement.

The key instrument applied in this study was the questionnaire which was characterized by the three types of item construction mentioned above, as well as a selected response format of A Likert scale. The questionnaire was adopted from Gamage (1996) for an empirical study in the New South Wales (NSW) state schools system. On the basis of an extensive review of literature, it was found that the research questionnaire which was modified to suit the context of this study was the appropriate one. Furthermore, the questionnaire in the study consisted of three major parts. The first part began with demographic information. The second part was completed by all students and the third part was completed by teachers in charge of guidance and counseling only. The The research instruments that were employed in this study as tools for data collection were questionnaires namely.

- (a) Student's Questionnaire (SQ)
- (b) Teacher's Questionnaire (TQ)

The two instruments were used to supplement each other and to give a deeper and wider exploration into research perspective which gave the research more quality.

3.4.1Quality control

Piloting is trying out of research instruments on the respondents who were not used in the main study: (Groll 1986) Note that a pilot study is necessary because" a researcher embarking on classroom research for the first time will find it valuable to spend some time in the classroom using one or more established systems and looking at the kind of issues which will arise in turning his/ her own research questions into a set of criteria and definition for use in the classroom." It is important for a pilot study to be carried out before any research is done as stated by Peter (1994). He states" even the most carefully constructed instrument cannot guarantee to obtain a hundred percent reliable data". Therefore it was necessary to pretest the instruments of the research on a small sample of respondents in a preparatory exercise to find out

if there was any weakness so that it could be corrected. In this study, two schools that did not take part in the main study were selected for piloting.

3.4.2 Validity of the Instruments

Validity is the extent to which the instrument measures what it appears to measure according to the researcher's subjective assessment (Nachmias: 1958). Validity deals with the adequacy of the instruments for example, the researcher needs to have adequate questions in the written task in order to collect the required data for analysis that can be used to draw conclusion. Frenekel (1993) suggest that the individual who is supposed to render an intelligent judgment about the adequacy of the instruments should be given the instruments before the instruments are administered. The instruments were amended according to the expert's comments and recommendations before being administered. In this study, the researcher sought help from the supervisors and lecturers in the school of education to judge the validity of the questionnaire and the questions in the written task.

3.4.3 Reliability of the research instruments

The study adopted the coefficient alpha to determine the internal reliability of the study instruments. The coefficient alpha ranges in values from 0 (no reliability) to 1-26 (perfect reliability). Gregory (2000, cited in Manning & Munro, 2006) claims: Coefficient alpha is an index of the internal consistency of the items, that is, their tendency to correlate with one another. Insofar as a test or scale with high internal consistency will also tend to show stability of scores in a test-retest approach, coefficient alpha is a useful estimate of reliability. They then state that the values of coefficient alpha above .70 are considered to represent "acceptable" reliability, above .80 "good reliability", and above .90 to represent "excellent" reliability. However, Pallant (2005: 90) asserted that with short scales (e.g. scales with fewer than ten items); it is common to find quite low Cronbachvalues, for example, .50. In this study, the values of coefficient alpha ranged was.75, indicating an acceptable and good reliability (Gregory cited in Manning & Munro, 2006)

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

Permission to carry out the study was sought after presentation of study proposal to the supervisors at the University of Nairobi. The nature and purpose of the study was explained to

the respondents by the researcher. The researcher filled application form for a research permit and submitted two copies of approved study proposal, a banks cheque of one thousand shillings, curriculum vitae, two photo passports and a photocopy of the National identity card to the Council for Science and Technology in regard to University's ethical considerations. After two weeks the researcher received the permit to carry out the research.

