

**PEER GROUP INFLUENCE AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF ADOLESCENT
STUDENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

CASE STUDY: KAPRORON SUB-COUNTY, KWEEN DISTRICT

BY

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research '**Peer Group Influence on Academic Performance of Adolescent Students in Secondary Schools**' represent my own work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete reference.

Sign..........Date.....19/08/2018.....

CHEBET JANEROSE

APPROVAL

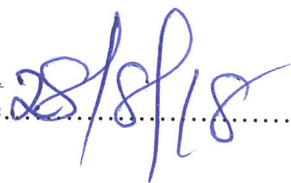
I certify that this research report has met the entire necessary requirement for the award of Bachelors of Arts with Education and is ready to go for further examination with approval as the university.

Mister: LAAKI SAMSON

University supervisor

Signed

Date

A large, stylized handwritten signature in blue ink, likely belonging to Laaki Samson, written over the dotted line for the signature.A handwritten date in blue ink, "28/8/18", written over the dotted line for the date.

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Such work would not be possible single handedly. I therefore want to extend wholeheartedly my deep appreciation to all who in one way or another have stood with me in producing this work. The academic, moral and financial support offered, however small in your eyes, meant much to me.

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I may not mention your contribution here but I do acknowledge whatever you did. To you all I say thank you so much.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents, brothers and sisters, my in-laws and relatives.

I love you all so dearly

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ABSTRACT

This study will investigate on the influence of peer group on academic performance of adolescent secondary school students in kween district, kapraron sub-county. These secondary schools are both private and government oriented. The instruments and methods of collecting data are questionnaires and interview check lists. A total of 144 participants are involved in the study that is to say 120 students and 20 teachers. Qualitative approach is the approach that will be used in the study. The major objective of the study is to establish the extent to which peer group influence academic performance of adolescent students both positively and negatively. It will further investigate on peer relationship, socialization, personality and environment on how they influence academic performance of students in secondary school.

In order to improve students' academic performance in schools, the will recommend guidance and counseling services at schools for purpose of building self confidence. It might help students to cope up with the challenges that are found to be affecting their performance. Additionally, the ministry of education and sports should provide adequate training to teachers on guidance and counseling for them to modify adolescent students' behavior and attitude to develop a good identity.

This will be concern on adolescent students of 12 to 19 (teenagers) of the same race in the same peer groups and should be male and female.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives, and research questions, purpose of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study and the definition of terms used in the study.

Education is central to the development of young people as it prepares them to the world outside and life. As young people go for longer periods in education, as part of natural course of development, peer group influence and maturity is also increasingly coinciding with secondary schooling.

As students (adolescents) reach secondary school, they meet with many students from different places, tribes, families with different attitudes and values, and how they address issues in their societies. A senior one student fast of all is lonely, new to the school and the peer group influence is too much because the student wants to fit into the society (school). However, much as the student comes from a good family and he or she is surrounded by bad people, that adolescent will be influenced negatively while even if the adolescent comes from a bad environment and he or she meets good people he may be changed to be also good.

Social status of the person determines whether he will be won into the group or he will win the group into his side. The socialization level will win many to your side irrespective of whether you are doing bad or good things.

Peer pressure is a big influence today more especially in the youth and adolescents. This negative peer influence can lead them away from fulfilling their purpose, down a road that leads to problems, pain and poverty. However, the right friends will encourage you to greatness and success.

Matt and Angela Catinella in their book faithful friends published in 2005 said that life is a collection of friendships. Friendship plays an important role in our lives more especially in the lives of adolescents. They influence how you think, act and who you become. Friends will either

make you succeed or to fail. They finally said that adolescents should be taught how to develop friends who will make them succeed rather than to fail.

Self esteem is also based on self image and therefore most times people or adolescents should change from the inside. When their attitudes change about themselves, other's attitudes will also change toward them. They fast stop and think of consequences, make right decisions, avoid trouble, encourage others to do good things, respect and trust elders and at the end will gain privileges.

1.2 BACK GROUND TO THE STUDY

Understanding the nature, magnitude, significance and implication of peer group on adolescent academic performance or education, is crucial and important for the productivity of educational processes and organizational design of school systems in Ugandan educational sectors and that of the globe. A peer is a person who has the same age or social status as others. A peer group is both a social and primary group of persons who have similar interests, beliefs and background. The members of this group are likely to influence the person's behaviors and beliefs. Peer groups contain hierarchies and distinct patterns of behavior. This group is the first social group outside home environment a child attempts to gain acceptance and recognition. Peer group is an important influence throughout one's life but are more crucial in developmental years of childhood and adolescence. These peers always emulate their mates in whatever form of behavior they exhibit, particular that which interests them.

Socialization refers to change in behavior, attitudes and having their origin in interaction with other persons and those which occur through personality. A child learns more through interaction with the peers. Adolescence is characterized by changes in the physical body, thinking and problem solving as well as emotional and sexual maturation (santrok 2008)

Adolescents have always been exposed to peer influence but the kind of influence has changed over the past years. Peers can influence everything from what they wear; to whether or not an adolescent engages to drug abuse or other related delinquent behaviors (Temitope and Christy 2015)

Peer influence on academic performance is an important issue because if society and education related professionals understand the issue surrounding negative peer influence, they are more likely to prevent it and be more adequately prepared to help a teenager facing negative aspects of peer pressure.

Bush master. (1990) says that peer group established in schools is an example of private communities which formulate distinct norms and thought patterns which usually orient their members attitude towards school.

The term adolescence is a Latin word which means growing up. It is the period of transition in which an individual transforms from childhood to adulthood. A person may ask this question “is education important to me”. Teachers, parents and peers all provide adolescents with suggestions and feedback on how they should think and how they should behave in social situations. The kind of group a particular child identifies with sometimes determines the kind of influence the group will have on his or her academic performance. Children if not checked often associate with bad friends and this could have great negative impact on them.

