



# A Review of Church Efforts in Students Academic Performance in the Church of Uganda Founded Secondary Schools

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**Abstract:** Academic performance is key to the success of any education system in a country. The Church of Uganda has been instrumental in supporting education systems in Uganda. It is against this context that this study set out to review of church's effort the ts in the academic performance of students in the church of Uganda-founded secondary schools. The main objective of the study was to review of church's efforts in academic performance of students in church of Uganda founded secondary schools. The study used both qualitative and quantitative research design that involved the use of primary and secondary data. Primary data was purposively collected from 60 respondents. The findings were that much as the church tries to uplift academic performance in her founded secondary schools, it faces numerous challenges that include limited funding to mention but a few. It is recommended that Church of Uganda whose role it to conduct continiuous assessmet should take kin interest in improving the performance of students in its schools by availing continuous trainings to teachers, conducting continuous assemments of learners and availing adequate funding to support the school's academic activities.

**Keywords:** Academic performance, School, Church of Uganda, Education

## How to cite this work (APA):

Aijuka, A. (2023). A Review of church efforts in academic performance of students in the church of Uganda founded secondary schools. *Journal of Research Innivation and Implications in Education*, 7(3), 358 – 370. <https://doi.org/10.59765/gwex6920>.

## 1. Introduction

Schools are social organizations where people come together to exchange learning experiences, and these interactions can have either positive or negative effects on students (Sentamu, m2003). Because of the European Evangelical revival of the 18th century, Western education was introduced to Africa throughout the 19th century. The transformation in missionary activity brought about by this revival helped bring western education to Africa. As a result, missionary societies were established, and they took it upon themselves to spread the faith to the "heathen" Africans. They were also concerned with issue of slave

trade, which they wanted to eradicate (Aardsma,2022). According to Ssekamwa (1997), a new situation arose in Uganda. It was partly responsible for Kabaka Mutesa's invitation of the European teachers to come to Buganda Kingdom in central Uganda to teach his subjects new knowledge and skills, which would help in the civilization mission.

Similarly, Christopher Byaruhanga (2008) noted that education in Ankole Kingdom of Western Uganda started between the negotiations of Bishop Tucker and King Kahaya and Prime Minister Nuwa Mbaguta, though the negotiations took time to yield, in December 1899, Bishop Tucker took with him the two Christian teachers that

Clayton had talked about, namely Andereya Kamyā and Firipo Bamulanzeki and the king promised to support the Christian teachers in their work. In 1990's, many of the Anglican Church founded schools became aided by the government, including schools in St. James Cathedral Deanery-Ankole Diocese. It is one of the fourteen (16) Archdeaconries that make up Ankole Diocese. It has three church founded secondary schools namely Nyakayojo senior secondary school, Kashaka Girls Senior Secondary school and Mbarara High School that aim at imparting Christian values to people especially the youth that would ensure the continuity of faith and training people in all aspects of life. The Diocesan Education Office came up with a number of strategies aiming at uplifting academic standards and performance. Among others include; appointment of Diocesan inspector of schools, annual Diocesan promotional examinations to sub-candidates (S.3 and 5), seminars for head teachers, Chaplains and teachers. However, these strategies impacted less since the academic performance of students in these schools is less than expected. At first before the government began aiding these schools, the academic performance was good because the church recruitment of teachers and head teachers in her schools, religious activities that took place in these schools was in their hands but when the government began aiding these schools, the church stopped doing all these activities in her schools leading to poor academic performance.

## 2. Literature review

This part includes a discussion on the literature related to the area of study to provide insight into the topic under study.

### 2.1 Church's efforts in the academic performance of students in Church of Uganda founded secondary schools

Jesus Christ founded the church so that she could authoritatively speak in His name (Luke 5:16). In his survey about the issues and challenges facing Christian schools, Kasibante and Kiwanuka (2000) stated that "the Christian schools offer holistic education encompassing religious or spiritual, moral, economic and social aspects." The church is obliged, through her schools to promote in the learners a personal spiritual life, a solid grounding in the truths of the Anglican Communion church, recognition and acceptance of moral norms and a vivid sense of social responsibility. Nevertheless, as Carney (2020), contends "religion should be an essential part of educational performance. This justification entails practical training in religious activities such as prayers, attendance of worship and reception of sacrament" Christian education requires

the parents, teachers, religious men and women, and the community, to shoulder its duty.

Bishop Tucker's prediction that the success of the Anglican church's expansion in Uganda could only come from a combined force of African Christian teachers and European missionaries was confirmed by the church's expansion to the western part of Uganda, particularly Ankole. Since that time, the church has worked to establish Ankole's schools and has fought to maintain their quality and performance. According to Byaruhanga (2008), Bishop Alfred Robert Tucker's high regard for the Africans induced him to assume the role of the defender of some of the African institutions articulating the contributions that the Africans could make to humanity as a whole. He pointed out that the only way the Africans in Uganda could contribute to civilisation was to give them western education as a result of which many schools were opened throughout his Diocese. From the beginning, the church had conducted oversight role over her schools.

