

**EFFECT OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ON  
LEARNERS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN  
RWANDAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS. A CASE OF  
KANZENZE AND MUDENDE SECTOR (S)  
IN RUBAVU DISTRICT (2015/2020)**

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ISSN 2277-7733  
Volume 11 Issue 1,  
June 2022

**Abstract**

*The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of community engagement on learners' academic performance in Rwandan primary schools. Its specific objectives were: to examine the effect of community engagement in school financing on learners' academic performance in primary schools of Kanzenze and Mudende sectors, to find out the effect of community engagement in teachers' motivation on learners' academic performance in primary schools of Kanzenze and Mudende sectors. The study adopted a correlational research design. The population under this study consisted teachers, head teachers, PTA, bursars and director in charge of studies. Totaling 94 potential respondents which took randomly. The instrument of the study was self-made (questionnaire) and a set of questions was formulated. Data were collected using structured questions with 5-point Likert scales. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, standard deviation, means, and regression analysis. The finding from study concluded that there significant effect of community engagement in school financing on learners academic performance, community engagement in thematic method were used to calculate regression analysis of the study. The study recommend the following: Government should mobilize the parents to contribute in education of their children instead of letting education in the hands of teachers and government only as the main people who are in charge of education, Government must mobilize donors and other stakeholders to orient the grants in education system so that they should full participation in education, Government should make survey on how community is engaging in education of their children.*

**Keywords:** *community engagement, learner's academic performance, bursar, headteachers, directors in charge of studies, teachers motivation and secondary schools.*

The world countries are strengthening the education system for the population, as they want to rise their economy and technological development (Roy & Giraldo-García, 2018). National Education Association (2009) Identified that the is no doubt that community involvement pays significance factor in enhancing students' performance academically and making school environment conducive. All over the world many parents give different excuse about their absenteeism in participating in school affairs, by explain that daily schedule is overloaded for work that it is not possible to get extra time for attending school activities while others say that they do not know what to help the school because of different culture, language, some say that school do not give them a space for

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participation, other side community also accuses the school that does not give the them information or use them in school activities unless there a problem of misbehavior and poor academic performance of the learners. Other say that the information from the schools are not well understand because of poor language of communication (Van Roekel, 2008). Russell (2009) indicated that community involved the people who shared same geographical location with the common vision, mission and objectives of educational development, but when researcher talk about the community, it means students, parents, private and public institutions and others organs that participate in education arena. then a school is the interconnection of educational services that bring together all the stakeholders together.

In African, since the government starts to take over the control of education system, the engagement of the community was reduced when compare with how the situation was before colonial era, the colonialist excluded the people of less developed country but they have not even allowed the colonized people to develop education system, all was done under the interest of colonialist only and colonial government, colonial regime failed to prepare the parents, caregiver and community to participate actively in education of their country (Human rights in development, UNHCHR (ND)). Some professionals in education like teachers, policy makers, professionals criticize the community that it does not participate in education actively and some of them decided to exclude the community in education but the wonder is that how can you exclude someone in the education that was designed to improve his/her socio-economic development. Naidoo and Kong (2003) reported that many governments started new system of empowering education system so that education can be productive targeting the satisfy the needs of the citizens and also to produce finished products that can outcompete others at national, regional, continental and at international level, the government is decentralizing education system from the authority to decentralized local community as the way of empowering the community. Decentralization of education system is the best way for making education meaningful as the beneficiaries will be taking part in education system, like making decision about the education that should be given to their children, in administration the school where they have sent their children, finally community will more pay attention about education together parents, stakeholder, private and public institutions. In Rwanda, there is also a problems of poor community involvement because all the education management is for the teaching and administrative staff, means that the parents have let education of children to the teachers (Cyprien, 2019).according to (REB, 2018) indicated that at the beginning the people do not participate in this service but in few years back, in the research made, identified that there is productive partnership between community and government in developing this policy, then the parents have to supply all basic needs to the children and the community has to

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give other services needed to enhance education at all cost. A survey conducted by Nizeyimana (2018) found that lack of community engagement is affected by many factors like some community members do not have sufficient funds to finance education activities, others are unskilled people means that they have not gone to school and see that there is values of education, while others are demotivated because of high unemployment rate of the graduate from high school and universities, poverty is also another big challenges of little community engagement, this prevent the community in school activities hence poor academic performance in Rwanda education system.