According to ward, stocker, and Murray ward (2006), academic performance refers to the outcome of education, the extent to which students and teachers or institution have achieved on their educational goals. It can be the ability to study and remember facts and being able to communicate ones knowledge verbally or written on paper (Answers, 2010).

The blame for poor academic performance among secondary school students is attributed on negative peer influence among others like poor time management, family background, poor teacher attitude and motivation, absenteeism and poor learning facilities. Educational activities are geared towards ensuring that students achieve mastery of educational objectives. In schools, the extent to which those objectives have been achieved is determined by the level of peer influence as students success is reflected in their academic performance.

1.3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Reports have shown that there has been a down trend in academic performance of adolescent students in Ugandan secondary schools in general and kween district in particular. These poor performance to some extent point accusing fingers to negative peer group influence as a

responsible factor for poor academic performance. This factor is suspected for luring of adolescents into engaging in negative habits like excessive drinking of alcohol, engaging in unhealthy sexual behavior, early marriages, which distract them from academic pursuit.

The government of Uganda made great effort to ensure that adolescent education is provided to adolescent students at school. They ensure that there is guidance and counseling in schools under the supervision of senior woman teacher and senior man teacher or counselors. Despite the great effort made by government to ensure awareness among adolescents, still the influence of peer group on adolescent students has a greater magnitude on behavior and decision making. It also affects academic performances negatively.

The constitution of Uganda propounds in Act 30 that all persons have a right to education, in Act 35 subsection 2, says that a child is entitled to basic education which shall be the responsibility of the state and parents of the child, also sub section 6 says that children are entitled to be protected from social or economic exploitation and shall be employed in or required to perform work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with their education or be harmful to their health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development

The study made by Mlawasa (2014) revealed that poor performance at schools was greatly influenced by negative peer group since it plays a significant role in determining student's academic performance either positively or negatively.

Thus due to the above, the ways and manners by which peer group influence affects adolescents academic performance needed to be researched and documented.

1.4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.4.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To find out how peer group influences academic performance of adolescent students in kaproron sub-county, kween district.

1.5 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To determine the relationship between peer group influence and academic performance of adolescents in kapraron sub-county, kween district.
2. To examine how peer learning environment influence academic performance in kapraron sub-county, kween district.
3. To investigate the social effects of peer group on academic performance in kapraron sub-county kween district.

1.6. HYPOTHESIS

- There must be a relationship between peer group and academic performance of adolescent students in secondary schools.
- They should be at least high negative level of peer influence among the adolescent.
- Peer learning environment must be one of the factors affecting the academic performance of adolescent students.
- Peer group composition or interests affect performance both positively and negatively.

1.7. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The major significance of the study is to find out both positive and negative effects of peer group influence on academic performance and there after provide appropriate solution to the problem stated.

1.8. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

CONTENT OF THE STUDY

The study will be carried out in secondary schools in kapraron sub-county, kween district. The schools selected are due to the poor performance by adolescents in secondary schools. The study is restricted to ordinary level students more especially senior two and senior three students because it is expected that peer influence is high in these two classes. The student's selected are both male and female. The academic performance delimited to the students cumulative average score of the school subjects in a session or term.

GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE

This study took place in Kween district, Kapchorwa sub-county in eastern Uganda and specifically Sebei sub region. Kween district borders Kapchorwa district in the west and Bukwo in the east. It is found in the slopes of Mount Elgon meaning that the place is fertile soils which favors agriculture and that meaning that most students engage in farming even in school days thus affecting their performance. The population of this district is 103 thousand persons. They have few schools which are private and government oriented. The performance is fair in advanced levels and poor in ordinary levels.

TIME SCOPE

This study got started in early April when the introduction and the objectives were approved. The second part was the approving of chapter two which is the literature review and the methodology. In late July the researcher went out to the real field work.

In general the study took four months that is April to July and then submitted in August

1.9. STUDY AREA OF THE STUDY

The study took place in eastern Uganda more specifically Kween district Kapchorwa sub-county. The population is 144 which include both teachers and students. Four schools which are both private and government oriented (three mixed schools and one single girls' school).

1.10. DEFINITION OF TERMS USED IN THE STUDY

1. Adolescence: is the transitional period of physical and psychological development between childhood and adulthood or maturity.
2. Performance: refers to the outcome or result of something you do or how well or badly you do something.
3. Academic: is something based on subjects that are taught to develop the mind rather than to provide practical skills?
4. Socialization: is the process by which people especially children learn to behave in a way that is acceptable in a given society for example in school, and among friends or peers.
5. Education: is a process of teaching, training and learning especially in schools, colleges to improve knowledge, attitudes and skills.

6. Interaction: this refers to the situation or occurrence in which two or more people, objects and events act upon one another to produce a new effect or is the conversation and exchange between people.
7. Peer group: these are individuals with same age, social status, and interests, background which can influence each other positively or negatively.

1.11. CONCLUSION

Peer group influence is a serious issue that is worth talking about. Therefore every individual should be concerned about it. Secondary students are affected most by the friends they hang out with. Making friends is a priority that determines the whole life of a person in the choices him or her makes, up to the careers he/she will join after school.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the literature review of the study which is the theoretical, conceptual and empirical perspective. Literature refers to all papers, treaties etc published in academic journals on particular subjects or can be the collection of creative writing of a nation, group, people, or culture. Review on the other hand is the second or subsequent reading of a text or artifact.

2.1 THEORETICAL STUDY

This part exposes the theories propounded by others concerning the problem stated.

Social control theory, this theory was propounded by Hirchi (1960). According to him social control refers to the societal and political mechanism which regulates individuals and group behaviors, leading to conformity and compliance to the rules of a given society, state or social group (Hirchi 2002). According to the theorist, he believes that exploiting the process of socialization and social learning builds self control and reduces the inclination to indulge in any bad behavior. The theory stipulated that ties or bonds which lead adolescents in conformity to family, school and other aspects of societal beliefs serve to diminish adolescent propensity for deviant behavior.

