

Determinants of Parent's Involvement in Public Primary Schools in Busitema Sub County, Busia District

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Abstract - This study assessed the determinants of parental involvement in public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County, Busia District, Uganda. The study aimed to: assess the influence of logistical factors, examine the influence of cultural factors, and determine the influence of the child's characteristics on parental involvement in public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County. This was achieved through a descriptive and cross-sectional survey research design following a mixed-methods approach. The study employed census and simple random sampling techniques in selecting participants. Quantitative data was collected from a sample of 268 participants using questionnaires. Qualitative data was collected from a sample of 17 participants using interviews. Quantitative data collected was analyzed using simple and multiple regression analysis. The results revealed a strong positive influence of child characteristics and parental involvement ($B = 0.522$, $Beta = 0.896$). Logistical factors too significantly influenced parental involvement ($B = 1.305$, $Beta = 0.681$). Cultural factors, also significantly influence parental involvement ($B = 0.621$, $Beta = 0.893$). Parental involvement in public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County is influenced by various factors, including child characteristics, logistical factors, and, to a lesser extent, cultural factors. It is concluded that child's characteristics, cultural factors, and logistical factors significantly associate with parental involvement in Busitema Sub-County's public primary schools. Positive child characteristics, cultural relationships, and access to resources influence parental involvement in child's education. It is recommended that schools should prioritize strategies promoting positive child characteristics, consider cultural contexts, and improve logistical conditions to foster parental involvement and enhance student outcomes.

Keywords: Determinants, Parent's Involvement, Public Primary Schools.

I. INTRODUCTION

Parental involvement is a focal point in children's academic success, as it fosters higher achievement, improved motivation, and stronger socioemotional skills by creating supportive home learning environments and reinforcing school (Jeynes 2023). Moreover, collaborative parent-teacher partnerships enhance student engagement and address barriers to learning, particularly for marginalized groups, by positioning cultural and community values with educational practices (Kim & Sheridan, 2021). More so, parental involvement in primary schools is of unlimited importance to the Ministry of Education as it improves student achievement, well-being, and engagement in learning (Jeynes, 2020). Additionally, active parental engagement supports children's socio-emotional well-being and classroom engagement by addressing systemic inequities and promoting inclusive learning environments (Sheridan et al., 2020). According to a study by Mapp and Kuttner (2020), parental engagement directly effects student success, as it primes to improved school attendance, behavior, and academic performance.

Research by Houtenville and Conway (2020) highlights that when parents are involved, schools are more likely to implement innovative and culturally relevant teaching practices, which can contribute to improved student outcomes across diverse communities. According to Wilder (2021), communities with high levels of parental involvement in schools tend to have stronger social networks and lower crime rates. This collaborative determination ultimately results in a more educated population, which has sweeping implications for national development (Rodela & González, 2021). The participation of parents in their children's education as a concept has evolved over time, with varying levels of emphasis depending on historical, cultural, and social contexts (Goodall and Montgomery's 2021).

In the early history of formal education, particularly in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the role of parents was minimal. Education was largely seen as the concern of the school and teachers, and there were few mechanisms or

expectations for parental engagement in school activities (Robinson, (2020). During the industrial revolution, education systems were designed to serve mass schooling needs, with little attention given to involving parents in the educational process and the focus was predominantly on the teacher-centered approach where educators were seen as the primary managers of children's learning (Lareau, 2003).

The terrain of parental involvement began to shift in the mid-20th century, particularly with the civil rights movements and the rise of educational reforms. During the period, there was an increasing acknowledgement of the role families, communities, and broader societal factors play in shaping children's academic outcomes (Anderson, 2021). The shift for equal educational opportunities in the 1960s and 1970s, especially for vulnerable groups, brought parental involvement to the forefront as an essential component of educational success (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). This was also when research started to demonstrate that children whose parents were involved in their education tended to perform better academically. Thus, efforts to encourage parental participation in school governance, teacher-parent conferences, and educational planning were integrated into many school systems (Ishimaru, 2020).

Parental involvement increased importance in the 1980s as studies related it to academic achievement (Epstein, 1987). The 1990 World Declaration on Education for All (UNESCO, 1990) emphasized family-school partnerships as important for equity. By the 2000s, OECD nations established parental engagement, countries like Finland rooted it in teacher training, whereas Japan's PTA systems adopted collaboration (OECD, 2001). The U.S. No Child Left Behind Act (2002) assigned schools to engage parents, nevertheless critiques pointed out acts of urban bias (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011).

Parental involvement has sustained to grow, particularly in light of policy changes like the No Child Left Behind Act (2001) and Every Student Succeeds Act (2015) in the United States, which emphasize the importance of family engagement for student success. These policies have led to the development of various programs and initiatives aimed at improving communication between schools and families and addressing the barriers to involvement that many parents face.

