STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT ROLES AND PERFORMANCE OF UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION SCHOOLS IN MOYO DISTRICT: A CASE STUDY OF MOYO TOWN COUNCIL

Taban Simon Benson[1],
Kaggwa, R. Victoria Tamale[2],
John Paul Kasujja[3i]
[1]School of Education,
Nkumba University,
Entebbe, Uganda
[2]Senior Lecturer,
Department of Foundations and Curriculum Studies,
School of Education, College of Education and External Studies,
Makerere University,
Kampala, Uganda
[3]Senior Lecturer, PhD,
Department of Humanities Education,
School of Education,
Nkumba, University,
Entebbe, Uganda

Abstract:

This study investigated stakeholder management roles and the performance of Universal Primary Education (UPE) schools in Moyo District. The study sought to examine the role of the District Education Office in the performance of UPE schools, to find out the extent to which headteachers contribute to the performance of UPE schools and to assess the contribution of parents in the performance of UPE schools in Moyo Town Council. The study used a cross-sectional survey research design with both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The study used 92 respondents selected using simple random and purposive sampling techniques. Data was analysed descriptively and thematically. The findings revealed that the District Education Office's role is to mobilize resources, pay school fees through a capitation grant, train, employ and pay teachers, and construct classrooms, among others. The findings also revealed that, although the government certainly put some effort into advancing education for all by introducing UPE through providing education funds, many shortfalls still exist in terms of equity and quality of the provided education. In addition, headteachers play important roles in the supervision of lesson plans, schemes of work, content delivery, teachable tools and class tools, which are very important in improving performance further despite their low involvement in

[i] Correspondence: email tabansimon22@gmail.com, rosettekaggwa@gmail.com, jonpkasujja@gmail.com

decision-making; parents have the mandate of providing scholastic materials, school uniforms and basic requirements such as the feeding of their children during school time. The study recommended that there is a need for a deliberate effort by the government to encouraging the parents of their triple role in supporting their children in schools, there is also a need for a proper needs assessment prior to the allocation of available funds, such that, the few available funds are allocated to where there is more need; this will help to improve the delivery of education services. Lastly, there is a need to ensure that headteachers regularly perform supervision roles so as to instill commitment and hard work, which would, in turn, lead to improved teachers' and pupils' performance in UPE schools. Parents should, therefore, give positive encouragement to their children to perform better academically.

Keywords: stakeholder, management, performance, universal primary education and Moyo District

1. Introduction

Ideally, Universal Primary Education was initiated to provide the facilities and resources to enable every child to access and remain in school until the primary cycle of education is complete, make education equitable in order to eliminate disparities and inequalities, ensure that education is affordable by the majority of Ugandans and finally, reduce poverty by equipping every individual with basic skills (Policy Brief 10, Inter-Regional Inequality Facility report 2006). This was intended to be achieved by 2015. The intention was for all school-age going children who enroll in schools to complete primary education. According to a Thematic Paper MDG 2 (2017), there is an indication that many children who enroll in primary one do not complete primary seven, and this is a similar case in Moyo Town Council. According to Moyo District Development Plan (2019), there has been poor performance due to low infrastructural support by the government, lack of instructional materials, the socio-cultural environment such as negative traditional attitudes and practices, poor attitude towards formal education among most parents as well as a high pupil-teacher ratio are the major root causes of poor performance. If this trend continues then Universal Primary Education may not realize its objectives, and illiteracy will continue to be a significant problem in the district as well as the whole nation. The current study, therefore, was intended to establish what stakeholders such as government, parents, community, headteachers and teachers are doing to enhance the retention of children in Universal Primary Education schools for the success of Universal Primary Education in Moyo Town Council, Moyo district.

1.1 Background
In the last three decades, the world has witnessed shifts in views on the extent to which the state should provide and control education and other services to its citizens. As part of education and public sector reforms, many countries across the globe have chosen to

decentralize the administration and financing of education services at regional, local, and school levels (Opande, 2013).

Globally, in Britain, the Conservative Party's manifesto for the 1987 national election contained proposals for four major reforms, each of which had implications for the management of schools and a shift in the centralization-decentralization time towards self-management. It entailed a national core curriculum and control over the school budget to be given to governing bodies and headteachers of all secondary and many primary schools within five years. At the same time, allowing state schools to opt out of Local Education Authority (LEA) control with grants from the national government being made directly to the schools. The School Management Committee (SMC) then allocates resources according to the needs of the school level (Caldwells & Spinks, 2008).

The British Reform Act of 1988 gave way to great devolution of power to individual governing bodies. The school management plays a great role in formulating all policies in schools and leaves the day-to-day administration of every school to the headteacher. The general responsibilities of school governors in Britain include the establishment of the educational needs and priorities of the school, allocation of funds, monitoring of the impact of decisions taken and evaluation of the effectiveness of the programmes undertaken (Cave and Wilkinson, 2012).

In the United States, public education is a state responsibility. According to Dupuis, Musial, and Hall (1994), public schools are organized into similar schools which have related purposes. However, a substantial level of community control has been achieved with the creation and empowerment under state law of locally elected school boards, which have the responsibility for schools' affairs.

Regionally, educational management in Kenya's primary and secondary schools is the responsibility of the School Management Committee. The Kamunge Report (2016) recommended that stakeholders be appointed from among the persons who have qualities of commitment, competence and experience. Opande (2013) carried out a study on the influence of school management on public primary schools' performance in Migori district, Kenya that revealed that the SMC had not coordinated and supervised well the provision of necessary learning materials like textbooks, furniture and classrooms. Most of the SMC members were found to be ignorant of their roles as far as academic matters were concerned since the majority of them were either semi-literate or illiterate and were unable to make appropriate decisions which translates into better education (KCPE) results.