3.6 Data Analysis preedure

Techniques some researchers report that there are two broad categories of statistical approaches in quantitative research, namely, descriptive (Creswell, 2005; Spatz, 2005; Salkind, 2004; McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). Descriptive statistics are used to summarize, organize, and describe the characteristics of a data collection. Inferential statistics is the most fundamental way to summarize data and it is a prerequisite for interpreting the results of quantitative research, while descriptive statistics are Commonly used in reporting results (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). Similarly, in the context of analyzing quantitative data using statistical techniques, Creswell (2005: 181) explains that descriptive statistics summarize a single variable in a data set or compare how one score relates to all others, while inferential statistical tests are used to assess the differences, relationships, and correlations among variables in the data set. The data collected was edited, coded and analyzed using inferential statistics. This involved use of measurers of distributions (chi-Square) and presentation of information in APA tables.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Permission to carry out the study was sought after presentation of study proposal to the supervisors at Kampala International University. The nature and purpose of the study was explained to the respondents by the researcher. The researcher treated all the information given by the respondents with a lot of confidentiality to safeguard the respondent's personal integrity in regard to University's ethical considerations. In line with human ethics procedures established by Kampala International University, the researcher submitted the questionnaire, which was constructed in English to the National Council for Education and sports. It was aimed at seeking approval and ensuring the ethical acceptability of the research involving human participants. Accordingly, the pre-testing and pilot study was conducted after obtaining the approval of the National Council for Education and Sports.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.0Introduction

To establish how peer group prior achievements influence form one girl student academic performance in girls boarding secondary schools in Wattuba County, investigating how peer group composition influence form one girl student academic performance in girls boarding secondary schools in Wattuba County, examining how peer learning environment influence form one girl student academic Performance in girls boarding secondary schools in Wattuba County.

This chapter is divided into three sections: section one presents the response return rate, the second section gives demographic inf00-ormation of respondents covering age, and gender and the third section provides results and discussions based on the three research objectives.

4.1 Response

Return Rate From the response return rates, the study was able to get a general return rate response from all the respondents. The study received 100% (95). According to Gay, (1981), ten percent of the accessible population is enough for a descriptive study and therefore this return rate of 100% has helped boost the reliability of the study.

4.2 Demographic information of the respondents

Two demographic characteristics of respondents were studied. These were age and gender.

4.2.1 Distribution of the respondents by age

The age of the respondents was thought to be of importance to the study therefore the researcher sought to establish the age of the respondents. This is shown in the table 4.1.

Table 4.2.1 Distribution of respondents by age

Age	Percentage	Frequency	
15-25yuears	90	94.73	
26-45years	4	4.21	****
46 and above	1	1.06	
Total average	95	100	

Source: primary Data 20018

Distribution of respondents by age The findings revealed that 94.73%(90) of the respondents were between 15 to 25 years old and 4.21%(4) were between 26 to 45 years old, while 1.06% were above 46 years. The findings showed that majority of respondents were mainly students.

4.2.2 Gender of the respondents

The gender of the respondents was sought and the results are given in table 4.2.

Table 4.2.2 Gender of respondents

Gender	Percentage	Frequency
Male	3	3.16
Female	92	96.84
Total	95	100

Source: primary Data 20018

The findings show that gender distribution of the respondents revealed that 96.84 (92) were female while 3.16 (3) were male. This was generally because the study targeted girl students in Girls Boarding secondary schools in Wattubba County

4.3 Influence of peer group prior achievement on academic performance of form one students in girl boarding secondary school in Wattubba County

The study sought to establish the influence of peer group prior achievement on student academic performance in public secondary schools under the following themes.

4.3.1 Influence of Peer group members prior grades on academic performance

The study sought to establish the influence of peer group membership of former school mates who scored good marks in UCE on academic performance. The findings are shown in table 4.3.

UCE		Performance	Total	Chi-square
18		2	20	1.25
32		10	42	0.381
22		6	28	0.035
Total	72	18	90	1.666
~				

Table 4.3.1 influence of peer group prior grades on academic performance

Source: primary Data 20018

The findings revealed a calculated chi-square of 1.666 which was below the table chi-square of 7.815 at a probability level of 0.05 (5% significant level) hence the expected results were significant to the observed results. It was deduced that the expected results were consistent with the observed results as chi-square calculated was lower than the chi-square table thus peer group members who scored good marks in UCE had positive influence on girl student academic performance in girl secondary schools.