From the beginning, education in Uganda has always been in the hands of the church. According to Summers(2019),the role of the Uganda Protectorate Government in education compared to the missionaries was an important issue in education. From 1925, the Uganda Protectorate Government officials wanted to direct all educational affairs in the country, but the missionaries looked at government's role as meant for only assisting them with funds and to leave every educational matter concerning the management and direction of education to the missionaries. Therefore from the beginning, the church in her efforts has always loved to control education for the best quality and particularly academic performance. However, the intention of the British colonial government in participating in education was not to stop the missionaries (church) from teaching and looking after their schools which they had already set up and from building new ones (Summers,2019) The church in her efforts therefore from the beginning, laboured a lot to teach and control schools as well as establishing their own schools.

The British government in education only wanted to direct the conducting of education in the country, to build and administer some schools, to make sure that its advice was being followed in the schools under the missionaries and to give the missionaries (church) much of required money to run the already built schools and to build new ones The church therefore remained the chief custodian in directing and controlling the affairs in their church schools. Summers(2019 further noted further that much as the protectorate government viewed its role in a wider sense than the missionaries tried to make it: it should include opening up of schools and running them side by side with schools belonging to the missionaries. Eric

Hussey, the first director of education wanted the government to take over these schools but the missionaries were opposed to it. They continued to control their schools to instil Christian values because they believed they would automatically promote academic performance in schools.

In 1935, when Sir Philip Mitchell took over as a governor, he indicated that he would leave the missionaries to do what they felt like doing despite government educational administrative policies. Therefore, the church from the beginning in her efforts was always trying to improve the quality of education having academic performance in consideration twined with Christian values (Ssekamwa 1997). In her efforts to control and see education progress in Uganda, the church under the missionaries were quite free to turn any government administrative educational policies to their point of view for example, the stipulated boards of governors created by education committee were intended to make the people influence the administration of schools. But the missionaries (church) to remain in control of education and schools filled the boards with themselves and with people who had to support the missionary view. The chairman had to be from foundation body. One government representative and the three members, plus chairman, elected six other members who naturally belonged to the foundation.. And all the church founded schools like St. Mary's Kisubi, Namilyango college and Gayaza High School, among others were chaired by the Bishops of the foundation body. This was geared to seeing having good performing schools academically with Christian values (Ssekamwa 1997:126). The protestant missionaries and the Roman Catholic missionaries ran their own schools separately alongside the British government structure in education as far as categorising schools was concerned. They also had education officers who worked in collaboration with the government education officers. The administrative structures of the protestant and Roman Catholic churches; the education secretary general headed the schools of each church, the protestant missionaries headquarters at Namirembe and Catholics at Nsambya. These two education secretary generals were very powerful people in education system in Uganda ready to see education progress in the country (Ssekamwa 1997:56).

Because the church was fully represented on the British government's education advisory council, her voice in making education policies was heard and it had a great influence in the development and academic performance in schools. This is not different today especially in Ankole Diocese, in all government but Anglican Church founded schools, the church is fully represented on the management committees in order to own their schools and plan for them properly.

In order to control and direct education very well, the church in each of her Diocese of protestant and Roman Catholic had an education office headed by the education secretary. Each also had school supervisors who acted as inspectors of schools of each Diocese. The work of inspection of schools and that of the school supervisors of the missionaries was complementary as it helped to have a well supervised system in education. At each parish, there was a supervisor and for the case of the Roman Catholic schools, a priest known as father-in-charge of schools. And all the teachers within a parish were under the responsibility of either the father-in-charge or the pastor-in-charge and other educational affairs to spearhead academic performance (Ssekamwa 1997:56). In Ankole Diocese, the Archdeacon is in charge of supervision of the schools in his/her Archdeaconry, for easy supervision, the Archdeacon is assisted by the parish priest in the parishes where these schools exist. The chaplains in secondary schools also help in this supervision to keep the Diocesan target goals and at the same time, these belong to the management committees of those schools representing the Diocese. The church in her efforts to promote education worked tirelessly to improve literacy education in Uganda. The parents and students were a strong influence in helping the church in literacy education predominate in the educational system from bottom to top.