In Uganda, according to Passi (2015), SMCs were established by the state government after independence from colonial rule in an attempt to reduce the influence of churches on primary education and establish its own administrative system. In 1998, with the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE), SMCs were reconfirmed as the statutory organs at the school level and represent the government and thus formally remain in control of decentralized education (Government of Uganda, Ministry of Education and Sports, 1998).

Universal Primary Education was introduced in January 1997 in Uganda, and it owes its origin to the United Nations Millennium Development Goal (Ezenne, 2014), one of which sets out to curb the illiteracy rate of youths in developing countries by 2015. It is worth noting that the idea of implementing UPE, however, was first conceived at the 1990 "Education for All" (EFA) world conference that was held in Jomtien, Thailand, (Ezenne, 2012). And, Uganda was a signatory at this conference and committed to reaching this goal through a "Government White Paper on Education, 1992". The implementation of 'EFA' took off in January 1997, when primary school tuition in Uganda's public schools was waived by the Government (Kasente, 2010).

Following the introduction of Universal Primary Education, Uganda registered a substantial increase in the gross enrolment of pupils in primary schools from 3.1 million in 1996 to 6.1 million in 1997, 7.5 million in 2007 and over 8 million in 2010 (Ssewamala, *et al.*, 2011).

However, despite an increase in the enrolment of pupils in primary schools, academic performance has dramatically declined in schools. Learning achievement as measured by competency in numeracy or literacy has been on the decline throughout the implementation of UPE. For example, based on test scores administered under the National Assessment of Progress in Education (NAPE) in 2012, only 46% of male and 36% of female grade-six pupils obtained the desired level of proficiency in numeracy. By 2016, the corresponding rates had declined to 26% and 15% respectively (UNEB, 2017). Annual Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) and National Assessment of Progress in Education (NAPE) results reflect poor performance by the pupils in rural UPE schools.

The school stakeholders in Uganda are mandated to undertake critical responsibilities in the proper management of the schools. However, these stakeholders have not effectively carried out their roles in terms of coordinating school programs and policy-making towards pupils' progress. The government has not performed its responsibilities to their expectations, and some headteachers and teachers forget about their existence and refuse to accept them as part of the management system for local schools. While some of the stakeholders compete with the better-known, better-established, and resourced Parents, Teachers Association (PTA), this aspect has undermined their level of effectiveness. This study seeks to examine the stakeholder Management roles and performance of Universal Primary Education (UPE) schools.

This study was guided by the systems approach theory as proposed by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy in 1956. The theory states that a system is a set of interconnected and interrelated elements directed to achieve specific goals. This theory views an organization as an organic and open system composed of many sub-systems. As a system, an organization is composed of a number of subsystems. All these sub-systems operate in an interdependent and interactional relationship. The various subsystems or stakeholders of an organization are linked with each other through communication, decision, authority, responsibility, relationships, objectives, policies, procedures and other aspects of coordinating mechanisms.

The ultimate influence of stakeholders plays a leading role in the performance of pupils, to ensure that the various partners in the school education system relate well so as to attain good results. This theory also implies that if the management relates well with school stakeholders: school administration, teachers, parents, community and local leadership by establishing a good school environment that supports conducive teaching-learning conditions, good communications about school programs and children's progress, participation in decision making, providing the necessities that fathom the learners' academic excellence, then there would be good academic achievement by the child. For better pupils' academic achievement in Moyo District to be realized, the various sub-systems in the Universal Primary Education system must work as a unit. The government, school administrators, teachers, and parents must all be linked as a unit for improved teaching-learning conditions so as to enhance academic achievement.

The study focused on the relationship between stakeholder management roles and performance. In this context, a stakeholder management role is a means to achieve the ideal output, while the learners' academic achievement is the ideal outcome. Waris (2018) defines stakeholders in terms of education as *"someone who has a vested interest in the success and welfare of a school or education system"*. This includes all parties that are directly affected by the success or failure of an educational system, as well as those indirectly affected". In this research, stakeholders include Ministry of Education and Sports officials (MoES, Director Basic and Secondary Education, Commissioner Secondary Education, Education Officer-in-charge of Board of Governors), Chairpersons BOG/PTA, headteacher, teachers, and learners. Through their participation, they have an impact on the learners and the success of the school system.

According to Adeolo (2013), stakeholder management is the process of devolution of power and authority by significant stakeholders to perform responsibilities in the administration, monitoring, evaluation and review of policy issues for sustainable goal-oriented governance to achieve set standards and quality outcomes. In schools, therefore, stakeholder management roles include instructional policy formulation, managing learners' classroom discipline policies, settling learning issues, planning, organizing and leading, among others.

Performance, on the other hand, is the accomplishment of a given task measured against preset known standards of accuracy, completeness, cost, and speed. In terms of schools' perspective, performance in the assessment of a pupil's achievement is evaluated by the mark or grade that he/she attains in tests or examinations done at the end of the topic, term year or education cycle (Kalule, 2006). Kalule further explained that the scores and grades that each learner obtains measure the degree of academic achievement. This means that the learners' output in terms of grades, scores on tests and internal and national examinations reflect his or her academic achievement.

Moyo District is located in the Northwestern corner of Uganda in the West Nile sub-region. The district is bordered by South Sudan to the north and east, Adjumani District to the south, across the waters of the White Nile, Yumbe District to the west, and Obongi District to the southwest. The South Sudanese State of Central Equatorial and

Eastern Equatorial form the northern border, and a road runs from Moyo to the Town of Kajo-Keji in Central Equatoria State. There are 68 Universal Primary Education schools in the district. All of these schools go up to Primary Seven and annually have candidates who sit for the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) and Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) to determine their level of academic achievements.

The performance of the candidates presented by these UPE schools has always been poor based on the Uganda National Examinations Board results. UNEB (2017) PLE assessment report Moyo district had a total of only 43 (10.4%) out of 413 candidates who obtained division one in 2016 PLE results released by UNEB. The same report ranked Moyo among the worst-performing PLE schools, with a total of 370 (89.6%) out of 23 primary schools not registering any candidate scoring first grade. This implies that there is a need for vigorous effort to improve the schools' performance in order to enhance learners' academic achievement.