The theory believes that anti-social behaviors' occur only when such bonds are weakened or are tied to and have a stake in their wider community they will voluntarily limit their propensity to commit deviant acts.

In socialization, this formation of bond between individual and the society comprise of four elements which are attachment, commitment, involvement and beliefs. Attachment refers to the effective ties which adolescents form with significant others like parents, teachers who tend to present among others optimal conformity to socially accepted behavior. A committeeman refers to the aspiration or goals which an individual set for self. Adolescents with well defined goals tend to minimize propensity for delinquent behavior because they

consider that they have much to lose as opposed to their counterparts who engage in drinking, smoking, dating and other criminal acts. Beliefs are the extent to which an individual accepts the moral values of society. And the extent to which an individual accepts these moral values determines the individual's propensity for delinquent behaviors. One of the key elements of social control is developing the individuals bond to conventional society though involvement in conventional activities with peers, away from parental supervision and providing the opportunity for delinquency. Free time was found to protect adolescents from problem behaviors whereas peer time places adolescents at a risk for those same behaviors. In addition, there was less delinquency when the adolescents spent more time on home work.

In line with this study, adolescents that conform to the rules established by significant people like parents, teachers, peers and the like which make them to be acceptable is society will reduce his propensity to deviant behavior which eventually enhances his or her academic performance. However, an adolescent could experience rejection from his peers and also compelled by them to conform against his wish. This type of treatment could make him or her loose his or her identity as a unique person. This may also affect the adolescent's personality and performance in school. This theory relates to this study because time factor spent with family is a protective factor against solving adolescent academic performance.

Wright in 2002 developed a theory which he named the Pickle Jar Theory. He used the analogy of an empty jar to think about how adolescents make use of available free time on daily basis. Pickle Jar Theory believes in scale of preference. This implies that making plans for all the activities and arranging them according to the most pressing. If we plan our schedule, we can get important work done while still leave time for small things which make life fun. The theorist is of the view that if adolescents should plan and make judicious use of their time, they can get important work done while still leave time extra-curricular activities.

The approach according to this theory will make adolescents learn how to keep time and use it appropriately in beneficial activities like reading books and having academic discussions. He is in the view that time management should be without balance meaning that adolescents should ensure that time is allotted to the most important things before the less important like gossiping, playing, drinking and activities come later.

In line with these, time fully managed leads to productivity. Any student who manages well time does well in academic performance. On the other hand, when adolescents fail to manage and plan for their time well, it can lead to un productivity and poor performance in school. For instance a student who spends his time in relationship with bad peer group will in most cases perform poorly or less participative in class.

2.2 REVIEW OF EMPIRICAL STUDIES

ADOLESCENTS AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Okoye (1992) carried out a study on the relationship between socio-economic status of parents and academic performance of students in some selected secondary schools in Oulu division of Imo state. Destructive source was used in carrying out the study. The data was analyzed using mean standard deviation and a t-test. The level of statistic significance considered for accepting the hypothesis of a tenable was 0.005. He came up with the conclusion that there is no significant difference between the performance of students of high economic status and those of low socio economic status. Students from low economic status work harder with little resource at home to perform well in school. This study is related because it points out that academic performance is dependent upon hard work and determination rather than family background.

Aryana (2010) carried out a study on self esteem in relation to student's academic performance in the pre-university students. It aimed at identifying whether there is a difference in academic performance of boys and girls. The result was that there is a significant positive relationship between self esteem and academic performance. The result suggests that high self esteem is an important factor and it strengthens the prediction of academic achievements in students. Therefore, the review is important to this study because self esteem is a result of personality which influences academic performance.

Izundu (2005) carried out a research on relationship between home environmental factors and academic performance of secondary school students. The researcher found out that come from low socio-economic status/families that are unstable does not affect their academic performance adversely. The researcher found out that there is a significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of students.

Akabogu (2002) investigated on the effect of location of school on secondary student achievement in reading comprehension. The study specifically is to find out whether urban or rural school, effect performance of studies in secondary schools (260) students of Enugu education zone of Enugu states. The data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation while analysis of co-variance was used to test the null hypothesis of 0.05 Alpha levels. Akabogu found out that location of school has significant impact on the reading of comprehension of students. Relating to the study to the present, adolescents whose houses are located in urban areas because of good roads will comes early to school to settle down for effective learning to take place than adolescents that came from rural areas

Uwaifo (2008) carried out a research on the effects of family structure and parenthood on academic performance of Nigerian university students. A consisted of 240 students drawn from six randomly selected faculties in Ambrose, Ali university, Ekpoma, Endo states. The adopted form of "Guidance and counseling achievement grade form" was used for data collection and data collected were subjected to statistical analysis using the t-test statistical method. The three null hypothesis formulated was tested at 0.005 level of significance. The result showed that significant difference existed between the academic performance of students from single-parent families and those from two-parent structures. In relating the present, any in-school adolescent that comes from single family should not allow the family background to affect his or her academic performance.

Similarity and socialization

According to Ryan (2000) an important component of interpersonal attraction and selection of friends is similarity. Brown, Mounts, lambron and Steinberg (1993) also suggested that adolescent peer group members select each other based on similar characteristics just as adults do. It is unusual for a young person to select a friend who smokes or drinks if they do not. Even when non-using adolescent has a best friend who drinks or smokes, research has found it that peer influence was relatively small and was mediating by family factors, such as parental monitoring (fischhoff, Cromwell, and kipke 1999). This finding is further evidence that parents can still have strong influence over sons and daughters.'

In the early years, Cohen (1983) suggested that whether socialization results in reinforcement or change depends on initial similarity. If individuals are similar on a particular characteristic, then the pressure will remain the same on that characteristic. On the other hand, if individuals are different on a particular characteristic, the pressure will be for change to occur so that similarity may be achieved. Therefore, it is impossible to select friends who are similar to you in all their character traits. Ryan (2000) stated that it makes sense because all that collection focuses on the characteristics that are most central to an individual's ideology. In general, adolescents over estimate how similar they are to their friends and perception are vital to influence.