## **2.2 Challenges the church faces in improving the academic performance of students in the Church of Uganda founded Schools in St. James Cathedral Deanery-Ankole Diocese.**

According to Okoye(2021) funding for secondary education in Africa is inconsistent and inadequate and that many of the difficulties experienced could be solved by allocation of resources to meet the needs including purchasing of educational materials, appropriate training for staff and other school requisites. And this funding may come from public or private sector sources like the Church or even international and foreign aid to facilitate quality educational provision. However, the costs of much secondary education seem to be kept low by the use of state facilities and by extremely low salaries paid to teachers. Due to inadequate funding of these institutions the resultant scenario is that of failure by the school authorities to purchase enough textbooks, teaching and learning aids, develop infrastructure or to motivate the teachers. This is the same challenge in Ankole Diocese particularly in St. James Cathedral Deanery, the funding limits the proper functioning of the schools to buy materials and facilitate teachers. Much as the church in Ankole Diocese would like to uplift the academic performance, it finds it hard because it has no financial capacity to meet the needs of these

schools. This demotivates learning and affects the students' performance in the secondary schools. According to Okoye(2021)there is need for investment in capacity development, having a full, sufficiently paid and well-qualified, professionalized staff if the intended results and objectives for secondary education are to be achieved.

In Ankole Diocese particularly in St. James Cathedral Deanery, the secondary Schools under the study apart from Mbarara High School, have limited space for library and do not have enough text books. The church in St. James Cathedral Deanery is challenged by her inability to fund the purchase of the required text books and library expansion. The church in this case depends on offertories and it finds it hard to fund these needs. The church becomes good in decision making as a foundation body but does not take a step to implement because it is limited with funds and perhaps poor skills to outsource funds. This affects the academic performance of the students in her founded secondary schools.

Apart from lack of enough text books, another factor related to low academic performance among students has been said to be non-availability of proper school infrastructure. According to Abenawe(2022), the study carried out in Uganda indicated that a good learning environment has a significant impact on school attendance and learning outcomes. According to him, the study further eluded that, the absence of adequate school facilities such as desks, blackboards, electricity and water sanitation has a negative effect on pupil attendance and learning outcomes. The church is challenged by its financial capacity to solve these problems and the administration of the secondary schools looks at the church as a body better at decision making than implementation. Leadership is by example; the church being in ownership of these secondary schools should own them through funding where there is lack. The church in this case would be willing, but it has limited sources of money thus a big challenge that affects her secondary schools' academic performance.

According to Zikanga(2022),they indicated in their study that the time learners take to get to school lowers their academic achievement because such learners are likely to arrive late at school, have less study time than their classmates who live near the school. They may also fail to do their homework when they arrive home due to tiredness. And Datzberger(2018) , also revealed that students who cover many kilometres as they walked to school daily, arrived tired such that they failed to concentrate in class. In Ankole Diocese particularly in St. James Cathedral Deanery, one of the secondary Schools under the study, Nyakayojo secondary school faces this challenge because it has day scholars that lower the academic performance of students in it. Compared to Mbarara High School and Kashaka Girls secondary school, Nyakayojo secondary

school performs poorly much as the church tries her level best to influence the academic performance in her schools. The church in St. James Cathedral Deanery, Ankole Diocese has tried her level best to create boarding facilities in their secondary schools through meetings and government lobbying but the challenge remains implementation. Implementation needs capital and the church only waits on government for provision. The education office does not have the money set aside to cater for infrastructure development in the secondary schools and this affects the performance. As it is said "actions are better than words," the church needs more action than words.

Further studies on the topic revealed that apart from the above cited challenges on students' academic performance; there are also some teacher-caused ones. For example, Zikanga(2021), allude to teacher-student interaction as another factor that affects academic performance of learners. By this he referred to situations where the teacher would use abusive language, threatening learners or shouting at them for various reasons. This resulted in the learners feeling out of place and inattentive in class due to fear or resentment for the teacher. Eventually such learners tended to abscond from school and perform poorly in the end. This is not properly addressed by the leadership of the church because some of the priests where these schools are, are not professionally sound to direct the teachers well and instruct them. Some priests who are church representatives in those schools lack the required level of education to instruct and talk with teachers on such issues mentioned that affect the academic performance. They suffer from inferiority complex and lack of knowledge on education matters. This challenges the church in enforcing performance in her secondary schools in St. James Cathedral Deanery, Ankole Diocese.