Moyo is endowed with many UPE schools in almost every village, which offers a place for every child to have an opportunity to get a good education that will lead him or her to a higher level of education in life, but this is becoming a problem because of management issues hence low academic achievement due to poor grades. Most of the PLE candidates score fourth grade, third grade and failures (UNEB report 2017). The report points to a crucial problem that schools face in terms of outcomes that can be pointed to as a management problem as in the school setting; the School Management Committees are tasked with the duty of overseeing that the school objective is realized and measured in terms of pupils' academic performance. Based on the real situation in Moyo District, as evidenced by the annual Primary Leaving Examinations results from the Uganda National Examinations Board, there is an urgent need for stakeholders to rise and take responsibility by coming up with collaborative strategies to boost the declining UPE performance.

Table 1: PLE performance trend of Moyo District for the last 10 years (2013-2022)

Year	G1	G2	G3	G4	GU	X	Total	% Total Pass	% Fail
2022	56	773	591	262	215	16	1911	88.7	11.3
2020	46	690	521	237	96	8	1598	94	6
2019	47	768	453	234	58	5	1565	96.3	3.7
2018	34	893	996	763	204	14	2904	92.9	7.1
2017	50	1001	722	553	356	76	2758	84.3	15.7
2016	57	845	587	295	152	19	1865	90.8	9.2
2015	34	731	700	244	152	9	1870	91.4	8.6
2014	70	907	387	143	44	92	1643	91.7	8.3
2013	72	1016	384	143	45	11	1671	96.6	3.4
2012	117	1090	263	97	28	28	1614	97.1	2.9

Source: District Education Office Moyo, June, 2023.

The table indicates that enrollment increased from 1598 in 2020 to 1911 in 2022, the PLE results have been the worst in the last 5 years, with only an 88.7% pass rate and a failure rate of 11.3%. Many factors affected the failure rate, due to the dropout of learners during

the two-year Covid-19 lockdown that led to rampant early marriages, high repletion rate, increased early teenage pregnancies and substance abuse among boys in Moyo district and Moyo Town Council inclusive. Out of close to 3878 enrolled P.1 in 2016, only 1911 reached P.7, of which 16 candidates did not sit for final examinations.

2. Role of the District Education Office in the performance of UPE schools

The successful implementation of UPE programs relies on effective management and support at various administrative levels. The district education office plays a pivotal role in ensuring the performance of UPE schools. This literature review aims to explore the multifaceted responsibilities of the district education office and its role in the academic performance of UPE schools.

According to a study conducted by Maboe (2019), district education offices are responsible for implementing and coordinating educational policies at the local level. They engage in strategic planning to ensure that UPE schools have the necessary resources, infrastructure, and trained teachers to deliver quality education. This includes establishing school improvement plans, creating guidelines for curriculum implementation, and facilitating the alignment of school activities with national educational goals.

The crucial role of district education offices in monitoring and evaluating the performance of UPE schools has been emphasized by Levinson (2017). District education offices conduct regular assessments to identify areas of improvement and provide necessary support. Through school visits, classroom observations, and assessments, they ensure compliance with quality standards and identify professional development needs for teachers, allowing for timely interventions to enhance teaching and learning outcomes.

Habibullah (2018) highlights that district education offices are responsible for organizing and facilitating professional development programs for teachers. They offer workshops, training sessions, and mentoring programs to improve teaching methods, pedagogical skills, and subject knowledge. By providing teachers with continuous professional development opportunities, district education offices contribute to enhancing instructional quality in UPE schools.

The role of district education offices in overseeing the development and implementation of the curriculum in UPE schools has been underscored by Rwenge (2019). District education offices ensure that the curriculum is relevant, up-to-date, and aligned with national educational objectives. They provide guidance to teachers on effective instructional practices and facilitate the integration of innovative teaching methods to enhance student engagement and achievement.

According to Najjumba (2020), district education offices are responsible for conducting student assessments to monitor progress and identify learning gaps. They develop strategies for remedial education, early intervention, and support services to ensure all students receive adequate assistance. Additionally, they coordinate efforts to

address the diverse needs of students, including those with disabilities or from marginalized communities.

Adebisi and Ugwoke (2018), emphasize the importance of effective resource allocation and management by district education offices. They are responsible for budget planning, procurement, and distribution of instructional materials, textbooks, and other resources. District education offices work to ensure equitable distribution and address resource gaps across UPE schools, thereby providing a conducive learning environment for students.

Maboe (2019) highlights that district education offices act as intermediaries between schools, communities, and other stakeholders. They promote community engagement by organizing meetings, awareness campaigns, and involving parents in school activities. By fostering stakeholder collaboration, district education offices enhance the overall support system for UPE schools, leading to improved student outcomes.

In addition to policy implementation, district education offices also play a vital role in policy advocacy and leadership. They engage with policymakers at higher administrative levels to advocate for resources, reforms, and policy changes that positively impact UPE schools. District education offices provide leadership and guidance to school administrators and teachers, ensuring effective implementation of policies and fostering a conducive learning environment.

According to Habibullah (2018), district education offices utilize data analysis to inform decision-making processes. They analyze student performance data, attendance rates, and other relevant indicators to identify trends, gaps, and areas for improvement. By making data-driven decisions, district education offices can allocate resources effectively and implement targeted interventions to enhance UPE school performance. Collaboration with external agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is essential for improving UPE school performance, and district education offices play a pivotal role in facilitating such collaborations. Rwenge (2019) highlights that district education offices form partnerships to access additional resources, expertise, and support for schools. Collaborative efforts with NGOs and other agencies contribute to innovative approaches, improved infrastructure, and enhanced teaching and learning practices in UPE schools.