As far as socialization is concerned, there are two important dimensions when friendships are formed that influence the socialization process. These two dimensions are similarity and value. Similarity is any given characteristic effect the pressure that exists among peers to change. High similarity results in pressure to change. This information corresponds with the similarity principle that we like people who like us. Cohen (1977) found evidence for similarity regarding use of drugs, alcohol, cigarettes' and also issues concerning academic outcomes. Best friends have been found to be similar in regard to frequency of cutting class and time spent on homework.

Motivation, engagement and academic performance

Another important aspect of adolescent peer group is motivation. The difference between motivation and engagement is that motivation focuses on student's cognition underlying involvement in school work like behavior. Ryan (2002) found that peer groups were influential regarding changes in student's instructive value for school as well as achievement. The peer group was not, however, influential regarding changes in student's utility valued for school. It was found out that associating with friends who have a positive effect towards school enhanced students own satisfaction with school, whereas associating with friends who have a negative effect towards school decreased it (Ryan 2000). Landau (2002) stated that an adolescent expectancy and success was the primary predictor of academic effect and grades. A sense of belonging and support of a peer group was also significantly associated with these outcomes.

Athletics, dating, and sexual behavior, as well as alcohol, drugs and tobacco use have been seen to be important to friendship choice in adolescence. For some adolescents, other interests may compete with or take charge over similar academic motivation and engagement as criteria for selecting a peer group. This could put an adolescent's motivation and engagement in school in a precarious position (Ryan 2000). Through selection, some adolescents may place themselves in peer group situations that support or foster their achievement-related beliefs and behaviors. Others may place themselves in contexts that weaken achievement-related beliefs and behaviors.

Peer learning environment with developmental risks

Ungar (2000) conducted qualitative research to examine the construct of peer pressure in relation to mental health for 41 high risk adolescents. The participants were ages thirteen to eighteen and they had all been in therapy within the twelve months. Two groups participated. The first group included twenty-one white adolescents, twelve females and nine males, from several small urban centers in south western Ontario, Canada. The second group included four females and sixteen males from long-term treatment program in young offenders, closed-custody facility in eastern Canada, seventeen were white and three were native Canadians. Participants in the study were voluntary. A small stipend was paid to the participants to ensure the inclusion of less altruistic youth and emphasize the distinction between this research and a therapy.

Each teenager participated in interviews lasting one hour and half hours. The interviews included open ended questions, covering issues related to adolescent mental health, relationships, competences, coping strategies and experiences of power and control.

The researchers in the study concluded that for many adults, the concept of peer pressure leads to the belief that peer groups or environment demands conformity to its norms, which may include delinquency. The notion that adolescents experience anxiety or frustration when unable to follow "the dictums of their peers" supports the idea that teens sacrifice personal agency. However, the high-risk youth in the present study provide a different perspective. The peer group was experienced as a forum in which to participate in the collective construction of both a group and individual's identity.

Positive peer influence on performance

Contrary to popular belief, not all peer influence is negative. Spending more time with peers does not always translate into trouble. Peer influence can, in fact, keep youth participating in religious activities like going to meeting and playing on sports teams, even when they are not leaders (Lingren 1995). The peer group is a source of affection, sympathy, understanding and a place of experimentation. This factor is consistent with Bowlby and Leary's "belonging hypothesis" in that there is a genetically based need to belong. The basic premise is that people of all ages seek inclusion and avoid exclusion. Influence in these primary peer groups can vary from joining the track team or drama club to motivation, engagement and achievement in algebra class.

Students define themselves by the group with which they affiliate. Values that are important to most adolescents include; school learning and achievements, social activities and whether or not to be engaged in delinquent activities (Landau 2002). Fischhoff, Cromwell and Kipke (1999) cited a systems theory perspective, arguing that groups that provide a lot of positive feedback encourage action to maintain good feelings. These good feelings are often reported in peer groups, and actions could lead to engaging in risky behaviors to keep the fun going. According to Ryan (2000), students who were identified as "jocks popular" perceived more pressure in the area of school environment and less pressure towards misconduct than students identified as "draggles-toughs".

Negative peer group influence and what causes it

Negative peer influence does exist and should be the concern of education-related professionals. One aspect that may contribute to the continuation of negative peer groups is passive acceptance of peer-group structure. Teachers expect that students will behave in certain way that is consistent with peer group affiliation and consequently make no attempt to intervene with the structure. In other words, teachers passively accept the "brain-nerd" differentiation.

According to Alderman (2000), an additional drawback is the ability of tracking. This involves separating students based on their achievements at school in the past. Ability of grouping forces isolation among students different achievement level, with each group

forming its own peer culture. Low achievers are isolated from models of achievement motivation and more effective strategies to succeed. In essence, ability tracking forces students to form groups that may result in the best outcome. High achieving students can benefit from interacting with low achieving students and vice versa.

Lastly, effort may be diluted when adults use stereotypical images either to excuse or blame students on social identity categories and crowds to which they belong. A teacher may excuse poor student's test performance on basis of family lifestyle or instead blame family background for the performance. Standards should be upheld and consequences for not performing well on a test are not always a bad thing. Otherwise, the students may blame the situational factors and give up trying.

Combating negative peer group influence on academic performance

Diminishing negative peer influence involves walking a fine line between taking an authoritative role and stepping back to allow individual freedom. Teachers can increase their personal awareness of adolescent social systems by investing more energy in getting to know their students and groups to which they belong. In the classroom, teachers should avoid making achievement a game of winners and losers. One step to accomplish this is to use criterion-based grading instead of grading a curve. Harnessing the power of peers can be important to create a school climate supportive to academic excellence (Burns and Darling 2002).