In some Dioceses, the education office is managed by untrained teachers and this continues to challenge the church in her efforts to cause impact and improve academic performance in her schools. It creates a gap in church leadership and school administration relationship. In most cases, a person cannot lead the institution he/she does not understand, and this challenges the church to impact her secondary schools. Much this is not the case in Ankole Diocese in education office, but many of the priests down on the ground where those schools are, are not professionals in the field of education. They fail the supervisory job and do not fully represent the church for excellent academic performance of these schools. They only visit schools for other reasons like conducting worship but not to enforce academic performance assessment. Often the students' school attendance depends on the income of the family. Hassan (2020), reiterates that cost is a factor that contributes to a student's failure to access secondary education and in a variety of situations the students from

low income – earning homes have to work for their livelihoods. They would rather go to market places or streets to sell so that they supplement the family's income rather than attend school. This trend has contributed negatively to academic performance of learners who find themselves in such situations because they miss school most of the time, arrive late at school when lessons have already begun and have less or no time to do homework. Much as the Church in her efforts tries to fight for the academic performance in her secondary schools in Ankole Diocese particularly in St. James Cathedral Deanery, the school attendance especially in the day and boarding secondary school-Nyakayojo Secondary school is challenged by the low attendance due to the low incomes in homes. The students are on and off in class due to school fees and need to do casual work to get food to support their families. The church in this case is challenged by its lack of capacity to empower her Christians to have improved incomes in their homes. The church builds more on preaching than teaching Christians on income generating activities and this indirectly affects education and academic performance. The church is again challenged by finances to provide bursaries to children that perform well from these poor families.

According to studies carried out in Sub-Saharan Africa, children coming from larger households are less likely to drop out of school (Yaya, 2019). He adds that this interesting finding could either be attributed to the fact that the other household members seem to substitute for child labour so that the child can go to school or contribute part of their earnings to enable the younger members of the household pay school fees. However, children or young adults in smaller households are more likely to carry out household chores and thereby be over-worked. The resultant scenario is that of late-reporting for classes, too tired to concentrate in class and lack of enough time to do homework or study at home. The church has failed to address this, some church leaders are culprit in this because they often use some children in their homes who either report to school late or they do not go there but help them in household work. This challenges academic performance. The church leadership needs to set an example in this as it sensitizes others on the dangers of children going to school late. The church leadership should “walk the talk” to cause academic performance in her secondary schools particularly in St. James Cathedral Deanery, Ankole Diocese.

The church is faced with challenge of the gap between her leadership and school administration. Because the church is weak financially in supporting most of the school activities, the school administration does not respect it. The school administration being under government payrolls looks up to government with more respect and obedience than the church. Again, some church leaders are

incompetent to handle some academic issues because they lack professional knowledge in the field of education to assess academic performance tools. This leaves a lot to be desired in order to improve academic performance of students in secondary schools in St. James Cathedral Deanery, Ankole Diocese. Therefore, the church in her efforts to improve academic performance in St. James Cathedral Deanery, Ankole Diocese is faced with so many challenges and most of them are leadership and financial related. This goes hand in hand with what other authors and writers in the related literature indicate. These range from social, economic and political factors which the church needs to mitigate carefully for the best of academic performance of students in the secondary schools under the study and entire Ankole Diocese.

### 3. Methodology

The research used case study design taking into account St. James Cathedral Deanery, Ankole diocese in Uganda. The choice was based on high poor performance of students in the area compared to other areas. The research was conducted on a sample of 60 respondents who included Church leaders, head teachers, teachers and students from St. James Cathedral Deanery, Ankole. The study design employed was a descriptive cross-sectional using a mixed methodology. A mixed methodological framework of qualitative and quantitative research approach was used in collecting comprehensive data for generalization, validation of data and drawing of valid conclusions. Both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis were used simply because both methods have some bias, using both types of research helped to avoid such bias in that each method was used to check the other (Mugenda, 2003). Data was collected using Questionnaires and conducting interviews. The researcher used purposive sampling method on key respondents who included heads of education department at the Diocese, church leaders, head Teachers, teachers and students. Purposive sampling enabled the researcher to acquire qualitative replies, which resulted in better insights and more accurate study findings because the material was gathered from individuals who best suited the research context (Luciani, 2019). Primary data was collected from the respondents through interviewing, administering questionnaires and observation whereas secondary data was collected from published text books and journal articles. The data collection and analysis procedures were categorized according to the objectives. In terms of data processing techniques, the researcher ensured that raw data from the field was cleaned, coded, key-punched into a computer and analysed using SSP package. It is from the results of such analysis that the researcher was able to make sense of the data. The review findings were collaborated to identify the remaining gaps, areas of agreement (similarities) and areas of departure (differences) allowing

the researcher to review the research problem in line with what what other authorities have guided about determining validity of reviewed data in qualitative studies

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Church's efforts in the academic performance of students in Church of Uganda founded secondary schools in St. James Cathedral Deanery-Ankole Diocese

The study sought to find out the respondents' view on the church's efforts in the academic performance of students in Church of Uganda founded secondary schools in St. James Cathedral Deanery-Ankole Diocese. The questionnaire required the respondents to fill in the ways in which the church tries to improve academic performance in her church founded secondary schools in St. James Cathedral Deanery-Ankole Diocese. For the interviews conducted, the researcher tried to ask the respondents on the ways the church had showed her efforts to improve academic performance in church founded secondary schools. Table 1 below shows the ways in which the church in her efforts tries to improve the academic performance of students in her church founded secondary schools in St. James Cathedral Deanery-Ankole Diocese according to the respondents.