3. The extent to which headteachers contribute to the performance of UPE schools

Meador (2013) asserts that a good school head is one who always leads by example, is positive and enthusiastic, has high energy, initiative, tolerance for ambiguity, a sense of humour, analytical ability, common sense and has a hand in the day-to-day activities of the school, and listen to what their constituents are saying. For the purpose of this study, only four (4) school heads' roles are discussed in detail; these are the strategic vision of the school development, school administration, supervision of the teaching process and the relationship between the school and the community.

3.1 Strategic vision of school development

According to Reh (2013), a vision is an overriding idea of what the organization should be. Often, it reflects the dream of the leader (school head). A vision must be sufficiently clear and concise that everyone in the organization understands it and can fulfill it with passion. Recent research findings define vision as a realistic, credible, attractive future for an organization. Let us dissect this definition. In the first place, a vision must be realistic by being meaningful to the school. This means that vision must be somewhat specific rather than a vague idea about the future. Tatum (2013) asserts that vision has to be relevant to those who are involved in reaching that ultimate goal. This means that teachers and all who have a stake in a school must recognize the potential of the vision and be committed to helping it come to pass. Furthermore, a vision must be attractive by making sure that all parties involved can identify some benefit from pursuing the vision.

3.2 School administration

Handy (as cited in UNESCO, 2011) continues that most of the school heads in community secondary schools are in a difficult position since they are expected to improve students' academic performance in a period of lessened resources. In spite of the complexity of problems surrounding the majority of school heads, very little attention has been taken to address issues relating to their appointment, training and support. Most countries continue to appoint heads from within the ranks of senior classroom teachers with little or no preparation for the onerous and complex task of school headship. Despite all these, most of the researchers insist that the school headteachers must be the main change agent in the school by promoting the increase of capability of the teaching through administering all school activities to secure the best outcomes. Personal attributes of the school head may be a determinant for achieving success in school performance, as well as in securing collaboration and commitment among staff.

In enumeration, Mpondo (2014) argues that the key function of Heads of schools is to secure and operate effective allocation, monitor and control the use of resources. A school head is expected to prepare the school budget that covers different responsible areas for the fulfillment of educational objectives, specifically the teaching and learning process. However, recent studies such as Mbise (2012) discovered that, unlike heads of private schools, heads of public schools in Tanzania, such as community secondary schools, have no real powers over staff. They cannot hire, relocate, reward, punish or fire them. They also have limited resources to assist in creating conducive living and working environments for the staff.

In the same vein, Bennars (2015) continues that a school head is supposed to identify resources needed to support the implementation of school policies. Schools need to have a laboratory, apparatus, library, textbooks, teaching aids, chalk, notebooks and teacher's reference books. Also, the permanent construction and improvement of school buildings, painting, repairing walls, windows, doors, and school furniture, fencing, clearing, and landscaping are other duties of the school head. The school head should make sure that all buildings meet the required standards. Also, he must control the

equipment and materials by overseeing their acquisition, storage and use. Therefore, in order for the school head to supervise the resources well, he/she must make sure that school equipment and materials are updated annually and inspected periodically to achieve the school objectives.

3.3 Management of resources

Campbell *et al.* (2009) cited one of the headteachers' task areas as management of physical resources. This includes the provision of all the relevant physical facilities, ensuring their proper use and maintenance, and authorizing and approving the purchase of all teaching/learning equipment in consultation with the departmental heads. The researchers also noted that most schools which performed poorly spend less money on the purchase of teaching/learning resources. In dealing with physical facilities, a headteacher has to bear in mind where to house the educational program and the population to be served by the facility and ensure that financial resources are readily available for the school expansion.

Jekanyifa (2012) outlines that it is the role of the school head to make sure that educational inputs which are of vital importance to the teaching of any subject in the school curriculum are available. One of them is teaching materials that enable the teaching and learning process to go smoothly. Examples of teaching materials include chalkboards, textbooks, apparatus, and handbooks. Most of the recent studies insist on the use of teaching materials as it would make discovered facts glued firmly to the memory of students.

Moreover, UNESCO (2011) insists that the school head needs to ensure that delegated tasks are actually carried out on time and in a proper manner. Therefore, the school head supervises and oversees the work of others in the school. Through meeting senior management, individually or in groups, feedback on the administrative functioning of the school, including curriculum implementation and development, will be recognized. By being active within the school, visiting classes, and talking to teachers, pupils and parents, he/she will be informed about the school community, its people and events. Problems can often be prevented, simply because the school head keeps, as they say, his or her 'ear to the ground' at the same time setting a good example to others of self-discipline.

3.4 Contribution of parents on the performance of UPE schools

Parents could be the best teachers at home; this could be possible when they solve problems concerning their children's behavior in school matters. Furthermore, schoolteachers expect parents to serve as teacher-aids and volunteers in the classroom; good teachers should always regard parents as the first teachers at home. Hill and Tyson (2009) emphasize the parents' important role in education when stating that "*early adolescence is often marked by changes in school context, family relationships, and developmental processes, and therefore parents have a responsibility to monitor students' progress at home and*

school". Parents have a great obligation to organize extra learning material to use at home and to arrange a private tutor to supplement their children's learning.

Parents play a significant role in the academic achievement of primary and secondary students. According to Van Deventer and Kruger (ibid), the enhancement in school academic performance, reduced dropout rates, a decrease in delinquency, and a more positive attitude towards the school are the benefits of parental role in education. Van Deventer and Kruger (ibid) state that, "the 'phenomenon' parental involvement has a significant effect on the quality of learners' experience of teaching and learning in the school, and on their (academic) results.

Furthermore, parents are financial donors who help raise school funds and serve as classroom volunteers. Parents could develop a 'neighborhood watch' committee for the schoolchildren who walk to and from school. Parents may champion school special events; and work on projects such as helping Grade 12's revision in high-impact subjects such as English, Mathematics, and so forth (St John, *et al.*, 2008). The formation of parents' clubs could be beneficial to the school. Clubs such as 'Dad's clubs' for renovating or repairing the school's physical environment; and 'Mom's clubs' for painting the school to create a suitable teaching and learning environment for their children.