In Rwanda, campaign is being done to enhance quality of education in teaching and learning process but more efforts are on alarming the teachers and learners, all parties should have an active engagement in preparing lesson, this campaign is done to attract of educational stakeholders to actively participate in education those stakeholders are ministry of education, districts, sectors, NGOs, teachers, learners, school general assembly and parents who should take a big role in education of their children, this is done because influence of the community was at low level in Rwanda even the quality of education was questionable in Rwandan education system. Basing on the background of Rwandan education and writing of other researchers about community engagement on learners' academic performance no one who conducted a research in Rwanda, it is the reason why a researcher started making investigation on relationship between community engagement and learners academic performance.

### **Research hypothesis**

There is no effect of community engagement in school financing on learners' academic performance in primary schools of Kanzenze and Mudende sectors, There is no effect of community engagement in teachers' motivation on learners' academic performance in primary schools of Kanzenze and Mudende sectors.

### **Community engagement in school financing on learners' academic performance**

Aronson (1996) stated that parental involvement has a great influence that affect the quality of education that a school give to the learners, means community is best actor of enhancing the quality of education that students receive from any school. Sanders (2001) reported that community participation is made by many factors it is not only one factors that people have to see but also many others that contribute also in enhancing education (Sanders,2001). Family financial status where the learners are from give the image of the community financial means and also the type of financial support they can give or contribute in education, this also affect children education if one is from poor family and community is really difficulty to develop academically because community con not afford the prices of schooling a child (Alam, 2015). It is noted that poverty among

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family members and community is among the factors that can determine the level of support in which the community is going to give because poor community doesn't participate well in education of the children if even if some can want that too or can try to support but that support is in vain as it is not sufficient to enhance any activity successfully (Haque, Ehsan & Jabbar, 2004).

The learners from a low income family tend to study badly or do not study in less developed countries because the parents are not capable of giving their children school materials such as books, pens, pencils, school bags, payment of school fees, giving transport means when a school is located far from the school. Even most of the children from poor families are suffering from stunting means their level of understanding in the class is somehow low, it is not easy for a school to educate stunted children. In addition to that when the community is poor, it is not able to finance school activities that can raise the school quality in teaching simply it means that as the parents are poor, learners' academic performance is negatively affected. Literature review showed that in Bangladesh even primary school attendance is free of charge for all the families but also there is a little amount of money families have to pay, this is a problem for a poor family which can even afford a price of a soap in rural areas, the children from the families like that mostly like to drop out because of lack of support from their respective families and community as there is no one to help them academically at home hence they leave school at a lower age (CDRB, 2004).

In the research made by different scholars and writers indicated that the School Feeding Program (SFP) is among the best determinants of learners' academic performance. Ahmed (2004) explained that in some of the countries like Bangladesh most of the students who are under the School Feeding Program are from low income families briefly are from poor families. 69% of the households in rural areas earn 0.5 \$ per day. Means that this family cannot educate a child because they are affected by hunger, poor shelters, poor clothing, malnutrition and other things that affect helpless people.

Finally, there are similarities among different researchers about the role of the community in enhancing learners' academic performance, children from poor families don't study well in the school because of inadequate support from the local community and family, it is not easy for a learner to perform well when he/she was not eaten at home, when a learner doesn't have materials that can help in teaching and learning activities, or when a learner is malnourished at home poverty hinders learners' academic performance while a child from a well-do family like to perform well academically as long as they have all the requirements that can allow them to participate actively in the teaching and learning process. A little difference is that learners from poor families do not always perform poorly because there are many examples that showed that even if the community and family situation is like a struggle but there is a part of learners who engage themselves in different things that

can generate some money and then they can use that money in buying some school materials while others have Non- Governmental Organization (NGOs) that pay for them a school fees, even some of solidarity cooperatives from community can commit to pay for those children those children perform better like others. There is another part that can learn in that worse condition and perform better.