The Colonial systems in Africa excluded parents, designed education as a colonial administrator's field (Bogonko, 1992). Post-independence, states like Ghana and Nigeria encouraged community schools, but economic crises in the 1980s under Structural Adjustment Programs weakened mass participation (Okeke, 2014). South Africa's post-apartheid Schools Act (1996) formalized School Governing Bodies, yet inequities continued in rural areas (Mncube,

2009). In Kenya, the harambee ethos (1970s) organized parental labor and funds for school construction, yet post-2003 Free Primary Education marginalized formal roles, shifting focus to academic support (Sifuna, 2007).

In East Africa, show that parental engagement remains critically low despite its recognized importance. Kenya's Competency-Based Curriculum, emphasizes caregiver participation, yet rural regions report less than 30% attendance in school meetings, attributed to poverty and competing labor demands (MoE Kenya, 2021). Likewise, in Tanzania, cultural norms prioritizing communal childcare over individual parental roles, coupled with low maternal education, have weakened direct engagement (URT, 2019). Rwanda's post-genocide education reforms have made strides in mobilizing communities, but urban-rural gaps persist, with rural parents often citing distrust in school systems as a barrier (REB, 2020). These regional trends reveal a paradox, while education policies increasingly advocate for parental roles, structural and sociocultural barriers stifle implementation, leaving millions of children underserved. Tanzania's UPE (1977) initially centralized control but later introduced School Committees in the 2000s, though rural parents often lacked voice (Wedgwood, 2007). In Rwanda, the Post-genocide reforms (2000s) stressed community participation via Parent-Teacher Associations, augmenting enrollment with the challenge of gender disparities (Abbott et al., 2015). The 1994 Ethiopia's Education Policy stimulated community partnerships, with rural-urban divides in parental literacy that hindered engagement (Rose & Alcott, 2015).

In Uganda, Universal Primary Education (UPE) program, launched in 1997, initially boosted enrollment but has struggled to sustain meaningful parental collaboration ([NPA] Uganda. (2020). National surveys indicated that only 22% of parents regularly attend school meetings, with rates plummeting to 8% in conflict-affected regions like Karamoja (UBOS, 2022). Urban centers such as Kampala fare slightly better, yet even there, 40% of teachers report minimal parental follow-up on children's academic progress (NPA Uganda, 2021).

The consequences are dire with schools in low-involvement districts report dropout rates exceeding 35% by Primary 4, alongside chronic underperformance in national literacy assessments (UNICEF Uganda, 2023). Yet, without parental collaboration, efforts to improve learning environments curb dropout rates, and address gender disparities, such as girls' early marriage remain fragmented.

Theoretically, the study was based on Coleman's Theory of Social Capital, proposed by James Coleman in 1988, emphasizes the value of social networks, trust, and shared

norms in encouragement of collective action. It suggests that relationships and community structures act as resources, enabling individuals to access support, information, and cooperation, which enhance outcomes like educational achievement. Coleman highlights closure or interconnected networks as critical, where tight-knit communities enforce norms and accountability, benefiting institutions like schools. This theory relates to parental involvement in public primary schools by underscoring how social capital influences engagement. Strong parent-teacher networks, trust, and communal norms create environments where parents feel obligated or empowered to participate. Schools with robust social ties facilitate communication, resource-sharing, and collective responsibility, addressing barriers like time constraints or lack of information. Thus, social capital determinants, relationships, trust, and community cohesion, directly shape parents' ability and willingness to engage in their children's education.

Conceptually, Anderson & Mapp (2022), posits that determinants of parental involvement refer to factors that influence the extent and quality of parents' engagement in their children's education. These determinants comprise of socioeconomic status (SES), cultural norms, parental beliefs about education, school outreach efforts, and logistical barriers, such as time, language, or institutional accessibility) (Kim & Sheridan, 2021). Additionally, Hornby and Blackwell (2021) suggest that unwelcoming school climates, such as the lack of parent rooms, act as institutional deterrents to parental involvement. Meanwhile, Jeynes (2020) conceptualized the determinants of parental involvement as follows: socioeconomic factors; cultural factors, which imply the view that education is solely the school's concern and negate positive involvement; gender roles, with the belief that school issues are a father's responsibility rather than a mother's; community traditions, referring to societal activities like feasts, funerals, and sowings that may preoccupy parents and prevent them from attending school events; and attitudes towards involvement, such as a parent's reluctance to engage with teachers due to limited knowledge. None the less, child characteristics like child's age and developmental stage (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997) and child's academic performance (Jeynes, 2005) are other determinants of parental involvement. Therefore, this study will conceptualize the determinants of parental involvement as child's characteristics, cultural, and logistical factors.

On the other hand, parental involvement refers to the participation of parents in their children's education, both at home and in school. It encompasses a range of activities and behaviors that support children's academic, social, and emotional development (Henderson & Berla, 1994). It includes behaviors such as assisting with homework, attending

school events, participating in governance, and communicating with teachers (OECD, 2022). It is often categorized into home-based involvement, such as academic support at home, and school-based involvement, like volunteering (Castro et al., 2021). Epstein's (2018) framework further differentiates contribution types, including parenting (home environment), communicating, and decision-making.