Singh, *et al.*, (2010) identified four components of parental involvement namely; parental aspirations for children's education, parent-child communication about school; home structure and parental participation in school-related activities. It should be emphasized that 'parental aspiration' refers to the parents' hopes and expectations for the child's continuing education, 'parent-child communication' refers specifically to school-related matters, 'home structure' refers to the degree of discipline exerted by the parents to insist on homework completion and to limit potentially distracting activities, for example, watching television, whilst 'parental participation in school' more self-evidently refers to parent support for and participation in school and class functions. Singh *et al.* showed that parental involvement in school activities had no effect on achievement whilst home structure had a slight negative association. Parental involvement in the form of parent-child discussions had a moderate impact.

Darren (2011) also found out that parental aspiration had a powerful influence on achievement both directly and indirectly through discussion. To give some idea of the scale of this influence, it can be compared to the influence of prior achievement. Prior achievement is usually the best predictor of pupils' present achievement. It is a good measure of all the previous effects of family background and the child's abilities. Singh *et al.* showed that parental aspiration was the factor that had the most significant impact on pupil achievement once social class factors had been taken into account.

4. Methodology

The researcher used a cross-sectional survey design with both qualitative and quantitative research approaches because, according to Frankel & Wallen (1996), cross-sectional research describes an existing relationship between variables. It is also

encouraged by Amin (2005) for studies that involve collecting data from a large population. the target population was 120 respondents selected from three (3) different primary schools; headteachers (3), standing committee (7), teachers (40), religious leaders (04), community development officers (2) government officials (10)- including district education officer, district inspector of schools, district sports officer, guidance and counseling and office in charge of special needs of education (SNE) and 54 parents. The accessible population of the study was 92 respondents as (Kothari, 2004; and Guest *et al.*, 2006), stipulate, selected using simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques (Amin, 2005). Data was analysed descriptively and thematically.

5. Findings

To examine the role of the District Education Office in the performance of UPE schools in Moyo Town Council, the researcher sought to examine the role of the District Education Office in the performance of UPE schools in Moyo Town Council. Different statements were posed to the respondents and the responses are presented below.

5.1 The District Education Office effectively allocates financial resources to support the needs of UPE schools in Moyo Town Council

The respondents were asked whether the District Education Office effectively allocates financial resources to support the needs of UPE schools in Moyo Town Council. The results attained are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: The District Education Office effectively allocates
financial resources to support the needs of UPE schools

Response	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly disagree	30	33.3
Disagree	30	33.3
Agree	21	23.4
Strongly agree	9	10.0
Total	**90**	**100**

Source: Primary data (2022).

According to the findings in Table 1, the smallest percent of the respondents, 33.4%, agreed with the statement, while 66.6% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. This is an implication that the district education office does not effectively allocate financial resources to support the needs of UPE schools in Moyo Town Council.

The highest disagreement implies that a significant majority of the respondents believed that the current allocation of financial resources by the district education office is inadequate or insufficient to meet the needs of UPE schools. This implies a perceived lack of funding or misallocation of resources, resulting in a negative impact on the educational needs and quality of UPE schools in the area.

5.2 The District Education Office provides regular and comprehensive professional development programs for teachers

The respondents were asked whether the District Education Office provides regular and comprehensive professional development programs for teachers. Results attained are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Providing regular and comprehensive professional development programs for teachers

Response	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly disagree	13	14
Disagree	20	22
Agree	40	44
Strongly agree	17	20
Total	**90**	**100**

Source: Primary data (2022).

Findings from Table 2 show that the most significant percentage of the respondents, 64%, agreed, while 36% disagreed with the statement. This means the District Education Office provides regular and comprehensive professional development programs for teachers.

In support of the above argument, a headteacher from Moyo Town Council Primary School was quoted:

"In my experience, I have witnessed the positive impact of these programs on our teaching staff. By attending regular training sessions, our teachers have gained valuable insights into the latest pedagogical approaches, subject content updates, and innovative teaching methodologies. This has enabled them to deliver quality education to our students and keep pace with the evolving educational landscape (Headteacher, Moyo Town Council Primary School, 30th June, 2023)

5.3 Collaborating with UPE schools to develop and implement curriculum guidelines and educational policies

The respondents were asked whether the District Education Office actively collaborates with UPE schools to develop and implement curriculum guidelines and educational policies. The results attained are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Collaborating with UPE schools to develop and
implement curriculum guidelines and educational policies

Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly disagree	8	9.0
Disagree	13	14.4
Agree	39	43.3
Strongly agree	30	33.3
Total	**90**	**100**

Source: Primary data (2022).

According to the findings in Table 3, the majority of the respondents 76.6%, agreed, while 23.4% disagreed with the statement. This means that the District Education Office actively collaborates with UPE schools to develop and implement curriculum guidelines and educational policies. Those who agreed supported the idea that the District Education Office has successfully implemented various initiatives or programs in partnership with UPE schools, leading to improved curriculum guidelines, enhanced educational policies, and positive educational outcomes for pupils.

5.4 Ensuring timely and accurate distribution of teaching and learning materials

Another question on whether the District Education Office ensures the timely and accurate distribution of teaching and learning materials and responses is reflected in Table 4.

Table 4: Ensuring timely and accurate distribution of teaching and learning materials

Response	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly disagree	22	24
Disagree	30	33
Agree	20	22
Strongly agree	18	21
Total	**90**	**100**

Source: Primary data (2022).

According to the findings in Table 4, the majority of the respondents, 57%, disagreed with the statement, while 43% agreed. This means that the District Education Office does not ensure timely and accurate distribution of teaching and learning materials.