**Community engagement in teachers' motivation on learners' academic performance**

According to Griffin and Van Fleet (2013) motivation is changing and putting an individual into a desired condition of work. It is understandable that community must participate in teachers' motivation so that they can work accordingly because a community supports them. It is noted that the research does not put more effort on motivation as career but they focused on motivation and job satisfaction because if a teacher is motivated, tend to teacher well even the probability for job turnover reduces (Sharma, Forlin, & Earle, C. 2006). According to Deal and Peterson (1999) the indicated the importance of teacher in developing effective and efficient teaching and learning activities which always lead to the quality of education and school success.

Teachers are the most important person in education, the community has to motivate him/her so that teacher become productive in teaching and learning activities. Ololube (2006) discovered that teacher job satisfaction is among the important factors that influence education system to run together with other minor factors like job experience, qualification, availability of teaching aid. Teachers are motors or trigger of education system and quality of education, so community has to take care of teachers and strive to make conducive environment to them. Cheng and Chen (2011) discussed the job satisfaction and conducive environment in education institution as the strategy of rising quality of education and school success, means community can engage in developing teachers' motivation by valuing the task of teachers.

Then, teachers' wishes and petitions should be satisfied in order to make conducive environment where teachers work in, this can increase learners' academic performance as long as teachers are satisfied with job. A lot of studies were made by many researcher and scholars about motivation of students as customers but they did not take care about teachers' motivation and the role of teachers in developing learners' academic performance but teachers are the best determinants of quality education (Comm & Mathaisel, 2003). Community and government have to work together to develop teacher motivation because no way one can ask teachers performance when his family is starving or die with hunger, community have to participate in rewarding teachers.

Bogler and Nir (2012) indicated that teachers job satisfaction is important in improving school performance and improvement. While Saari and Judge

(2004) and Li and Hung (2012) said that there is a big correlation between teachers' job satisfaction and teacher attitude and work working happiness. Furthermore, community is among the stakeholders that could help the teachers to be motivated and satisfied with daily life but if community do not put more effort teaching and learning activities will continue to be meaningless because a starved employee cannot be productive while condition of his life is in critical condition.

Teachers motivation is among the important criteria that make education system to be successful together with other factors such as teachers experience, qualification, teachers working experience, and the environment in which teachers work in, such as the level of community engagement in school activity, recognition of teachers, rewards from parents and government and sufficient teaching materials. If you combine those factors, there no hesitation that learners' academic performance can be high depending the objectives (Ololube, 2006).

So many researchers described that there is relationship between community engagement in financing teachers and learners' academic performance, because teachers are facilitator or guider even if currently education system is advising the world form knowledge based curriculum to competence based curriculum where teachers will work lesser than the student but teacher is always there for facilitating and guiding the learners about the contents and giving the instructional materials. Even in some schools, teachers cannot participate a lot but take an example in kindergarten school and primary one, two and three, learners are always still young, they cannot manage the situation without teachers' presence.

### **Research methodology**

Study population was a group of person where a sample was taken from, means that when a researcher was explaining a study population, wanted to say that is a group of individual that share same characteristics or have something in common. For example study population this study were the all primary schools located in Rubavu District. Furthermore, the people who were in sample were head teachers, director in charge of studies, teachers, discipline masters, bursar because they had relevant information that can be used to find the good results on the problems. Sample size is a specific number of population which was selected to represent others, means are the individuals which was taken from targeted population for exemplifying them. In research a researcher has chosen both probability and non-probability samplings. Probability sampling is where all the items located in sample size have an equal chance for being selected while non-probability sampling is that all item is have no equal chance. Through this research purposive sampling was used to selected head teachers, bursars and directors in charge of studies since these respondents had specific information. Random sampling was used for the teachers depending on their big number. Cluster sample were used to select the schools from both

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two sectors sectors, because studying all schools in district was not easy and their accessibility could be difficult. For calculating the sample size the researcher used Morgan sample size determination.

### **Findings**

of more than two years. Only 10.6% are experienced of less than two years.