Adults should abandon the stereotype of peer groups because is always negative, promoting positive peer relations, and perhaps setting up parent education programs for families with teenagers. Establishing peer intervention programs could target teens with poor social skills and aggressive tendencies. These groups could teach appropriate ways to communicate, deal with anger and even raise self-esteem.

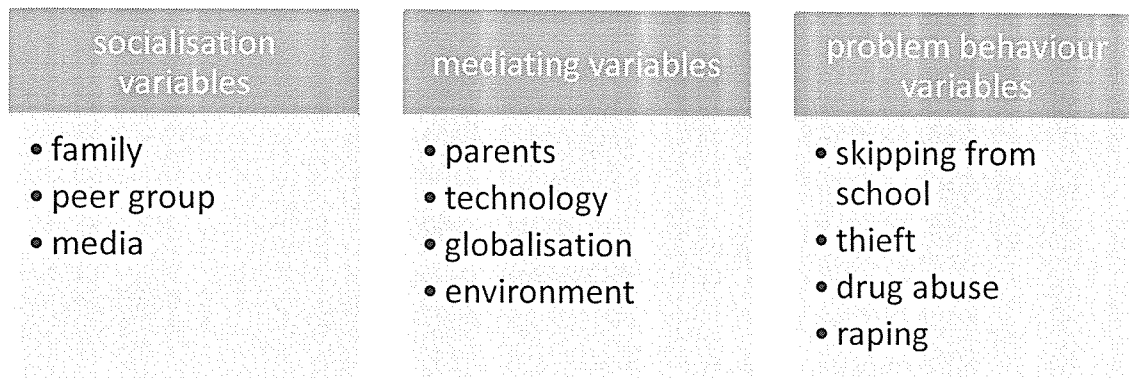
Parents can praise smart choices and compliment adolescent's accomplishments. It is important for parents to get involved and know their children's friends, which could be accomplished by inviting them home, carpooling and asking appropriate questions, like who will you be with?, is a traditional way but crucial to parents. They should encourage them to participate in profitable activities like school clubs, church youth groups and scouts.

Overall, parents should never underestimate the value of quality time spent together. If parents have a busy schedule and cannot be physically present, they should still make their presence felt in the home through phone calls, personal notes or other forms of communication. Black (2002) stated that teenagers with close ties to their parents were far less likely to become delinquent or suffer depression than students who felt distant from their families. The bottom line is that it is of utmost importance for parents to be tolerant, patient and show unconditional love during teen years, and to realize that adolescence is not terminal, it just feels like it.

2.3 CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK

Learning occurs through modeling and imitation. Adolescents learn good and bad behaviors from parents, fellow peers, family members and media through imitating modeling Santrok (2008). The model in this study examines the relationship between variables and its outcomes.

The family is a primary socializing agent. That is, it is within family relationships that a child learns first his first lesson in social living, social roles and social behaviour in the general way of life in society. Using the family as his reference group, he learns some of the patterns of behavior perceives some realities and acquires habits (Godia and waiyaki 1986). In his peer group, the child learns adult values such as co-operation, responsibility, following rules, honesty, fair play and good roles and acts as a source of information for its members. Media is a socializing agent among adolescents as well as adults. It can influence an adolescent to form identity (Brown 1990). Adolescents use media to learn sexual and romantic scripts (Brown et 2000). This can lead to early unwanted pregnancy hence school dropout.



2.4 Summary of literature review

Peers influence each other more heavily in the early teen years. 14 year olds are more than twice more likely to engage in risky, self-destructive behavior than 18 year olds. The theory is that by 18, a young man or woman is more autonomous and has clear aspirations' of where he or she wants to go and how to get there. Consequently, if risky behavior doesn't fit into the equation, an older teen is able to pass easily without feeling bad. However, the pressure to fit in' for someone entering high school is tremendous. Solution to the social problems is important in upward mobility and concrete beliefs which may be pessimistic about educational success.

The critical point of measuring the influence of peers is to identify the real peers. Keeping in mind that students spend a relative part of their time in class and it seems to be a credible assumption that their class mates are a good proxy of their peer groups. However, in some cases there may be significant variation between classes within school-grades and hence the assumption that school peers are a good proxy of class mates can be quite strong.

The available literature suggests an existence of peer influence on academic performance both positive and negative. The literature has, however, dealt with the issues within an individualistic cultural framework. Much can be expected from a similar treatment of the

issue within a collective cultural context. Hypothetically, a greater impact is more likely to result from peer relationships that belong to the same collective background, since the impression of holism is more substantial and basic. This study aims at investigating the impact of peers on academic performance of secondary students in social life.

In closing, the researcher would like to further stress the point that not all peer influence is negative. Peer groups are essence, necessary for adolescent growth and development. As such, educators should praise the positive choices that students make in regard to peers and work to combat the negative ones. It is obvious that peer groups are not a fad or a trend, they are around to stay. For this reason, peer group influence is a phenomenon that will be studied throughout time.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapters the conceptual and theoretical issues relating to peer group influence on academic performance were examined. The literature review showed that peer group influence had both positive and negative effects on academic performance as they impact on their education and future career opportunities. In this chapter, the research methodology used in the study concerns the effects of peer group on academic performance.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is the plan for carrying out a research project. It outlines the methods and plans of the study. It answers what the study is about, the place, type of data collected, and period of time and sample design with the technique of data collection.

The study used case study research design. Case study design was used because it focuses on one particular study area or issue such as region or one school, even if this has been criticized as descriptive and takes more of a qualitative than quantitative approach. For instance, Kothari (2004) asserts that case study design is needed because it facilitates the smooth sailing of various research operations. Kothari ibdi adds that the case study design allows participants to speak for themselves, thereby enabling the situation to be seen through the eyes of the participants. Creswell (2009) maintains that case study attempts to know more about a little known. In this study, the design helped the researcher to obtain and interpret meaning and experiences of informants and respondents in the natural setting.