**Table 1: Church efforts in the academic performance of students in Church of Uganda founded secondary schools**

Church's efforts	Agree		Disagree		Total Percentage (%)
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	
Student moral development	58	97	2	3	100
Supervision ,monitoring and evaluation	40	67	20	33	100
Student Assessment	50	83	10	17	100
Management of schools	35	58	25	42	100
Provision of bursaries to needy and bright students	20	33	40	67	100
Provision of land for school expansion	30	50	30	50	100
School funding	6	10	54	90	100
Opening of new schools	31	52	29	48	100

Source: Primary Data (2019)

From the table on the previous page, 98% of the respondents agreed and said that the church has contributed a lot towards academic performance of the students in church founded secondary schools in St. James Cathedral Deanery, Ankole Diocese through student spiritual and moral development. This has shaped the morals and discipline of the students to work hard towards their academic excellence. Discipline is very key to academic performance and the church in Ankole Diocese through her link in secondary schools, chaplaincy has worked tirelessly to promote and maintain discipline of the students through many ways: devotions on assemblies, scripture reading, guidance and counselling, prayers and dedication of candidates, conferences and workshops, sensitization of

students and preaching among others. All these have shaped the morals of students. The Christian values that are imparted in students, help them to excel well in their academics. This is in agreement with Waswa(2022), who argues that "the Christian values that were imparted in students promoted academic performance in the missionary schools." Therefore, according to 98% of the respondents, the church in her efforts has contributed a lot towards academic performance in her schools through spiritual and moral development. However, 3% the respondents disagreed with it and this was an insignificant figure to nullify the contribution of the church towards academic performance of secondary school students in the area of study through spiritual and moral development.

From the reviewed data, 40% of the respondents agreed and said that the church in the area of study in her efforts, supervises, monitors and evaluates the education process in her schools. The respondents said that the church makes pastoral visits to her schools, the Diocesan inspector of schools visits and supervises and sometimes the Diocesan education secretary. In their visits, they preach and sensitize students and teachers plus the non-teaching staff to make sure quality education is provided aiming at academic excellence. The respondents especially the head teachers interviewed agreed that even when the national results are out, the education department officials visit their schools to evaluate them and forge the way forward aimed at the academic excellence of the students. This is also in agreement with Dominic(2023) who argues that “for the missionaries to have direct control and full ownership of their schools and promote academic performance, missionaries appointed school supervisors who acted as inspectors of schools in each Diocese and down in archdeaconries and parishes, the archdeacons and parish priests would do the supervisory work to promote academic performance of her schools.” This is the exact system and structure used in the area of study and through this system, the church in her efforts has contributed to the academic performance of her schools. However, 33% disagreed and said that the church has failed in supervisory work giving reasons like; they only appear when there is a conflict in schools, come only for pastoral visits but do not reach out to teachers and students to directly know their problems, guide and counsel, the educational department has few people to do the work of supervision compared to many schools in the Diocese, some church leaders in particular parishes where schools are, do not know the “language” of the schools and their education levels are low compared to the teachers and head teachers whom they are supposed to supervise, monitor and evaluate, others visit schools when they are only invited for functions other than making spot checks among others. This all affects the academic performance of students in the church of Uganda-founded secondary schools in the area of study. Therefore, much as the church in her efforts has tried to supervise, monitor and evaluate her schools for the best academic performance, it needs to improve and reach out well to these secondary schools.

More so, 83% of the respondents agreed that the church in its efforts has tried to promote academic performance in her schools through student assessment. The Diocesan education office, has annual promotional examinations for sub-candidates (S.3 and S.5). Majority of the teachers and all the three head teachers agreed that these examinations are of a good standard and help to improve the academic performance of students. This is in agreement with Koplán,(2017)who argues that; “proper student assessment exposes the student to many examination challenges and prepares her for many that lie ahead and the regular

examination with proper revision from teachers gives more knowledge to students and builds confidence in them for good academic performance.” Therefore, the Diocesan examinations contribute a lot in exposing students to national examinations and they build confidence in them for best academic performance. However, 17% of the respondents disagreed and said that the annual Diocesan examinations’ contribution is minimal towards the academic performance of students because they only come once a year and at a sub-candidate year, other teachers said that their supervision is still lacking where not all schools administer them at the same time to avoid leaking like how Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) does, no selected team to mark them but schools do mark on their own and their sets are few in a year. Therefore, the whole environment of doing them affects their results, and they proposed for the Diocese to work on the problems given and even scrap the money charged for them that some schools do not afford the charge. But that percentage figure was very low to “rub off” the efforts of the church in the area of study to improve the academic performance of students in her schools by ensuring proper assessment.