#### **4.2. Presentation of the findings**

The part below explain the variables statistically by utilizing mean, maximum, minimum and standard deviation

#### **Descriptive Statistics on community engagement in school financing**

Statements	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std
In this school, family pays Regularly school fees	66	2.00	5.00	4.0455	.86703
Community sending extra money to the school to finance different activities increase learners performance.	66	2.00	5.00	4.2879	.73934
Community engagement in paying money for part time teachers increase learners performance	66	1.00	5.00	4.1515	1.17986
Community involving in giving the school different gifts to build the infrastructures.	66	1.00	5.00	4.3788	.97294
Community participating in making school budget	66	3.00	5.00	4.5909	.55407
In this school, parents are involved in making audit	66	1.00	5.00	4.2273	.83750
In this school, community is involved in committee which give market	66	2.00	5.00	4.1667	.83359
In this schools, family contribute in giving bonuses to the teaching and administrative staff.	66	1.00	5.00	4.1364	.94277
In this school, family send transport and communication fees	66	1.00	5.00	4.2727	.90376
In this school, there are donors who finance school budget	66	1.00	5.00	4.3030	.85880
Valid N (listwise)	66			4.2560	0.86896

Note: Strongly Disagree = [1]= Very Low mean; Disagree= [1-2]=Low mean; Neutral= [2-3] =moderated mean; Agree= [3-4]=High mean; Strongly Agree= [4-5]= Very High mean

As indicated by the table, most of the respondents strongly agreed that community engaging in school financing has significant effect on learners academic performance as indicated below: In this school, family pays Regularly school fees (mean=4.0455 and STD=.86703), Community sending extra money to the school to finance different activities increase learners performance (mean=4.2879 and STD=.73934), Community engagement in paying money for part time teachers increase learners performance (mean=4.1515 and STD=1.17986), Community involving in giving the school different gifts to build the infrastructures (mean=4.3788 and STD=.97294), Community participating in making school budget (mean=4.5909 and STD=.55407), In this school, parents are involved in making audit (mean= 4.2273and STD= .83750),In this school, community is involved in committee which give market (mean=4.1667 and STD=.83359), In this schools, family contribute in giving bonuses to the teaching and administrative staff. (Mean= 4.1364and STD=.94277),In this school, family send transport and communication fees (mean= 4.2727 and STD=.90376),In this school, there are donors who finance school budget

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(mean=4.3030 and STD=.85880). Overall mean indicated that most of the respondents confirmed that community engagement in school financing affect learners academic performance as indicated by statistics (mean=4.2560 and STD=0.86896).

### **Descriptive Statistics community engagement in teachers' motivation**

Statements	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std.
Community engagement in rewarding teachers increase learners academic performance	66	3.00	5.00	4.3485	.69043
When community give teachers voice, leads to the increase of learners academic performance	66	3.00	5.00	4.5455	.66058
Community Provision of incentives and bonuses to the teachers increase learners' academic performance.	66	2.00	5.00	4.3030	.84069
Community involvement in giving performance appraisal to the teachers increase learners academic performance.	66	2.00	5.00	4.3030	.82219
Community engaging in public work for building teachers building increase learners academic performance	66	1.00	5.00	4.3485	.83191
In this school, teachers are given transport fees from parents	66	1.00	5.00	4.2424	.87812
In this school, teachers are given communication fees from parents	66	1.00	5.00	4.1212	.92012
In this school, community participate in sponsoring teachers training.	66	1.00	5.00	4.1364	.90955
In this school, teachers make field trip to visit community and for studies	66	1.00	5.00	4.5000	.82741
In this school, teachers are who best performers get incentive and motivation fees.	66	1.00	5.00	4.2273	.98910
Valid N (listwise)	66			4.3075	0.83701

Note: Strongly Disagree = [1]= Very Low mean; Disagree= [1-2]=Low mean; Neutral= [2-3]=moderated mean; Agree= [3-4]=High mean; Strongly Agree= [4-5]= Very High mean