3.3 APPROACH

The study applied qualitative approach despite their philosophical difference. Qualitative was the major approach because it implied an emphasis on the qualities of entities, process and meaning that cannot be experimentally examined (Kothari, 2004). Data from the interviews were qualitative in nature. A qualitative approach was used to collect broad and quantified data from questionnaires. Creswell (2009) argues that quantitative approach measure

attitudes and information which is analyzed using statistical procedures. The combination of qualitative and quantitative in this study was necessary because each had advantage and disadvantage (Bryan, 2006)

AREA OF STUDY

The area of study refers to the geographical place where the study is going to take place from. The study is going to take place in sebei region, kween district, and kaproron sub-county. The area is in eastern Uganda.

3.4 POPULATION

De Vos (2003) defines population as the entire collection of persons, objects which are potentially available for observation Dale (2006) describes a research population as a large collection of individuals or objects that is the main focus of a scientific investigation. A research population is also known as a well-defined collection of individuals known to have similar characteristics.

The target population for this study was students (adolescents) and educators from kween district in kaproron sub-county. Educators were selected as respondents because of their perceptions, views and opinions regarding peer group influence in their classes.

3.5 SAMPLING AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

Sampling refers to the process of collecting elements from a population in a way that sample elements selected represent a population. Sampling has many types for example random, systematic, purposive, cluster and accidental

Sampling helps in saving time, money and makes work easy and, gives complete findings with proof that the study or research scientific.

Kothani (2004) defines sampling as a process of selecting number of participants from a large group of people. The sample study included 120 students, 20 teachers (2 discipline and two academic teachers). The study had a total of 144 participants. The study utilized purpose sampling techniques to select the students because it was selective in nature. Thus the respondents and informants who met the specific needs of the study were selected. For

instance, participants who freely express their ideas were given first priority in order to collect valid and valuable data.

Kothari found out that the organizers of inquiry deliberately choose particular respondents and informants to ensure sample will be typical or representative of the whole. In this study, teachers were chosen/selected for two reasons; first, the experience they have on teaching adolescent students and secondly, for they were the ones who evaluated students academic performance at school.

According to Mays and pope (2000) simple random sampling entails defining the population to be studied, determining the sample size, assigning each member of a population a number giving each individual equal chance of being selected for inclusion in the sample. In this manner, a sufficiently random sample of the population becomes representative of a large whole.

For the purpose of this study 20 educators were selected randomly as described above. This provided the researcher with sample of students which is considered as an adequate sample for research project for bachelors level

By using our different schools, it is affordable to the researcher and gives opportunity to the researcher to obtain direct information from the subject that has direct impact on them with the theme of the study in all places used.

The spread of the subjects across the places used are below

N/0	SCHOOL	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
1	Chemwania high school	15	15	30
2	Kween modern	15	15	30
3	St. Micheal girls	15	15	30
4	Cheminy standard high	15	15	30
TOTAL	4	60	60	120

3.6 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The study utilized two instruments to increase the probability of getting highly accurate, valid and reliable information. Interview and questionnaires were used to collect data.

INTERVIEW AS A RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Interview is a formal meeting in which a researcher asks someone questions in order to find their opinion on a specific topic or study. Interview was for teachers who teach in classrooms, discipline masters and academic teachers. Semi-structured interviews were used because of the nature of the topic and the type of information needed. Kothari (2004) maintains that the instruction leads to more information and greater depth. In addition to that, Enon (1995) finds out that this instrument is flexible and the information collected is detailed.

QUESTIONNAIRE AS A RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

A Questionnaire is a prepared question form submitted to respondents in order to obtain information about a given topic. Questionnaires were for students. A structured questionnaire containing questions with alternative answers from which the respondents select the most suitable answer were used. There were both open and closed-ended questions. Open-ended questions were used to allow respondents to elaborate fully their own lines of response.

Thungu et al (2004) found out that the instrument is cheap and appropriate because it reduces biasness that may occur with other methods or instruments.

This instrument was prepared in two parts. Part one contained questions on personal data about each respondent while part two contained other set of items on different factors which can influence the learners in reference to peer group.

The questionnaire was scaled on 4 main points of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD) and Disagree (D); the respondents were asked to indicate the extent extend of their agreement with the given items.

3.7 VALIDITY OF THE INSTRUMENT

Validity refers to the quality of a method or measurement to be able to indicate the degree to which the measure reflects the underlying construct that is whether what purports to measure.

The instrument used for data collection was validated by the researcher to check the face and content validity of the instrument. Her criticisms and recommendations were effect to produce a final draft.

3.8 Reliability of the instrument

The split-half method of testing reliability was to ensure the reliability of the instrument. The scores gotten were correlated using person product moment correlation co-efficient and a co-efficient reliability of 0.69 was arrived at.

3.9 Administration of the instrument

The administration of the instrument for the study was carried out by the researcher by taking the questionnaires to the respondents concerned with the instrument on how to fill them.

Each subject was told at the aim of the researcher to ascertain the influence of peer group on academic performance of students more especially adolescents

The students filled the questionnaires independently and later retrieved individually.

3.10 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTON

The data collected from the subjects will be analyzed using percentage based on the 4-points scale. To analyze the responses from subjects, simple percentage method was used.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyzes the data collected from administration of questionnaire s with simple percentage method of data analysis and findings are discussed below in the tables.

- ✓ Does peer group influence the academic performance of students in secondary schools?

Table 1: I prefer to study with my friends

Option	Response	Percentage
Strongly Agree	48	48
Agree	29	29
Disagree	23	23
Strongly Disagree	20	20
Total	120	120

Table 1 above shows that 48 of the respondents strongly agreed, 29 agreed, 23 disagreed and 20 strongly disagreed.

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that secondary school students prefer to study with their friends because they can interact freely and they are used to each other.