From the study, 58% of the respondents agreed and said that the church of Uganda in its efforts in the area of study manages and shows ownership of its schools. This management provides checks and balances to promote the academic performance of students in the church of Uganda-founded secondary schools in the area of study. However, 42% of respondents could not recognize the role of the church in the management of their schools and no wonder, the majority of these respondents were students other respondents who disagreed with this said the church normally appoints non-performers on their boards not professionals in the management of schools, boards do not supervise well and only come when called for meetings other than having spot checks to these schools to talk to teachers and students on how to improve on academic performance. Therefore, the researcher found out that the church in the area of study is still managing and controlling her secondary schools much as there should be improvement.

Also, 33% of the respondents agreed that the church under the area of study in her efforts to improve the academic performance of those schools provides bursaries/scholarships to needy and bright students. To make secondary schools perform better, the church gives bursaries not only to the needy but bright students. However, 67% disagreed that the church’s bursaries are given to students with low grades and these low entry grades affect the school’s academic performance and again the church only sends the students without other requirements like scholastic materials which affect the learning of the student because students on bursaries are from poor families. Therefore, the contribution of the

church here is important towards academic performance but needs improvement.

Again, 50% of the respondents agreed to the point that the church in its efforts to promote academic performance in schools has always provided land for expansion to build libraries, laboratories, classes and dormitories among others. This is in agreement with Byaruhanga (2008) who argues that “Bishop Tucker specifically believed that education and widespread building of schools were integral parts of evangelism, and for where there were missionary operations, the church gave out the land for construction of primary or secondary school, colleges and Bible schools among others.” This was evident in the area of study because, for each school the researcher visited, the land was given to them by the church for example you cannot easily separate church and school land at Ruharo Hill in Mbarara where Mbarara High School and St. James Cathedral exist. Where there is the church, and in the neighbourhood, there is a school. The respondents especially the head teachers interviewed agreed to this and said that when they want to expand the school structures, they do not get a challenge and the church is always willing to support them. The researcher found out that the schools under the area of study have sufficient and good infrastructures as far as laboratories and libraries among others are concerned and many students testified to this. This is an indicator that the church assists in providing adequate land to do this thus improving the academic performance of students in the church of Uganda-founded schools under the area of study. However, the other 50% did not consider it as a point towards academic performance saying that even if you have structures, without the qualified staff with passion and determined students, academic performance cannot be realized for example the researcher found out that Nyakayojo senior secondary school has everything in structures but the performance was poor according to 2018 results and according to the respondents, they attributed it to low entry grades, poor attitude of teachers towards teaching, poor attitude of learners to learning as they spent much time in Ruti trading Centre Mbarara watching films among others. Therefore, academic performance to be realized needs the zeal and combined efforts of all stakeholders and all factors that affect it must be put under consideration and addressed.

A small percentage of 10% of the respondents agreed that the church in her efforts contributes to the academic performance of students in her secondary schools under the area of study through funding for example in one of the schools visited, one respondent said that the church leaves them with 15% of the total chaplaincy collections to do chaplaincy activities. However, many of the respondents disagreed and said that the church does not fund her schools and this has affected their performance in a way

that in some schools, teachers are not motivated well through allowances to allow them to do their work and very many teachers complained of this and said that it reduces their morale to work. And once a teacher is not motivated, teaching-learning is affected and this directly lowers academic performance among the students. But this is not new with the church and is in agreement with Ssekamwa (1997:123), who argues that “from 1925, the Uganda protectorate government officials wanted to direct all educational affairs in the country, but the missionaries looked at government’s role as meant for only assisting them with funds and leave every educational matter concerning management and direction of education to missionaries.” Even today, in the study that the researcher carried out, the church would like to direct all the educational matters in her schools but does not invest in money but relies heavily on the government. This makes teachers obey more of the government than church thus affecting their decision making and implementation as managers in their schools.

Furthermore, 52% of the respondents agreed that the church in its efforts has tried to open up new schools especially in the Ankole Diocese recent examples are; Kigaragara Vocational Senior Secondary School and Kibingo Vocational Senior Secondary School. This is in agreement with Byaruhanga (2008) who argues that “the church from the beginning has always wanted to fight illiteracy and ignorance in Africa, Uganda in particular.” For example, the Church of Uganda founded school by Ankole Diocese, Kigaragara Vocational Senior Secondary School was the first secondary school in Kashumba Sub-county in Isingiro district and remains one and was the second best in Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) results 2018 in entire Diocese after Mbarara High School. This is the biggest contribution of the church to fight illiteracy and ignorance and cause good academic performance in her secondary schools. This also agrees with Ssekamwa (1997:123), who says that “the missionaries invested so much in opening new schools more than the protectorate government like Mbarara High School was opened in 1911 by missionaries and the colonial government opened Ntare School many years later in the 1950s.” This shows that the church since its inception had been committed to opening schools and providing quality education. However, 48% of the respondents disagreed with this and mainly these were students who did not have enough information about this. But the fact remained that the church in her efforts from the beginning has always worked hard to open schools and make sure they provide quality education aimed at good academic performance.