My reading of this result was Students seemed to do better in their early stages of Secondary school when their new Schoolmates had a good record of prior achievement. There was also some form of social interaction between students that promoted higher attainments. The findings were in line with other previous findings by (Epple and Romano, 2000) who asserted that Schools seem often to be judged on the kind of children they enroll, rather than on the quality of their teaching or the other facilities they offer. This observation led many to argue that the background and abilities of a pupil's school-mate have an important influence on his or her own achievements at school. Motivated by this, a rich international literature evolved to try to model and measure the consequences of social interactions between pupils – so called 'peer-group effects' – spanning the economics, education, sociological and psychological fields.

4.3.2 Influence of peer group learning resources on girl student academic performance in boarding secondary schools

The study sought to determine the extent to which peer group learning resources influenced the academic performance of girl students in girls boarding secondary schools. The sampled students were asked to rate the influence of text book ratio on girl student performance and the findings are in the table 4.3.

Table 4.3.2 Influence of text book ratio on g	irl student academic performance in bo	barding
secondary schools		

Text books student	Performance	Total	Chi-square
ratio			
1-2 32	4	36	3.45
1-3 20	6	26	0.02
1-4 12	8	20	2.76
1-5 4	8	8	2.84
Total 68	26	90	9.07
Q	D / 00010	1	1

Source: primary Data 20018

The chi-square calculated was 9.07 and is greater than the chi-square table of 7.815 at probability level of 0.05 (5% significant level) hence the expected results were insignificant to the observed results. From the table above it was asserted text books had no significant influence on girl student performance in boarding girl secondary schools. Therefore performance is not influenced by text book student ratio because students can perform well due to group discussions or using their notes given by their teachers.

This view is also shared by previous studies by Coleman.(1966), Understanding the nature and the magnitude of peer group effects in education is crucial for the "productivity" of educational processes and the organizational design of school systems. for example, in order to improve student outcomes, it is important to know which inputs influence their performance most and the relative importance of peer effects compared to other inputs, such as teacher quality or school resources. More importantly, the nature of peer effects also has fundamental implications in a

family's choice with regards whether parents consider that their offspring would benefit from schools which sort students according to their abilities.

4.4 Influence of peer group composition on girl student academic performance in secondary schools.

The study sought to investigate whether peer group economic stability had boosted girl student academic performance under the following indicators.

4.4.1. Influences of peer group pocket money spent per month on girl student academic performance in secondary schools.

The study sought to reveal the extent to which peer group pocket money spent per month had influenced the academic performance of girl students in girls boarding in secondary schools. The sampled students were asked to rate the following given statements as the indicators the: 0-499, 500999, 1000-1999, and the findings are in the table 4.5.

Table 4.4.1 Influence of peer	group pocket money	[,] spent per mon	th on girl student
academic performance in sec	ondary schools.		

Pocket r	noney spent	Performance	Total	Chi-square
per mon	th			
19		2	21	1.68
30		12	42	1.4
22		5	27	0.10
Total	71	19	90	3.18

Source: primary Data 20018

The chi-square calculated was 3.18 and is less than the chi-square table of 7.815 at probability level of 0.05 (5% significant level) hence the expected results were consistent with the observed results. The findings showed that majority of respondents indicated that little pocket money spend per month had a positive influence to girl student performance. This showed that low money spent by peers was 33-34 an important 'contextual' influence on student attainments because too much money distracts the attention of the students towards education causing poor academic performance. The findings were also in line with other previous findings which

asserted that Parents recognized the importance of peer groups and – through their choice of neighborhoods, schools, and activities regardless of their economic backgrounds (Haynie, South and Bose 2006; Lareau 2003; Mouw and Entwisle 2006) – parents attempt to guide and direct their Children's friendship selections, which can be increasingly challenging during adolescence. Regardless of socioeconomic status, parents want their children to be surrounded by the best possible social networks, especially during adolescence, when youth are increasingly independent from parents. During these formative years, educational goals take form, and youth make a series of decisions that shape their educational trajectories, even as their friendship networks gain influence upon these decisions.

