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CAUSES OF POOR PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE AT UGANDA
CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION
(UCE) EXAMINATION IN SIRONKO DISTRICT, UGANDA
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ABSTRACT

The performance of students in English language national examinations in Uganda has been very poor for quite a long time. This culminated to complaints from parents, students and other stakeholders. It was on this background that this study made a critical analysis of the causes of poor performance of students in English language at UCE examinations in Sironko district, Uganda. The specific objectives of this study were; to find out the extent to which family background contributes to students' poor performance in English language in secondary schools in Sironko district, to identify how school environment influences students' poor performance in English language in secondary schools in Sironko district, and to establish the extent to which teachers' competence affects students' poor performance in English language in secondary schools in Sironko district. A cross-sectional survey design was used in order to gather the data from various respondents from secondary schools in Sironko district. The researcher also adopted both quantitative and qualitative research approaches to triangulate the data. The study population comprised of head teachers, English language teachers and students in Sironko district. Purposive sampling and simple random sampling techniques were used for the selecting respondents. Sample of the study included, 3 administrators who included Head teachers and directors of studies, 12 English teachers, and 303 students which the total of 318. The finding based on first objective shows that family background contributed a lot to the performance of students in the English language. Also the study found that the schools had inadequate teaching materials and capacity to warrant effective teaching, and teacher competence was very important and its absence affected performance of students in English language. The study concludes that the causes of poor performance of student in English language Examination includes, level of income of the parent, parent level of education, socio-economic status, and parents' working experience. And other related factored are, lack of instructional materials in the school, class size, insufficient library materials, lack of language laboratory, inadequate preparation of the teachers as well as poor method of teaching. It was finally recommended that school administrators should help to sensitize parents towards developing keen interest in guiding their children to perform well academically and Sironko district authority should assist in purchasing learning materials that are not in the schools for effective teaching.