Elements of parental involvement include, parenting which provides a supportive and stable home environment that fosters learning and development (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997), communicating with children about their education, interests, and well-being (Epstein, 2001), volunteering where parents participate in school events, activities, and decision-making processes (Sanders, 2006), learning at home which supporting children's learning at home through activities such as homework help, reading, and educational games (Jeynes, 2005), decision-making where parents participate in school decision-making processes, such as parent-teacher associations or committees (Henderson & Berla, 1994), and collaboration with community organizations and resources to support children's education and development (Sanders, 2006).

Moreover, Castro et al. (2022) measured parental involvement in academics, such as homework help frequency, against socio-emotional aspects, like parent-child discussions about school and parent/child diaries. According to Boonk et al. (2021), school-family communication is identified as the most impactful form of involvement, particularly for students with disabilities, emphasizing individualized strategies over generic outreach. The current study will conceptualize parental involvement as participation in school events, communication with teachers, and home learning support.

Contextually, according to the Busia District Education Office (2023), less than 30% of parents participate actively in school meetings, homework support, or extracurricular activities, a figure significantly below the national average of 50% (Ministry of Education and Sports [MoES], 2022). This gap in engagement results in limited communication between parents and teachers, hampering effective monitoring of student progress and reducing parental reinforcement of learning at home. Contributing factors include widespread poverty, with over 40% of households in Busia living below the poverty line (Uganda Bureau of Statistics [UBOS], 2023), which diverts parental resources and attention from their children's education. Consequently, children lack adequate supervision, motivation, and mentorship, leading to poorer academic outcomes and increased dropout rates, especially among vulnerable groups.

The extent of parental involvement in Busitema is alarmingly low, with recent reports indicating only 20-25% of parents are engaged beyond basic enrollment (UNICEF Uganda, 2022). Many guardians cite limited education, ignorance of the importance of participation, or work obligations that prevent them from supporting their children’s schooling (Busia District, 2023). This disengagement has serious repercussions; for instance, teenage pregnancies are alarmingly high here, with 23% of adolescent girls reporting pregnancies in 2023 (Busia District Local Government, 2023). The lack of supervision and guidance from parents correlates strongly with these cases, as unsupervised routines often lead adolescents into risky behaviors. Such neglect hampers children’s ability to complete their education and exposes them to health risks, social vulnerabilities, and early motherhood, perpetuating cycles of poverty and dependency.

The consequences of low parental involvement extend far beyond academics, aggravating social vulnerabilities and community health issues. The Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2023) reports a 35% rise in cases of neglect, abuse, and child labor exploitation, which are frequently linked to disengaged guardians (Busia District, 2023). Poor parental oversight has also contributed to high dropout rates up to 20% among girls in upper primary grades because guardians are seldom involved in tracking attendance or advocating for their children’s needs (Busia District Education Office, 2023). Furthermore, uninvolved parents tend to neglect supporting teachers’ efforts, leading to increased cases of teacher absenteeism and transfers, which further diminish educational quality in the district (Uganda Ministry of Education, 2022). Overall, the pervasive low parental involvement fosters a cycle of poor academic achievement, social instability, and limited community development, highlighting the urgent need for interventions to enhance parental engagement in Busitema and beyond.

Parental involvement is a basis for effective education systems, as highlighted in Uganda’s National Strategy for Parental Involvement (MoES, 2021) and global frameworks like UNICEF’s School-Family Partnerships (2020). It is key to

children's academic performance and overall educational success. Despite government policy endeavors, parental involvement in Busitema District has been low. Only 25% of parents attend school meetings, and 60% rarely engage in home learning support, such as homework assistance and creating study-friendly environments (Busia District Local Government, 2023). For example, at Kanjo Primary School, involvement in school governance, including PTA meetings and decision-making, has been less than 15% (Busia District Education Office, 2023). Consequently, children face diminished academic performance and higher dropout rates, reinforcing cycles of inter-generational poverty (World Bank, 2020). Not only that but also, negatively affecting the transition rate to secondary education and the development of the district and the whole country at large and without urgent, evidence-driven action, the promise of UPE and the potential of millions of children risk remaining unfulfilled.

The decline in academic performance in Busitema, compared to neighboring areas, is linked to limited parental oversight, affecting literacy and numeracy skills (Ministry of Education, 2022). Rising teenage pregnancies (23% in 2023), child neglect, and labor exploitation are associated with disengaged caregivers (Busia District, 2023; Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2023). Educational initiatives like feeding and literacy campaigns underperform due to poor parental collaboration, hindering their sustainability (UNICEF Uganda, 2021). High dropout rates among girls and increased teacher absenteeism also correlate with limited parental follow-up and advocacy (Busia District Education Office, 2023; Uganda Ministry of Education, 2022). These studies do not show what factors influence parent involvement in public primary school education. Therefore, this study aimed to fill the knowledge gap on the specific determinants of parental involvement in public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County, Busia District, focusing on socio-economic, cultural and logistical factors influencing educational and social outcomes. It seeks to provide targeted insights for enhancing parental engagement strategies and addressing gaps in existing research tailored to this community.