As indicated by the table, most of the respondents strongly agreed that community engaging in teachers motivation has significant effect on learners academic performance as indicated below: Community engagement in rewarding teachers increase learners academic performance (mean=4.3485 and STD=.69043), When community give teachers voice, leads to the increase of learners academic performance (mean=4.5455 and STD=.66058), Community Provision of incentives and bonuses to the teachers increase learners' academic performance (mean=4.3030 and STD=.82219), Community involvement in giving performance appraisal to the teachers increase learners academic performance (mean=4.3030 and STD=.82219), Community engaging in public work for building teachers building increase learners academic performance (mean= 4.3485 and STD=.83191), In this school, teachers are given transport fees from parents (mean=4.2424 and STD=.87812), In this school, teachers are given communication fees from parents (mean= 4.1212 and STD= .92012),In

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this school, community participate in sponsoring teachers training (mean= 4.1364 and STD= .90955), In this school, teachers make field trip to visit community and for studies (mean= 4.5000 and STD=.82741), In this school, teachers are who best performers get incentive and motivation fees (mean=4.2273 and STD=0.98910).

Overall mean indicated that most of the respondents confirmed that community engagement in teachers' motivation affect learners academic performance as indicated by statistics (mean= 4.3075 and STD= 0.83701).

### **Discussion**

The findings from the objective number one which was to examine the effect of community engagement in school financing on learners' academic performance in primary schools of Kanzenze and Mudende sectors, the results revealed that there is positive and significant effect of school financing and learners' academic performance in primary schools of Kanzenze and Mudende sectors as ( $p$ -value=0.000,  $\beta$ =0.862). This signifies that null of hypotheses was rejected and alternative hypotheses were approved. This was attained by distributing 10 statements or options about community engagement in school financial for which the participants were requested to tick appropriate box by Likert scales. Therefore, it was revealed that that community engagement in school financial has effect with overall mean and standard deviation (mean=4.2560 and STD=0.86896). This work was similar to the findings of Blank, Jacobson, Melaville & Pearson (2010) asserted that when parents are motivated to support school financially, school academic performance can be increased because school may have little money to run some of different activities but when community is engaged and support some activities can be build and developed. Schools need many things such teaching aids, feeding the students, making field trips and paying wages of part time workers, this indicated that when community support the school, those activities can be achieved easily.

The outcomes from the objective number two which was to examine community engagement in teachers' motivation on learners' academic performance in primary schools of Kanzenze and Mudende sectors, the results revealed that there is positive and significant community engagement in teachers' motivation on learners' academic performance in primary schools of Kanzenze and Mudende sectors as ( $p$ -value=0.000,  $\beta$ =0.964). This signifies that null of hypotheses was rejected and alternative hypotheses were approved. This was attained by distributing 10 statements or options about community engagement in teachers' motivation for which the participants were requested to tick appropriate box by Likert scales. Therefore, it was revealed that that community engagement in teachers' motivation has effect with overall mean and standard deviation (mean= 4.3075 and STD= 0.83701). The research is similar to the findings of Gitonga, (2012) disclosed that community engagement in teacher

motivation is very crucial because teacher motivation it is not the responsibility of government only but also the responsibility of community apart from the salaries which granted by government community must provide bonuses, incentives and other fees which can contribute in teacher motivation at school.

### **Conclusion**

By emphasizing on the results from data analysis, revealed that community engagement has significant effect on learners' academic performance in Rwandan primary schools. As all objectives indicated that there is significant effect of independent variable as they are namely community engagement in school financing, community engagement in teachers motivation and community engagement in home-based coaching and dependents variables (learners' academic performance). This was approved by statistics from chapter three that all null hypothesis provided negative, means null hypotheses were rejected while alternative hypothesis were accepted.

### **Recommendations**

The study revealed that the stakeholders and other people who are involved in education system of Rwanda have to do the following as recommendation: Government should mobilize the parents to contribute in education of their children instead of letting education in the hands of teachers and government only as the main people who are in charge of education. Government must mobilize donors and other stakeholders to orient the grants in education system so that they should full participation in education.

### **Suggestion for further studies**

The research was made on small areas because different factors such as financial, time etc, but other research can also make the research on the topic related to secondary schools, higher institutions. Such the effect of Parental participation on learning effectiveness in Rwandan secondary school.

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