In support of the above disagreement, the headteacher of Illi Valley Primary School was quoted:

"Based on my experience, I have observed that the District Education Office struggles to ensure timely and accurate distribution of teaching and learning materials. We often face delays in receiving the necessary materials, and at times, the materials provided are incomplete or outdated. This situation has a direct impact on our ability to deliver quality education to our students. We have raised our concerns on many occasions, but the issues persist" (Headteacher, III Valley Primary School, 30th June 2023).

5.5 Conducting regular inspections and assessments to monitor the infrastructure and facilities of UPE schools

Regarding the question of whether the DEO conducts regular inspections and assessments to monitor the infrastructure and facilities of UPE schools, the results attained are presented in Table 5.

Table 4.6: Conducting regular inspections and assessments
to monitor the infrastructure and facilities of UPE schools

Response	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly disagree	18	18
Disagree	24	26
Agree	28	36
Strongly agree	20	20
Total	**90**	**100**

Source: Primary data (2022).

Table 5 showed that the majority of responses were positive; 44% disagreed, and 56% agreed. This means that the DEO conducts regular inspections and assessments to monitor the infrastructure and facilities of UPE schools. The majority agreement, with 56% of respondents agreeing, implies that a significant portion of the respondents agreed that the DEO conducts regular inspections and assessments to monitor the infrastructure and facilities of UPE schools. On the other hand, the disagreement from 44% of respondents implies that a considerable proportion of the respondents have doubts, concerns, or experiences that indicate a lack of effective monitoring and assessment by the DEO.

5.6 Establishing effective communication channels to address concerns and provide guidance to UPE schools

Concerning the question of whether the DEO establishes effective communication channels to address concerns and provide guidance to UPE schools, table 6 illustrates participants' responses.

Table 6: Establishing effective communication channels to
address concerns and provide guidance to UPE schools

Response	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly disagree	22	24
Disagree	30	34
Agree	28	31
Strongly agree	10	11
Total	**90**	**100**

Source: Primary data (2022).

As in Table 6, the largest percentage, 58% of the respondents disagreed with the statement, whereas 42% agreed. This implies that the DEO has not established effective communication channels to address concerns and provide guidance to UPE schools.

The disagreement was supported by the headteacher of Noor Primary School, who was quoted:

"With my five-year's experience, I have identified common areas of miscommunication between this school and the District Education Office (DEO). One of the main issues is the

lack of timely updates on educational meetings and inspections that are just abrupt. We often find ourselves unaware of important changes, which can lead to confusion and inconsistent implementation, making it challenging to align our actions with his requirements". (Headteacher, Noor Primary School, 30th, June, 2023).

5.7 Engaging parents and the local community in promoting the quality and performance of UPE schools

Further still, the question of whether the DEO engages parents and the local community in promoting the quality and performance of UPE schools and the responses were captured in Table 7:

Table 7: Engaging parents and the local community in
promoting the quality and performance of UPE schools

Response	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly Disagree	26	29
Disagree	32	35
Agree	24	27
Strongly agree	8	9
Total	**90**	**100**

Source: Primary data (2022).

Findings in Table 7 indicate that 64% disagreed with the statement, while 36% agreed with the statement that DEO does not occasionally engage parents and the local community in promoting the quality and performance of UPE schools. Respondents felt that the DEO has not implemented proper initiatives or programs that actively involve parents and the local community in supporting UPE schools.

In disagreement, one of the local leaders was quoted:

"From my perspective, there has been limited involvement or interaction between the DEO and our community regarding school-related matters. We rarely receive communication or invitations to participate in activities aimed at improving UPE schools. This lack of engagement makes it challenging for us to contribute effectively and feel like valued stakeholders in the education system" (Chairperson, Moyo Central, Moyo Town Council, 3rd July, 2023).

5.8 The extent to which headteachers contribute to the performance of UPE schools in Moyo Town Council

This was the second objective of the study; the results attained are presented in the subsequent Table 8.

Table 8: The extent to which headteachers contribute
to the performance of UPE schools in Moyo Town Council

Question	SD	D	NS	A	SA
Headteachers ensure that teachers' supervision and	6	12	2	38	32
appraisal is done and with feedback.	6.7	13.3	2.2	42.2	35.6
Headteachers track teachers' lesson plans on daily	0	8	0	42	40
basis and gives constructive feedback	-	8.9	-	46.7	44.4
Procures, stores and supervises the use of school materials,	0	0	6	46	38
equipment and other facilities	-	-	6.7	51.1	42.2
Makes sure teachers work in a conducive atmosphere	8	14	0	36	32
with clear guidance and support	9	15.5	-	40	35.5
Submits records, educational statistics, and data requested	12	20	6	24	28
by the Ministry on a timely basis	13	22	7	27	31
Checks constantly with teachers who have delegated	0	5	5	40	40
responsibility or are indiscipline	-	6	6	44	44
Ensures that all the teachable subjects for every class and	0	6	0	40	44
term is schemed as a way of monitoring syllabus coverage	-	7	-	44	49
SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, NS= Not Sure, A= Agree, SA= Strongly Agree					

Source: Primary data (2022).

Results from Table 8 above show that the largest percent, 78% of the respondents, agreed with the statement, whereas 20% disagreed and 2% were not sure. This implied that headteachers ensure that the teacher's supervision and appraisal are done and with feedback.

Furthermore, results from the table show that 9% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that headteachers track teachers' lesson plans on a daily basis and give constructive feedback and none was not sure, moreover, majority of respondents, 91% agreed which implied that headteachers track teachers lesson plans on a daily basis and gives constructive feedback.

The study results from Table 8 also revealed that none of the respondents disagreed with the statement that headteachers procure, store and supervise the use of school materials, equipment and other facilities; whereas 7% were not sure; however, the highest percent, 93% of respondents agreed. This is an implication that headteachers procure, store and supervise the use of school materials, equipment and other facilities.