Conceptual Framework

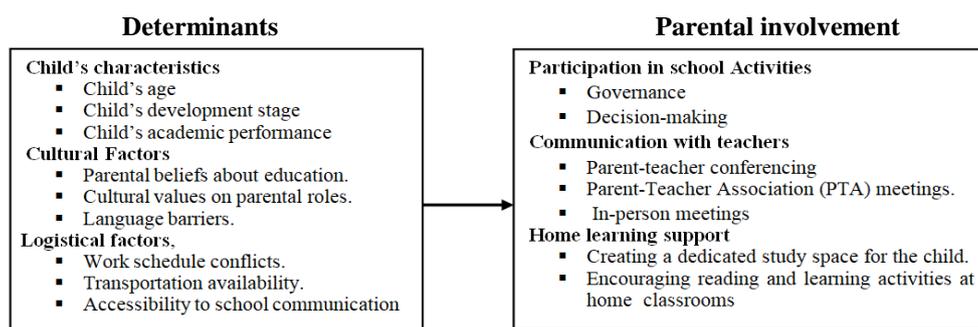


Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework on determinants and parental involvement

Source: Constructed with modifications from Anderson & Mapp (2022), Castro et al. (2021), (OECD, 2022), and modified by the researcher (2025)

The conceptual framework describes the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. In this conceptual framework, determinants are conceived as the independent variable while parental involvement is the dependent variable. Determinants are conceptualized by socio-economic factors, cultural factors, and logistical factors. Parent involvement is assessed by participation in school meetings, communication with teachers, and home learning support. Thus, the parent's involvement in public primary schools is perceived to be dependent on key determinants which are socioeconomic factors, cultural factors and logistical factors.

Determinant of parental involvement: In this study, determinants of parental involvement refer to the various factors that influence the extent and nature of parents' engagement in their children's education within public primary schools. These determinants include child's characteristics like child's age, child's development stage and the child's academic performance, cultural factors (parental beliefs about education, cultural values on parental roles, and language barriers), and logistical factors (work schedule conflicts, transportation availability, and access to school communication).

Parental involvement: In this study, parental involvement refers to the active participation of parents in their children's educational processes and school activities. This includes participation in school meetings (attending parent-teacher association (PTA) meetings, and engaging in parent-teacher conferences), communication with teachers (regular email or phone communication with teachers, and responding to teacher requests and concerns), and home learning support (creating a dedicated study space for the child, and encouraging reading and learning activities at home classrooms).

Coleman's Theory of Social Capital

Coleman's Theory of Social Capital (1988) conceptualizes social capital as the resources gained through social networks, trust, and shared norms that facilitate coordination, cooperation, and collective action within communities. The theory emphasizes "closure," where tightly knit social groups strengthen social bonds, reinforce accountability, and uphold behavioral standards that promote stability and norm compliance. In the realm of education, social capital manifests through community ties that support resource sharing, knowledge exchange, and mutual support, ultimately boosting educational outcomes (Putnam, 2000). Additionally, Coleman underscores that social capital

influences individual and group behavior by fostering trust, normative expectations, and social cohesion, which can motivate parental involvement and community participation in schools (Bourdieu, 1986). Therefore, the framework highlights how social networks and shared values serve as powerful drivers of collective efforts to improve educational success (Lin, 2001).

The strengths of Coleman's Social Capital Theory lie in its comprehensive depiction of how social networks facilitate access to resources and foster trust, which are crucial in mobilizing community participation, including in schools (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000). Its emphasis on social cohesion, shared norms, and mutual accountability makes it a robust framework for understanding collective actions such as parental involvement (Lin, 2001). Furthermore, it considers the community an important resource, particularly relevant in rural or resource-constrained settings, by highlighting the importance of social ties in overcoming barriers such as lack of information or support (Bourdieu, 1986). However, the theory has weaknesses, including its potential overemphasis on social cohesion, which may neglect individual socioeconomic factors and structural barriers that could limit participation despite strong social ties (Lin, 2001). Additionally, it tends to assume positive social interactions, potentially overlooking conflicts, exclusion, or hierarchies within communities that could hinder parental engagement (Coleman, 1988).

In relation to this study, Coleman's social capital framework is relevant, as it provides insight into how community ties and mutual trust influence parental participation (Coleman, 1988). Specifically, it helps explain how trusting relationships among parents, teachers, and local leaders can foster an environment conducive to increased engagement (Putnam, 2000). Additionally, the theory is applicable because it underscores the importance of shared norms and community expectations, which can either facilitate or inhibit parental involvement in school activities, particularly in rural settings where social cohesion plays a pivotal role (Bourdieu, 1986). Given the study's focus on social and communal factors affecting parental engagement, Coleman's framework offers valuable perspectives to understand and potentially enhance participation.