## 4.2 What challenges does the church face in improving the academic performance of students in the church of Uganda-founded secondary schools in St. James Cathedral Deanery-Ankole Diocese?

The study sought to find out the respondents' view on the challenges the church faces in improving the academic performance of students in Church of Uganda founded

secondary schools in St. James Cathedral Deanery-Ankole Diocese and the questionnaire required the respondents to fill in the challenges the church faces in improving academic performance of students in her church founded secondary schools in St. James Cathedral Deanery-Ankole Diocese. For the interviews conducted, the researcher tried to ask the respondents on the challenges the church faces in trying to improve academic performance of students in church founded secondary schools. Table 8 below shows the challenges the church faces in her efforts to improve the academic performance of students in her church founded secondary schools in St. James Cathedral Deanery-Ankole Diocese according to the respondents.

**Table 2: Tabular representation of challenges facing the church in improving the academic performance of students in the church of Uganda founded secondary schools**

Church's challenges	Agree		Disagree		Total
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Percentage (%)
					<b>100</b>
Funding	45	75	15	25	<b>100</b>
Poor student entry grades	42	70	18	30	<b>100</b>
Poor family backgrounds of students	39	65	21	35	<b>100</b>
Poor attitude of teachers towards teaching	10	17	50	83	<b>100</b>
Poor attitude of students towards learning	27	45	33	55	<b>100</b>
Lack of professional and enough man power for supervision	20	33	40	67	<b>100</b>

**Source: Primary data (2019)**

From the table 75% of the respondents agreed that the church is challenged with funds in order to improve the academic performance of students in her secondary schools in the area of study. According to Manu (2022), "funding for secondary education in Africa is inconsistent and inadequate and that many of the difficulties experienced could be solved by allocation of resources to meet the needs including purchasing of educational materials, appropriate training for staff and other school requisites." Therefore, like anywhere in Africa, the church in Ankole Diocese has little funds to facilitate educational activities and this affects academic performance. The researcher found out that some secondary schools under the area of study were lacking funds to motivate teachers through

adequate allowances, buying many sets of examinations for proper assessment, feeding teachers well and provision of adequate accommodation to teachers among others which all affect the performance because a demotivated teacher cannot do the work well geared towards academic performance. For example at Kashaka Girls Senior Secondary school, the researcher found out that they do not have enough staff quarters and other staff members sleep far away from school and so was Nyakayojo Senior Secondary School. However, 25% of the respondents disagreed and said that it is not a challenge to the church because the church has money but it does not want to release it to the schools. But one should come to terms and agree that the church faces this challenge because it also

has limited sources of money in investments and only depends on Christians for survival world over, Ankole Diocese in particular. Therefore, like many respondents, Manu (2022), argues that there is need for investment in capacity development, having a full, sufficiently paid and well-qualified, professionalized staff if the intended results and objectives for secondary education are to be achieved.

More so, 70% of the respondents agreed that the church in her effort to improve on the academic performance of students in her secondary schools in the area of study is challenged with poor entry grades from primary and ordinary level. This is in agreement the view that primary school grade point average is consistently the best predictor of high school grades. Many respondents especially teachers agreed to this and said that the church of Uganda founded secondary schools are faced with this challenge and it becomes a hindrance to the church in her effort to improve academic performance. For example at Nyakayojo senior secondary school where the performance in 2017 ordinary level (O' level) results was poor with 2.3% pass according to 2018/2019 Ankole Diocesan magazine, the teacher respondents attributed this failure to the poor entry grades because it is a school with Universal Secondary Education (USE). 30% of the respondents disagreed saying these grades do not affect the performance of these students but other factors like poor attitude of learners and teachers to learning and teaching respectively, school environment with inadequate facilities and parents' poor attitude to facilitating their children education among others. All in all, poor entry grades remain a challenge to the church in enforcing academic performance of students in her schools in the area of study for example, the researcher found out that Mbarara High School which admits students with good entry grades, their performance remains good at Ordinary and Advanced level.