Results from the study also show that 24% of respondents disagreed with the statement that headteachers make sure that teachers work in a conducive atmosphere with clear guidance and support; none was not sure, while the majority of the respondents, 76%, generally agreed with the response that headteachers make sure teachers work in a conducive atmosphere with clear guidance and support.

Also, according to Table 8, 35% of respondents disagreed with the statement that headteachers submit records, educational statistics and data requested by the ministry on a timely basis; 7% were not sure; meanwhile, the majority of respondents, 58% generally agreed with the statement, and this implied that headteachers submit records, educational statistics and data requested by the Ministry through the district education office on a timely basis.

Also, the study results contained in Table 8 revealed that 6% of respondents disagreed with the statement that headteachers check constantly with teachers who have delegated responsibility or are indiscipline, 6% were not sure, while the majority of respondents 88% agreed, and this means that headteachers' checks constantly with teachers who have delegated responsibility or are indiscipline.

On the other hand, the study also analyzed whether headteachers ensure that all the teachable subjects for every class and term scheme as a way of monitoring syllabus coverage. Results showed that 7% disagreed with the statement, whereas 93% of the respondents agreed. This means that headteachers ensure that all the teachable subjects for every class and term are schemed as a way of monitoring syllabus coverage.

To complement the results, the qualitative analysis below yielded supplementary findings with the quantitative analysis presented above (Table 8) as presented in the themes below;

During interviews, the headteachers were asked about whether they ensured that teachers' supervision and appraisal were done and with feedback. As they all responded in a similar way, one headteacher revealed that:

"I supervise my teachers at the beginning of term, midterm, and towards the end of term". Another headteacher said: "We have a particular school programme of supervision: for example, per week for particular classes" (Interviewed on 12th September 2022).

Additionally, another headteacher (headteacher for Illi Valley Primary School) revealed that:

"I always ensure instructional materials are used during every lesson, for instance when it is time for mathematics, I ensure that charts, sets and mathematical textbooks are available to all teachers for effective lesson delivery" (Interviewed on 12th September 2022).

One of the headteachers noted:

"As a head of the school, I supervise my teachers any time, in most cases I do it without informing them such that I assess their teaching without any notice. Abrupt visiting make teachers prepared all the time so this makes them smart and deliver content in an organized manner" (Interviewed on 12th /Sep/ 2022)

Similarly, one other headteacher (Moyo Town Council Primary School) revealed:

"I personally visit classrooms during teaching, mark lesson plans daily and schemes of work. I do this to ensure that the right content is delivered and this improves on teachers' organization and classroom management" (Interviewed on 12th September 2022).

Another headteacher, from Noor Islamic Primary School, reported:

*"I always ensure that lessons are conducted and punishment is given to those who try to dodge classes. This has helped in checking on absenteeism cases and therefore slight improvement in performance" (*Interviewed on 12th September 2022*).*

5.9 The contribution of parents in the performance of Universal Primary Education schools in Moyo Town Council

This was the third objective of the study, respondents were asked different questions and interviewed, and the results attained are presented in the following Table 9.

Table 9: The Contribution of Parents in the performance of UPE schools in Moyo Town Council

Questions	SD	D	NS	A	SA
Parents fulfill their responsibilities such as feeding, providing uniforms or medical care as set out in UPE guidelines.	12 13.3%	18 20%	0 0%	34 37.8%	26 28.9%
Frequently and actively participate in the school PTA activities and meetings.	12 13.3%	20 22.2%	0 0%	30 33.3%	28 31.1%
Parents check their pupil's homework books whenever they are home to assess class performance.	10 11.1%	12 13.3%	8 8.9%	30 33.3%	30 33.3%
Parents assist their pupils in doing homework given by their teachers in class and usually sign their books.	24 26.6%	32 35.5%	8 8.8%	18 20%	8 8.8%
Parents usually encourage their children to work hard for good academic performance.	8 8.9%	12 13.3%	10 11.1%	24 26.7%	36 40%
Parents actively participate in school activities aimed at improving performance.	13 13.3%	18 20%	10 11.1%	19 21.1%	30 33.3%
Support awareness raising and other activities directed at parents by explaining to other parents the need for and the importance of education.	10 11.1%	14 15.6%	8 8.9%	28 31.1%	30 33.3%
SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, NS= Not Sure, A= Agree, SA= Strongly Agree					

Source: Primary data (2021).

According to results from Table 9, the above data was computed and the findings revealed that 33.3% disagreed with the statement that parents fulfill their responsibilities such as feeding, providing uniforms or medical care as set out in UPE guidelines; and none was not sure; whereas the majority, 66.7% generally agreed with the statement and this means that parents fulfill their responsibilities such as feeding, providing uniforms or medical care as set out in UPE guideline.

Also, results from Table 9 revealed that 35.5% of respondents disagreed with the statement, while the majority of respondents, 64.5%, agreed. Despite the relative disagreement, this was an implication that Parents frequently and actively participate in the school PTA activities and meetings. Most respondents, especially the religious leaders noted that there is a need for increased parents' sensitization on the concepts of the UPE, this will help the community to understand that the UPE program is not totally free but a cost-sharing arrangement between the government, the community and the parent.

Further, results from Table 9 revealed that 24.4% of respondents disagreed with the statement that parents check their pupils' homework books whenever they are home to assess class performance, and 8.9% were not sure; whereas the majority of respondents, 66.6% agreed, this implied that parents check their pupil's homework books whenever they are home to assess class performance.

Additionally, results from the table showed that 28.8% of respondents agreed with the statement that parents assist their pupils to do homework given by their teachers in class and usually sign their books, and 8.8% were not sure, while the majority of the respondents, 62.1% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. This implied that parents do not really assist their pupils in doing homework given by their teachers in class and usually sign their books.

Also, results from the study show that 22.2% of respondents disagreed with the statement that parents usually encourage their children to work hard for good academic performance, and 11.1% were not sure; while the highest percentage, 66.7% of the respondents agreed with the statement. This means that parents usually encourage their children to work hard for good academic performance.