Table 2: I discuss my learning problems with friends

Option	Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	45	45
Agree	30	30
Disagree	25	25
Strongly Disagree	20	20
Total	120	120

In table 2 above, 46 respondents strongly agree, 30 agree, 25 and 20 disagree and strongly disagree respectively with the statement which shows that students like to discuss their learning problems with peers.

Table 3: The group work helped me to boost my grades

Option	Response	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	40	40
Agree	25	25
Disagree	20	20
Strongly disagree	35	35
Total	120	120

From table three above, where 30 strongly agreed, 22 agreed, 18 disagreed and 30 also strongly disagreed, which shows that group work help to improve student's grades because in the group various students are involved like the most intelligent students in class.

Table 4: I love to make friends with intelligent students

Option	Response	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	35	35
Agree	35	35
Disagree	22	22
Strongly disagree	28	28
Total	120	120

From table 4, 35 strongly agree and 35 just agree, 22 disagree and 28 disagree strongly

Based from the above results, many secondary students love to make friends with intelligent persons because intelligent friends make you think more rather than the others.

Table 5: my friend's assistance in group discussion assisted to improve my grades

Option	Response	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	26	26
Agree	50	50
Disagree	22	22
strongly disagree	22	22
Total	120	120

From table 5 shows that 26 strongly agreed, 50 agreed and 22 disagreed while 22 also strongly disagreed.

Hence, it can be concluded that assistance by peers in group discussion helps to improve student's grades because even in this groups they can ask questions rather than in class and sometimes the nature of teachers who are so tough.

Table 6: The upper grade of my friends helps me to work harder

Option	Response	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	45	45
Agree	35	35
Disagree	25	25
Strongly disagree	15	15
Total	120	120

From table 6 above where 45 strongly agreed, 35 agreed and 25 disagreed while 15 strongly disagreed, it can be deduced from the results that secondary school student are encouraged to work harder because of upper grade performance of their friends and because they want to fit in the same peer group.

- ✓ Does the economic status of peer influence their learning and academic performance?

Table 7: my friends' parents are educated

Option	Response	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	10	10
Agree	10	10
Disagree	25	25
Strongly agree	75	75
Total	120	120

From table 7 above, 10 respondents strongly agreed, 10 agree and 25 disagreed while 75 strongly agreed meaning that most students have friends with parents who are not educated because it is village level not town.

Table 8: I hate to make friends with students from poor families

Option	Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	10	10
Agree	15	15
Disagree	60	60
Strongly agree	35	35
Total	120	120

Table 8 above shows that 10 respondents strongly agreed that they hate to make friends with students from poor families, 15 of the respondents agreed with the statement, 60 of the total respondents disagreed while 35 strongly disagreed.

Therefore from the results above it can be concluded that most adolescent students in secondary school have friends from all categories irrespective of being rich or poor because intelligence does not discriminate.

Table 9: I like to associate with friends from rich families

<i>Option</i>	<i>Responses</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Strongly agree	40	40
Agree	45	45
Disagree	25	25
Strongly disagree	10	10
Total	120	120

From the table above 40 strongly agreed, 45 agreed and 25 disagreed while 10 strongly it can be concluded that students like to associate with rich families.

From the table above, it can be concluded that most like to associate with students from rich families because they want to benefit from the social status of them.

Table 10: I borrow text books from rich friends

Option	Responses	Percentages
Strongly agree	35	35
Agree	45	45
Disagree	20	20
Strongly agree	20	20
Total	120	120

Table 10 above shows that 35 of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 45 agreed and 20 disagreed while 20 also strongly disagreed which indicated that students in secondary school borrow textbooks from their rich friends.

This can be concluded that most adolescents from poor background like to borrow books from rich friends because they usually don't have money.

Table 11: I have every necessary textbook

Option	Response	Percentage
Strongly agree	10	10
Agree	15	15
Disagree	40	40
Strongly disagree	55	55
Total	120	120

From the table 11 above where 10 of the respondents strongly agreed to having every necessary textbooks, 15 agreed to the statement, 40 disagreed while 55 disagreed strongly that they do not have necessary textbooks, thus from the results above it can be concluded that secondary school students do not have necessary textbooks.

Table 12: my intelligent friends are from rich families

Option	Response	Percentage
Strongly agree	15	15
Agree	35	35
Disagree	30	30
Strongly disagree	40	40
Total	120	120

From table 12 above where 15 respondents strongly agreed, 30 agreed and 30 disagreed while 40 strongly disagreed can be concluded that most high school students have peers who are not from rich families.

✓ Do parents show interest in knowing the peer group associations of their children?

Table 13: my parents know most of my friends

Option	Response	Percentage
Strongly agree	30	30
Agree	40	40
Disagree	25	25
Strongly disagree	25	25
Total	120	120

From the table 13 above, 30 strongly agreed that their parents know their friends, 40 agreed and 25 disagreed while 25 also strongly disagreed.

Note: that the greater percentage was for females who agreed and strongly agreed therefore from the results it indicates that most females have friends known to their parents.

Table 14: my parents do not like my movement with friends

Option	Response	Percentage
Strongly agree	15	15
Agree	40	40
Disagree	45	45
Strongly disagree	20	20
Total	120	120

From the table above 14, 15 of the respondents strongly agreed, 40 also agreed and 45 of the respondents disagreed while 20 strongly disagreed with the statement which indicates that most parents do not like the movement of their children with peers more especially during night hours.

Table 15: my parents like me to many friends

Option	Response	Percentage
Strongly agree	50	50.
Agree	40	40
Disagree	20	20
Strongly disagree	10	10
Total	120	100

From the table above 15, where 50 of the respondents strongly agreed that their parents love them to many friends, 40 also agreed and 20 disagreed while 10 also strongly disagreed that their parents love them to have many friends.

Hence, it can be ascertained from the figures that parents love their children to have many friends or associate with peers.