4.4.2 Influence of peer group family background on girl student academic performance in secondary schools.

The study sought to reveal the extent to which peer group family background had influenced the academic performance of girl students in girls boarding in secondary schools. The sampled students were asked to rate the following given statements as the indicators starting with a rich family background and then a poor family background under the following indicators, influence, no influence, little influence and undecided and table 4.6 shows the study findings.

Table 4.4.2 Influence of peer group family background on girl student academic performance in secondary schools

Family	back ground	Performance	Total	Chi-square
44		5	41	4.08
26		15	49	4.88
Total	70	20	90	8.96

Source: primary Data 20018

The chi-square calculated was 8.96 and was higher than the chi-square from the table which is 7.815 at a probability level of 0.05(5% significant level) hence the expected results were insignificant to observed results, Therefore it was deduced that neither a rich family background nor a poor family background had any significant influence on girl student academic performance, the findings were in contrary with other findings by Duflo and Saez (2000) whose reflection seemed very likely that students from rich backgrounds tended to perform better

compared to others from poor backgrounds. However, the more interesting possibility was that rich peer group behaviour or attributes could modify individual actions in relation to important social and economic decisions that would affect their life chances especially achievement in education.

4.5 Influence of peer group teacher/ student learning environment on girl student academic performance in secondary schools.

The study sought to establish the Influence of peer group teacher/ student learning environment on girl student academic performance in secondary schools under the following indicators.

4.5.1 Influence of career counselors on girl student academic performance in secondary schools

The study sought to reveal the extent to which career counselors had influenced the academic performance of girl students in girls boarding in secondary schools. The sampled students were asked to rate the following given statements as the indicators on whether the number of times a student has been counseled had any influence on their academic performance. Starting from 1-2 times per term, 3-5, and 6-7; table 4.7 shows the study findings.

Table 4.5.1 Influence of number of times a student was counseled on girl student academic performance in secondary schools

No of tin	nes counseled	Performance	Total	Chi-square
01-02	18	2	20	1.25
03-05	32	10	32	0.381
06-07	22	6	28	0.035
Total	72	18	90	1.666

Source: primary Data 20018

The calculated chi-square was 1.666 which was less than chi-square in the table which: 7.815 at probability level of 0.05 (5% significant level) hence it was deduced that a low number of time counselled influence the academic performance of girl students. The research concludes that the fewer the number the student was counseled indicated the discipline of the student that positively influenced the academic performance. This finding were in line with other previous findings by

Fennema and Sherman (1995) found that students of teachers who were well- organized, achievement-oriented and enthusiastic tended to have more positive attitudes towards education. In support of other studies concerning the influence of career counselors, the students mentioned the teacher, in both personality and interrelationships with students as a crucial variable in academic performance (Bolaji Caleb, 1996). Teacher personality, relations and interactions with students' classroom activities, rewards, assignments and students work are all controlled by the teachers. The results from this study suggested the need for the teachers to develop positive relations with students, to stress classroom activities which involve active- teaching process and student participation and to engage students meaningfully in the subject, so that a fruitful and satisfying results is assured.

4.5.2 Influence of the number of exams taken by peer group on student academic performance in girl secondary schools

The study sought to establish the extent to which the number of exams taken by peer group together had influence on student academic performance in girl secondary schools. The sampled students were asked to rate the number of exams taken together in relation to their peer group academic performance. The findings are shown in the table 4.8.