Also, results from the study show that 33.3% of respondents disagreed with the statement that parents actively participate in school activities aimed at improving performance, and 11.1% were not sure, while the majority of respondents, 55.6%, generally agreed with the statement and this implied that parents actively participate in the school activities aimed at improving performance.

Table 9 further shows that parents support awareness raising and other activities directed at parents by explaining to other parents the need for and the importance of education. 26.7% of respondents disagreed with the statement, and 8.9% were not sure; while the majority of respondents, 64.4%, agreed, this implied that parents support awareness raising and other activities directed at parents by explaining to other parents the need for and the importance of education.

To strengthen the quantitative findings above (table 9), the below qualitative analysis was further made: in an interview discussion with some of the respondents, the following information was obtained;

One respondent, a member of SMC, actually estimates that:

"It's only approximately 30 percent of parents who turn up for such meetings. Respondents also were concerned that the increased attendance of these meetings by female parents could be of little or no consequence since it's the male parents who have the financial power to implement the decisions taken in school meetings. They were also concerned that while some parents are always positive in meetings, implementing the decisions taken is not always easy," (Interviewed on 12th September 2022).

In an interview with the District Inspector of Schools (DIS) and the headteachers of the selected schools in Moyo Town Council, they all opined that:

"Parents are the cause of children's absenteeism during planting and harvesting seasons, market days, weddings and cultural days and that this affects academic performance" (Interviewed on 13th September 2022).

A careful consideration of the findings from the interviews suggests that most parents do not check their children's workbooks and cannot even help their children do the homework, though a few do help. This happened for different reasons; for example, one of the parents from Illi Valley Primary School was quoted:

"Many parents lack the necessary education and are therefore not knowledgeable enough to take on and answer the questions asked, facilities like lighting, furniture, are missing in many of the homesteads, parents lack time because they come back home very late and find children asleep, and some simply have a negative attitude towards education. Some parents want to use their children to do family work during this time when pupils are back home from school" (Interviewed on 13th September 2022).

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that there are areas where the District Education Office (DEO) in Moyo district needs improvement. The majority of respondents expressed concerns about the effective allocation of financial resources to support the needs of UPE schools, the timely distribution of teaching and learning materials, and the establishment of effective communication channels. However, the DEO received positive feedback regarding the provision of regular professional development programs for teachers, active collaboration in curriculum development and implementation, and conducting inspections to monitor infrastructure and facilities. Engaging parents and the local community also received mixed responses. Overall, the study suggests a need for the DEO to address the identified areas of concern to enhance the quality and performance of UPE schools in Moyo Town Council.

The study concludes that when headteachers execute their roles, it statistically increases teachers' frequency and efficiency of making the schemes of work, lesson plans, lesson notes and preparation of learning aids in time. It was also qualitatively observed that effective headteachers' supervision can instill commitment and enhance teachers' enthusiasm to prepare lesson plans, schemes of work, teaching aids, and lesson notes daily. Preparing such pedagogical documents can have a vital role in influencing the learning process. This is because they provide direction towards the attainment of the selected objectives and foster active learning among pupils.

Furthermore, the study showed that there is relatively low involvement of parents in school management, a tendency that undermines good academic performance. This study also revealed that whereas the provision of scholastic requirements to children at school most especially writing materials, school uniforms and feeding, appear to be very significant factors for good academic performance, the findings revealed that parents

have not been fully responsive in availing these requirements to their children. However, the same study findings showed that good pupils' academic performance at UPE schools is inextricably intertwined with active parents' involvement and cooperation with school management.

7. Recommendations

7.1 To District Education Office

The office should develop a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system: Implement a robust system to regularly monitor and evaluate the performance of UPE schools. This should include academic assessments, infrastructure inspections, and feedback mechanisms to identify areas of improvement and provide intended support. Strengthen teacher training and professional development: Design and implement regular and high-quality professional development programs for teachers that address specific pedagogical needs, subject knowledge, and instructional strategies. Provide ongoing support and mentoring to enhance teaching effectiveness. Foster community engagement: Actively engage parents, local communities, and relevant stakeholders in the education process. Establish platforms for regular communication, collaboration, and involvement in school activities to promote a sense of ownership and shared responsibility for UPE schools. Improve resource management and allocation: Enhance financial planning and management to ensure efficient utilization of resources. Develop a transparent and accountable system for resource allocation, considering the specific needs of each UPE school and prioritizing investments that directly contribute to improving learning outcomes.

7.2 To headteachers

It is recommended that regularly, headteachers should not shy away from supervising teachers' schemes of work and lesson plans. This should be emphasized during appraisal sessions to help improve teacher effectiveness and hence student learning. There is a need to ensure that teachers are always supervised daily so as to instil commitment and hard work, which would, in turn, lead to improved teachers' performance in UPE schools. It is also important to note that it is the headteacher's task to always improvise on the instructional materials needed for the teaching process even if funds for the purchase of readymade materials are not available. Headteachers should also ensure that assessment and evaluation of learners become a daily routine. Remedial lessons, exercises, and homework should be given to learners frequently to assess them and identify their weaknesses and strengths.

7.3 To parents

This study therefore recommended that parents ought to be encouraged to attend school management meetings, visitation days and speech open days. Through good management practices, parent-teachers' relations can improve hence leading to good

academic results. Parents also need to create time and a good home environment to check their children's workbooks and assist them with homework to better their academic performance. There is a need for parents, to provide support to schools to have meals either packed or support the school to prepare meals for their pupils.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

About the Author(s)

Taban Simon Benson, graduate, Master of Educational Management, and Planning.
Kaggwa, R. Victoria Tamale, Senior Lecturer, Makerere University, Uganda. B.A. Education (Hons), Masters in Education, PhD (Education).
John Paul Kasujja, Senior Lecturer, History, Department of Humanities Education, Nkumba University, Uganda.
ORCID: orcid.org/0000-0002-6969-5547

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