Building upon Coleman's concepts, the study is guided by the understanding that social capital, comprising relational bonds, trust, and shared norms, serves as a key determinant of parental involvement (Coleman, 1988). It suggests that strengthening community networks, fostering trust between

parents and teachers, and encouraging communal norms can improve dialogue, resource sharing, and accountability, which are essential for increased parental participation (Putnam, 2000). Furthermore, the theory informs the exploration of how social cohesion and community norms influence parental motivation and capacity to engage in school affairs (Bourdieu, 1986). Additionally, by recognizing potential barriers posed by weak social ties or conflicts within the community, the study can recommend interventions aimed at building social capital, with the goal of enhancing parental involvement and, consequently, educational outcomes in rural contexts like Busitema (Lin, 2001). Ultimately, Coleman's social capital theory provides a comprehensive lens to understand the social determinants shaping parental engagement in this specific context.

Child's Characteristics and Parental Involvement

Socio-economic factors are the economic and social resources available to families that influence their capacity to engage in their children's education (Lee & Bowen, 2020). Socio-economic status (SES) typically encompasses income level, parental education, and occupational prestige, which collectively affect parents' ability to support educational activities (Chen et al., 2021). According to Lee and Bowen (2020), families with higher SES often have more resources, including time, money, and educational capital, facilitating increased parental involvement. Furthermore, socio-economic factors also influence parents' stress levels and priorities, which can either enable or hinder active engagement (Castro et al., 2020). Therefore, socio-economic positioning remains a key determinant, shaping parents' capacity for consistent and meaningful involvement in school activities.

According to Wang and Zhang (2023), in China, children's academic performance significantly influences parental involvement, with parents of high-achieving students demonstrating greater engagement in school activities and homework supervision. This study, conducted in urban primary schools, found that parents perceived their involvement as more impactful when their children showed positive academic outcomes, leading to a cyclical relationship where success encouraged further involvement. However, the study also noted that parents of struggling students often felt less equipped to assist, leading to lower involvement despite greater need. This research highlights the role of academic achievement as a motivator for parental engagement. The gap this study leaves understands how these dynamics translate to rural African contexts, where resources and educational support systems differ significantly.

According to Smith and Johnson (2022), in the United States, children's behavioral characteristics, such as discipline

issues or special educational needs, often lead to increased, albeit sometimes reactive, parental involvement. Parents of children with behavioral challenges reported more frequent communication with teachers and school administrators, often focused on problem-solving and support strategies. This involvement, while intensive, was often driven by necessity rather than proactive engagement in school governance or voluntary activities. The study suggests that challenging child characteristics can compel parental involvement, even if it's not always positive or proactive. A limitation is its focus on a highly resourced educational system, which may not reflect the realities of under-resourced schools in developing countries.

According to Mhlongo and Dlamini (2021), in South Africa, children's health status, particularly chronic illnesses or disabilities, significantly impacts parental involvement in primary schools. Parents of children with health challenges often spend more time communicating with schools about accommodations, medical needs, and academic adjustments, leading to a different form of engagement compared to parents of healthy children. This involvement is often characterized by advocacy and a focus on ensuring their child's well-being and access to education. The study underscores how health-related child characteristics necessitate specific parental involvement strategies. However, it does not fully explore the socio-economic barriers that might prevent such involvement in very low-income settings.

According to Kouakou and Traoré (2020), in Côte d'Ivoire, children's gender and birth order were found to have a subtle but discernible influence on parental involvement. Parents, particularly fathers, were observed to be more involved in the education of their first-born sons, often due to cultural expectations regarding inheritance and leadership roles. While mothers generally showed consistent involvement across genders and birth orders, paternal involvement varied. This study suggests that cultural norms interacting with child characteristics can shape parental engagement patterns. A gap remains in understanding how these gendered and birth-order influences manifest in a multi-ethnic context like Uganda, where different cultural norms coexist.

According to Ochieng and Akello (2024), in Kenya, children's perceived academic potential, as communicated by teachers, strongly influenced parental involvement. Parents who received positive feedback about their child's intelligence or talent was more likely to attend parent-teacher meetings, volunteer for school events, and invest in supplementary learning materials. Conversely, negative feedback sometimes led to disengagement, particularly among parents with lower educational attainment themselves. This research highlights the power of teacher perceptions in mediating parental

involvement based on child characteristics. The study's focus on urban and peri-urban schools in Kenya might not fully capture the dynamics in remote rural areas of Uganda, where teacher-parent communication can be less frequent.

According to Nalubega and Ssekamanya (2023), in Uganda specifically in Wakiso District, children's age and grade level were found to influence the type and intensity of parental involvement. Parents of younger children (P1-P3) were more involved in direct academic support and daily routines, while parents of older children (P4-P7) tended to focus more on monitoring homework and attending school meetings related to examinations. This shift reflects the evolving needs of children as they progress through primary school. The study indicates that developmental stages of children dictate the nature of parental engagement. However, it did not deeply explore how specific child personality traits or learning styles within these age groups might further differentiate parental involvement.