Table 16: my parents encourage me to move around with students who are intelligent

Option	Response	Percentage
Strongly agree	45	45.
Agree	35	35
Disagree	20	20
Strongly disagree	20	20
Total	120	120

From table 16 above which shows that 45 of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 35 of the respondents also agreed and 20 of the respondents disagreed while 20 strongly disagreed with statement.

It can thus be concluded that parents encourage their children in secondary school to move around with intelligent students.

Table 17: my parents encourage me to study with my friends

Option	Response	Percentage
Strongly agree	45	45
Agree	35	35
Disagree	22	22
Strongly disagree	18	18
Total	120	120

The observation from table 17 shows that 45 of the response strongly agreed with the statement, 35 agreed that their parents encourages them to study and 22 disagreed while 18 strongly disagreed with the statement.

Finally, the researcher concluded that parents encourage their children in secondary schools to study with their friends.

Table 18: my parents teach me how to relate with friends

Option	Response	Percentage
Strongly agree	26	26
Agree	45	40
Disagree	35	35
Strongly agree	14	14
Total	120	120

Table 18 above shows that 26 of the total respondents totally agreed that parents teach them how to relate or associate with their friends, 40 of the respondents agreed and 35 of the respondents disagreed while 14 of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

It can thus be concluded that most parents teach their children on how to relate with friends.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is concerned with the conclusion, educational implications for further studies and summary of the study. It gives priority to the details of major findings of this study as earlier postulated in the research questions.

Learning does not occur in isolation but through interaction with certain factors one of which is peer group, which a child interact with will definitely affect learning. On the peer group ensures positive or negative learning of a student.

The extent to which peer group determines the academic ability of students has been investigated in this study revealed that a dull student may become study inclined when he finds himself in the group that encourages effective learning. The study also revealed that when students are not well monitored they may fall in bad groups. However, the study has revealed the fact that students associated in groups with students of the same age and ethnic background. The study has also shown that a high percentage of students are more interested in relating to their friends than to their parents and teachers.

This may be as a result of attitude of the parents and teachers. It is indicated that in the finding that teachers may be able to use peer group effectively for classroom interaction and participation. The peer group could also be used in group to motivate students' class achievements.

A).Educational implication

The findings of this study revealed the following on education:

1. In order to change students' performance positively, more attention should be devoted to their relationship with classmates both in classroom and outside.
2. A child who is not brilliant may do better in school if he is accepted by the group that is study inclined.

3. Most students from high and middle socio-economic status homes have high standard of education performance and they should be encouraged to associate freely with the rest of the students from poor homes in orders for these children to gain and have access to what their elites have to improve their educational performance.

B).Recommendations

Based on the findings from the study, a number of recommendations could be made as follows.

- i. Teachers should understand that the peer group is an important factor in child's learning and therefore should use it to encourage learning.
- ii. Teachers should use peer groups as study groups to bring out effective learning and classroom interaction. The teacher must neither be too strict nor too permissive so as to encourage good teacher-student relationship.
- iii. Students should endeavor to form or join groups that are study inclined and encourage learning that their learning would be effective or affected properly.
- iv. Parents should ensure that their children are well monitored and they should encourage them to have friends that would have positive influence on their learning both at home and at school.

The peer group influence is a very important consideration in learning, so further efforts must be made both by parents, students and teachers alike to ensure that it is effectively used to improve learning.

c).suggestions for further studies

- a) The study should be extended beyond kween district. If this could be done, it would make further revelation on peer group relationship and its influence on academic performance of students in schools.
- b) That the study should be replicated using interview and observation techniques for data collection, because it was observed that in few of the questionnaire items, some of the respondents declined true comments.

D).summary of the study

The study was designed to find about peer group relationship and its influence on the academic performance of students in school. The researcher has three research questions and questionnaires were administered to the secondary schools. Four schools were used as sample in the area kween district.

The result of the data analyzed can be summarized thus:

- It is evident that the peer group that a child form or moves with influences his/her performance also feels free to discuss their peers.
- Also, through the research questions, it was discovered that students are pleased to make friends with other students from rich families and the rich students are pleased to associate with fellow students from poor homes.
- Finally, the result of the findings also show the interest of parents in monitoring the peer group association that their children move with especially the female children.

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QUESTIONNAIRE SHEET

College of education, Kampala international university
Department of arts with education, questionnaires for students

Dear respondent,

The purpose of this questionnaires is to collect data for my research work titled “peer group influence on academic performance of adolescent students in secondary schools” A case study of the schools in kween district, kaproron sub-county.
Your sincere response to the questions will be highly appreciated and every information will be given a confidential treatment.

Yours sincerely
Chebet janerose

SECTION A

Fill the gaps with your information

Date.....
age.....

Sex.....
Class.....
Religion.....
Tribe.....

SECTION B

Tick () any of the 4-points rating scale to indicate your level of agreement: 4-points scale is (SA) strongly agree, (A) agree, (D) disagree and (SD) strongly disagree.

To be filled by students.

A. Does peer group influence the academic performance of secondary school students?

SN		SA	A	D	DS
1.	I prefer to study with my friends				
2.	I discuss my learning problems with my friends				
3.	The group work helped me to boost my grades				
4.	I love to make friends with intelligent students alone				
5.	My friends assistance in group discussion assisted me to improve my grades				
6.	The upper grade of my friends encouraged me to work harder				

B. Does the economic status of peer influence their learning and academic performance?

SN		SA	A	D	SD
1.	My friend's parents are educated				
2.	I hate to make friends with students from poor families				
3.	I like to associate with friends from rich families				
4.	I borrow textbooks from my rich friends				
5.	I have every necessary textbook				
6.	My intelligent friends are from rich families				

C. Do parents show interest in knowing the peer group association of their children?

SN		SA	A	D	SD
1.	My parents know many of my friends				
2.	My parents do not like my movement with friends				
3.	My parents love me to have many friends				
4.	My parents encourages me to move around with students who are intelligent				

5.	My parents encourages me to study with friends				
6.	My parents teach me how to relate with friends				