Table 4.5.2 Influence of the number of exams taken together by peer group members on student academic performance in girl secondary schools

No of exams		Performance	Total	Chi-square
taken				
5 times	19	2	21	1.68
4 times	30	12	42	1.4
3 times	22	5	27	0.1
Total	71	19	90	3.18

Source: primary Data 20018

The calculated chi-square was 3.18 which was less than chi-square in the table which is 7.815 at probability level of 0.05 (5% significant level) hence it showed that the expected results were consistent with the observed results since they were significant. Therefore it was deduced that the number of exams taken by a peer group together had a positive influence on girl student

academic performance. From the study the researcher concluded that the student's interaction and discussions improves student's academic performance. The findings were in line with other previous findings by Foster, (2006) who asserted that apart from peer effects related to the classroom environment, students belonging to the same class tend to study and revise the subject together, so generating important externalities. Clearly, friendly teacher/student relationships boosted academic achievements of all members of a class. In fact, students who continually do exams in the same session with one another are often students who study together, sharing course material and information. We looked at the students teaching environment as having had a big influence to their performance and we used this information to define a second measure of peer group quality, which weight the abilities of each student according to the number of exams taken together.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of findings as deduced by the study, it also presents Conclusions, Recommendations of the study and areas for further research.

5.1 Summary of findings and discussions

On the influence of peer group prior achievement on student academic performance in public secondary schools, The findings revealed that 1.666 chi-square indicated that peer group members who scored 400-500 marks in UCE had a positive influence on girl student academic performance, The findings also show that text book ratio had no significant influence on girl student performance in boarding girl secondary schools with a chi-square of 9.08 at probability level of 0.05 (5% significant level).

Concerning the influence of peer group composition on girl student academic performance in secondary schools the findings showed that little pocket money spend per month had a positive influence to girl student performance with a chi-square of 3.18. The findings also revealed that a rich nor a poor family background had no significant influence on girl student academic performance by a chi-square 8.96. Investigation on the influence of peer group teacher/ student learning environment on girl student academic performance in secondary schools showed that a low number of times counseled influenced the academic performance of girl students by a chi-square of 1.666. The findings also showed that the number of exams taken by a peer group together had a positive influence on girl student academic performance with a chi-square of 3.18.

5.2 Conclusions.

It was deduced that peer group members who scored good marks in UCE had positive influence on girl student academic performance in girl secondary schools. Students seemed to do better in their early stages of Secondary school when their new Schoolmates had a good record of prior achievement. My reading of this result was that there was some form of social interaction between students that promoted higher attainments. And lastly it was asserted that peer group text book ratio had no significant influence on girl student performance in boarding girl secondary schools. Concerning influence of peer group composition on girl student academic performance in secondary schools, The findings showed that little pocket money spend per month had a positive influence to girl student performance.

This showed that low money spent by peers is an important 'contextual' influence on student attainments. It was deduced that neither a rich nor a poor family background had any significant influence on girl student academic performance, the findings were contrary with other findings by (Duflo and Saez 2000) whose reflection seemed very likely that students from rich backgrounds tended to perform better compared to those from poor backgrounds. However, the more interesting possibility is that rich peer group behaviour or attributes could modify individual actions in relation to important social and economic decisions that could affect their life chances – especially achievement in education. Investigation on the influence of peer group student learning environment on girl student academic performance in secondary schools showed that the less the time a student was counseled the more the influence on student academic performance. It was deduced that students learning environment had a positive influence on girl student academic performance.

5.3 Recommendations of the Study

On the basis of the findings and conclusions above, the following section presents the recommendations of the study.

Students and school stakeholders should be made aware of the benefits of peer group prior achievements as it greatly influences academic performance of students in secondary schools, schools administration and other stakeholders should advise the parents on the amount of money to give to their daughters as pocket money as it has influence on the academic performance of the students in secondary schools, school administration and stakeholders should provide good teaching/ learning environment in order to achieve good academic performance De Bartolome, Charles A. M. (1990) Equilibrium and inefficiency in a community model with peer De Giorgi, G., Pellizzari, M., Redaelli, S., (2006), Be as careful of the books you read as of the Degree: Evidence from Tuition Discontinuities, NBER Working Paper, N. 12863.

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