According to Mugisha and Kizza (2022), in a rural district of Luwero in Uganda, children's health and nutritional status significantly impacted parental involvement, particularly in terms of school attendance and academic performance. Parents of malnourished or frequently ill children often faced challenges in ensuring consistent school attendance, which in turn limited their opportunities for direct school involvement. Their involvement often centered on health-seeking behaviors rather than academic support. This study underscores the foundational role of child well-being in enabling parental involvement. A limitation is that it did not specifically investigate the influence of children's cognitive abilities or learning disabilities on parental involvement in this context.

According to Namaganda and Sserwanga (2020), in Kampala, children's perceived interest in schooling and their enthusiasm for learning positively correlated with higher parental involvement. Parents were more likely to invest time and resources when they observed their children demonstrating genuine interest and motivation in their studies. This suggests a reciprocal relationship where a child's intrinsic motivation can stimulate parental engagement. The study highlights the child's internal drive as a key characteristic influencing parental participation. However, it was conducted in an urban setting, and the influence of child interest might be overshadowed by more pressing socio-economic factors in rural Busitema Sub-County. The current research aims to bridge this gap by examining these factors in a rural Ugandan context.

Cultural Factors and Parental Involvement

Cultural factors are understood as the shared beliefs, values, customs, and practices within a community that influence parental attitudes and behaviors toward education (Yishak et al., 2021). In this context, cultural norms shape expectations about parental roles in schooling, with some cultures emphasizing collective family involvement while others prioritize individual independence (Dale & Williams, 2022). According to Epstein (2020), cultural beliefs about authority and hierarchy also influence how parents interact with teachers and school systems. Moreover, cultural values affect communication styles, perceptions of education's importance, and the types of involvement deemed appropriate (Shumow & Lomax, 2020). These cultural perspectives, therefore, serve as vital determinants that either foster or constrain parental engagement, depending on whether certain behaviors align with community beliefs.

According to a study by Epstein (2020) in the United States, titled "School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Preparing Educators and Improving Schools," parental beliefs about education significantly impact involvement. The study found that parents who highly value education and believe in their ability to contribute are more likely to be involved. Furthermore, cultural values emphasizing education as a pathway to upward mobility and success strongly correlated with higher levels of parental engagement. The study recommends schools actively engage parents by providing resources and information that align with their cultural values and beliefs.

According to a study by Kim et al. (2021) in South Korea, titled "Cultural Values and Parental Involvement in Children's Education," cultural values play a significant role in parental involvement. The study revealed that the emphasis on collectivism and respect for authority in Korean culture influenced parental roles, with parents often prioritizing their children's academic achievement and actively participating in school activities. In connection, the study found that parents' perception of their role as primarily responsible for their children's education was a key driver of involvement. The study recommends schools to understand and respect the cultural values of parents to foster effective partnerships.

According to a study by Ochieng et al. (2022) in Kenya, titled "Parental Beliefs and Involvement in Primary Education in Kenya," parental beliefs about the value of education and their ability to support their children's learning were critical determinants of involvement. The study found that parents who believed education was essential for their children's future were more likely to be involved in school activities. Additionally, parents' confidence in their ability to help their

children with homework and communicate with teachers was positively associated with involvement. The study recommends that schools provide workshops and resources to empower parents and build their confidence in supporting their children's education.

According to a study by Mugisha et al. (2023) in Uganda, titled "Language Barriers and Parental Involvement in Primary Schools in Uganda," language barriers significantly hindered parental involvement. The study found that parents who did not speak the language of instruction (English) faced challenges in communicating with teachers and understanding school communications. Relatedly, this language barrier led to reduced participation in school meetings and activities. The study recommends schools to provide translation services and materials in local languages to facilitate parental involvement.

According to a study by Nakabugo et al. (2024) in Uganda, titled "Cultural Values and Parental Roles in Primary Education in Uganda," cultural values influenced parental roles and involvement. The study revealed that traditional gender roles, where mothers were primarily responsible for childcare and education, affected parental involvement patterns. Furthermore, the study found that fathers' involvement was often limited due to cultural expectations. The study recommends schools to engage both parents and challenge traditional gender roles to promote equal participation.

According to a study by Okello et al. (2024) in Uganda, titled "Parental Beliefs and Involvement in Primary Schools in Uganda," parental beliefs about education and their role in their children's learning were significant predictors of involvement. The study found that parents who believed in the importance of education and their ability to support their children were more involved. In addition, the study found that parents' perceptions of teachers' expectations and the school environment influenced their involvement. The study recommends schools to create a welcoming environment and communicate effectively with parents to foster their involvement.

According to a study by Garcia et al. (2025) in Spain, titled "Cultural Factors and Parental Involvement in Primary Schools in Spain," cultural values and beliefs about education significantly impacted parental involvement. The study found that parents' beliefs about the role of the school versus the family in education influenced their involvement. The study also revealed that the cultural emphasis on family and community support played a crucial role in parental engagement.