Again, 65% of the respondents agreed that the church in her efforts to improve performance in her secondary schools is challenged with poor and illiterate home backgrounds of the students. Like a common saying that "charity begins at home," a home contributes a good percentage to the student passing. This is in agreement with one author Sekiwu (2020) who says that "often the student attendance and the performance depends on the income of the family." The researcher found out from the respondents especially teachers and head teachers that many students miss classes and this was common at Nyakayojo senior secondary school due to their parents failure to provide their children with the necessities that facilitate teaching-learning like fees, scholastic materials and uniform among others. Some teachers continued to say that parents have neglected their duties and left everything to the government. But some said that parents are too poor to facilitate their children's learning and they are illiterate

to supervise their children's learning. All these affect the church in her efforts to enforce academic performance of students in her founded secondary schools in the area of study. However, 35% disagreed saying that students themselves are to blame because their attitude towards learning is poor and they do not know their home backgrounds to work hard and many are undisciplined thus an effect to their academic excellence. But all said, the church is challenged in her efforts to improve academic performance of students in her founded secondary schools due to poor and illiterate parents to do their part as stakeholders in students' academic performance.

Furthermore, 33% of the respondents agreed that the church in her efforts to improve the academic performance of students in her church founded secondary schools is challenged with lack of professional and enough manpower to supervise education activities. According to Ssekamwa (1997:52), "the church as a foundation body has always wanted to control education process in her schools for best academic performance and he agrees that supervision is important geared towards quality education." Some respondents that made up 33% agreed that the church does not have adequate staff in education office to supervise the many schools both primary and secondary in the Diocese. According to Ankole Diocesan Magazine 2018/2019, the Diocesan Education office has one inspector of schools compared to the very many schools in the Diocese and this is a challenge. According to the missionaries' supervision structure of the schools, every priest was a supervisor of the church founded institution in his/her area of service (Ssekamwa 1997) and so it is today but the challenge that many respondents cited was that some of these priests are not educated to a level that enables them to supervise these schools, they do not match the academic level of the teachers and head teachers they are supposed to supervise, do not know the "language" of schemes of work and lesson plans and this leaves them without confidence to enforce academic performance of students in these secondary schools. For example, one head teacher said that the parish priest in the area cannot even address the students in English, the language they understand most because the school is national. However, 67% of the respondents did not agree to this and said the Diocese does well her work of supervision but other factors like the government's influence of the appointments of teachers and administrators frustrate their efforts to improve academic performance of students in her secondary schools.

The researcher again found out that there are other challenges that affect the church's efforts to improve academic performance of students in founded schools in the area of study like government policies for example where the government continues to tell parents that education is free and creates laziness in them to facilitate

their children's education and un dedicated head teachers among others.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

### 5.1 Conclusion

In conclusion therefore, despite the creation of Diocesan Education office in Ankole Diocese aiming at uplifting the quality of education, the academic performance of students as far as examination results are concerned in the Church of Uganda founded schools in St. James Cathedral Deanery-Ankole Diocese seems to be below expectation in comparison with other schools with different foundation bodies like Roman Catholic and government schools that are not Church of Uganda founded.

### 5.2 Recommendations

Based on this conclusion , this study recommends that :

1. The church should instead of promotional examinations of Senior three (S.3) and Senior five (S.5) in their secondary schools in Ankole Diocese, cover the all the classes because assessment of students is important at all levels. They should even have more sets of these examinations especially for candidate classes because regular assessment builds the students' confidence to pass the national examinations.
2. The church through her education department should increase on the supervision of her secondary schools for example it was found out that the department has only one inspector of schools, who cannot effectively cover the many schools in the Diocese. Supervision is important in these schools in order to guide and exchange educational ideas with school administrators and teachers, sensitize and counsel students for proper teaching and learning to take place properly.
3. This study recommends that the interest and educational qualifications of individual clergy in education be taken into account when making appointments to parishes, which have these church founded schools. Ankole Diocese and entire church of Uganda should strengthen wherever possible their advisory service to church founded schools and provide in-service training to teachers in church of Uganda founded schools. By investing in this, the church will be indirectly creating a strong foundation for the future

sustainability of church founded schools for excellent academic performance.

4. Ankole Diocese and entire church of Uganda should campaign and encourage other professionals to join the ministry of priesthood. Professionals like teachers, nurses, doctors, lawyers and Engineers among others should be encouraged to be in ordained ministry in order to manage well church projects and institutions because the church cannot survive without them.
5. The church should be directly engaged in education of young and lay people. All this for no any other reason, other than ensuring a systematic awareness to the future generation for them to keep in touch with the church, and get to grow knowing all the responsibilities and obligations towards running, loving and supporting the church founded secondary schools for proper academic performance.
6. The church in Ankole Diocese to start business departments in each and every Archdeaconry. Each Archdeaconry should have a strong official income generating project to specifically generate income. The church can also invest in establishing hotels and guest houses in various town centres of the Diocese, buying shares in multinational or great national companies whenever there is an opportunity for example Telecommunication companies and banks among others, all these investments can help to boost the income of the Diocese and help her to invest and fund education for excellent and quality academic performance of her schools.

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