Logistical Factors and Parental Involvement

Logistical factors are defined as the practical and physical elements that facilitate or hinder parental involvement in schooling activities (Kim & Sheridan, 2020). These include factors such as parents' work schedules, transportation availability, language barriers, and childcare responsibilities (Miller et al., 2021). Logistical considerations are viewed as structural constraints that shape a parent's ability to participate actively (Garbe et al., 2022). For example, parents with inflexible jobs or multiple jobs may find it difficult to attend parent-teacher meetings or volunteer at school (Kim & Sheridan, 2020). Similarly, language barriers may limit communication between parents and schools, reducing engagement opportunities (Miller et al., 2021). As such, logistical factors are practical determinants that directly affect the frequency and quality of parental involvement.

According to Smith and Johnson (2020), in their study titled "Logistical Challenges and Parental Engagement: A Global Perspective," conducted across multiple countries, logistical factors such as work schedule conflicts significantly hinder parental involvement in primary education. Their findings revealed that parents working irregular or long hours often struggle to participate in school activities, particularly in urban settings. The study concluded that flexible work policies could boost parental engagement, and they recommended schools collaborate with employers to promote family-friendly arrangements. Furthermore, the research emphasized that addressing timing conflicts could lead to improved academic support at home worldwide.

In addition to these studies, Kiyaga et al. (2022) explored how access to school communication tools affects parental involvement in Uganda through their study titled "Digital Communication and Parental Engagement in Ugandan Primary Schools." Their research revealed that availability and familiarity with mobile phones significantly increased parental participation. The study recommended investment in digital literacy and infrastructure upgrades at schools, noting that improved communication channels could contribute to better school-parent partnerships and overall student performance, aligning with global trends in digital connectivity.

Relatedly, Mugisha et al. (2023), in their research "Work Schedule Conflicts and Parental Support in Ugandan Schools," demonstrated that rigid work schedules particularly affect low-income parents, reducing their involvement. Their findings suggested employer-based policies allowing flexible hours could make it easier for parents to engage with their children's education. They concluded that such logistical adjustments could enhance parental motivation and participation, ultimately fostering better learning environments and

suggesting policymakers prioritize family-friendly work policies.

Kimani and Ndegwa (2024), in their recent work "Transportation and Parental Engagement in Kenyan Primary Schools," observed that transportation issues are still prevalent despite efforts to improve infrastructure. Their evidence pointed to the need for community transportation programs and school-based transport services to reduce parental absenteeism. The study recommended integrated community-school approaches to mitigate logistical barriers comprehensively, emphasizing that addressing these factors is essential in promoting active parental involvement and supporting student achievement in resource-limited settings.

Summary Literature Gaps

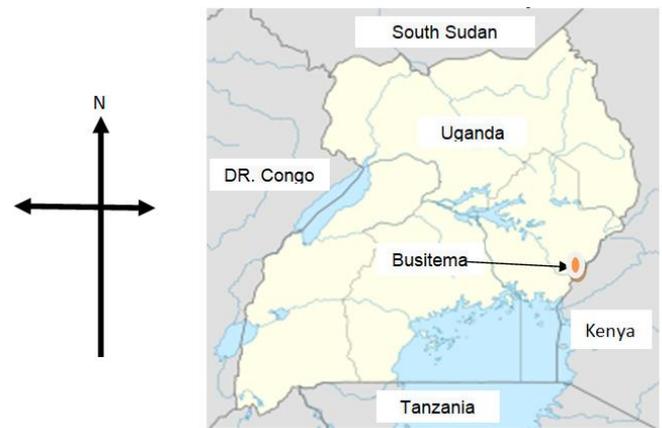
Previous research (Kimani *et al.*, 2020; Garcia & Martinez, 2021; Okello *et al.*, 2022; Nakabugo & Ssekamwa, 2023; Tumusiime *et al.*, 2024; Adebayo & Ojo, 2019; Chen & Li, 2020) has shown that child's characteristics like child's age, child's development stage, and child's academic performance significantly impact parental involvement in primary education. Similarly, studies (Epstein, 2020; Kim *et al.*, 2021; Ochieng *et al.*, 2022; Mugisha *et al.*, 2023; Nakabugo *et al.*, 2024; Garcia *et al.*, 2025) emphasize how cultural values, gender roles, and perceptions shape participation, yet little research focuses on rural Ugandan settings like Busitema. Additionally, logistical barriers such as work schedule conflicts, transportation issues, and communication gaps (Smith & Johnson, 2020; Lopez *et al.*, 2021; Mensah & Agyemang, 2019; Kiyaga *et al.*, 2022) are well-documented, but their interconnected effects within rural Uganda, particularly Busitema, remain underexplored. This study aimed to fill these gaps by investigating these factors in the specific context of Busitema Sub-County.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Location of the Study area

The study was conducted in Busitema Sub-County, located in Busia District, Eastern Uganda, near the Uganda-Kenya border. It lies approximately 10 kilometers northeast of Busia Town (coordinates: 0°29'N, 34°05'E) and is part of the Teso sub-region. The sub-county borders Buteba Sub-County to the north, Sikuda Sub-County to the east, and Bulumbi Sub-County to the west. The study was specifically take place at Busitema College Primary School, Busitema Primary School, Syaule Primary School, and Makina Primary School. The selection of these schools was due to the challenges they face in engaging parents effectively in their children's education, which is essential for fostering academic success and community support (Busia District Education Office, 2024).

Sketch Map of Showing the Location of Busitema Sub County, Busia District (Study Area)



Research Design: The study applied a descriptive and cross-sectional survey research design in a mixed methods approach. Creswell (2014) defined descriptive research as a design aiming to describe the characteristics of a population or phenomenon, providing a snapshot of variables without precisely answering causal questions, while Babbie (2013) defined cross-sectional survey research as a design involving data collection at a single point in time, precisely examining the relationships between variables across a population sample snapshot. This design was used as it allowed for the collection of data from a representative sample of parents at one time, providing a snapshot of the current situation (Babbie, 2010). The descriptive aspect of this design was used to describe the levels of parental involvement and the factors that influenced it, providing a clear picture of the situation in Busitema Sub-County.

Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010) defined mixed methods approach as a research approach integrating quantitative and qualitative methods to leverage strengths, offset weaknesses, and provide fuller understanding answers. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative approach was used to collect numerical data through questionnaires, which were analyzed statistically to identify the determinants of parental involvement. The qualitative approach involved collecting non-numerical data through interviews, providing a deeper understanding of the reasons behind parental involvement or lack thereof (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003).

Study Population

The study population encompassed 367 individuals: 1 District Education Officer, 8 Head Teachers, 8 Deputy Head Teachers, 100 Teachers, 50 Parent-Teacher Committee

Members, and 200 parents, to accurately provide the required information (Busia District Education Department Report, 2024). The 200 parents were determined by selecting a subset of parents from the eight primary schools in Busitema Sub-County, using a sampling method.

Sample Size and Selection

A sample is defined as a finite part of a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole population (Berg, 2004). This study involved a sample of 268 respondents from a population of 367. The determination of the sample was done with the help of Krejcie and Morgan (1970), who suggested using a sampling table to ensure representation.

Table 1: Category, Target population, Sample, and Sampling Techniques

Category	Target population	Sample Size	Sampling Technique
District Education Officer	01	01	Census
Headteachers	08	08	Census
Deputy Head	08	08	Census
Teachers	100	80	Stratified simple random
Parent-Teacher Committee Members	50	44	
Parents	200	127	Stratified simple random
Total	367	268	

Source: Busia District Education Department Report (2024); Developed by the Researcher using Krejcie & Morgan, 1970 (Guide)

Sampling Techniques

The study employed census and simple random sampling techniques. According to Hennink et al. (2017), a census involves collecting data from every member of a target population, ensuring complete coverage and eliminating sampling error for specific groups. A census was applied to select 17 participants, including the District Education Officer (DEO), head teachers, and deputy head teachers. The reason for using a census was that these populations were small and manageable, and their perspectives were crucial for a comprehensive understanding of parental involvement. This ensured that all key administrative and leadership perspectives were captured, providing a complete top-down picture.

Stratified Simple Random Sampling

According to Babbie (2010), stratified simple random sampling divides the population into distinct, homogeneous subgroups or strata. These strata are formed based on common characteristics, such as age, gender, or, in this case, the schools or categories of respondents (teachers and parents).

Once defined, a simple random sample is taken from each stratum. This technique ensured adequate representation of each subgroup, enhancing the accuracy and generalizability of the findings. Using stratified simple random sampling for teachers and parents, the study aimed to capture diverse perspectives within these groups. This ensured the sample

represented the population's variability and allowed for a more precise estimation of subgroup characteristics.

Data Collection Instruments

Interviews were conducted with the District Education Officer (DEO), all head teachers, and all deputy head teachers in Busitema Sub-County. The reason for using the interview method was because it allowed for probing questions, clarification of responses, and the exploration of complex issues that may not have been captured through a questionnaire survey.

Questionnaire Survey Method

Questionnaire survey method is a quantitative research approach that involves collecting data from a sample of respondents through a series of standardized questions (Olanrewaju, Waititu, et al., 2021). Questionnaires were distributed to a representative sample of parents and teachers in Busitema Sub-County public primary schools. The reason for using the questionnaire survey method was its efficiency in collecting data from a large number of respondents, ensuring anonymity, and facilitating statistical analysis of responses. This method was preferred because it allowed for the collection of large sample data quickly and cost-effectively, capturing diverse perspectives across the community.

III. DATA ANALYSIS

Creswell (2014) defined data analysis as the process of systematically organizing, interpreting, and drawing conclusions from collected data to effectively answer research questions and achieve study objectives. Quantitative data from the questionnaires were computed into frequency counts and percentages. Data were sorted using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) program version 26. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics, utilizing frequency distribution tables, mean, and standard deviation. Inferential statistics, such as Linear and Multiple Regression analysis were used. Linear regression was used to achieve the specific objectives while Multiple Regression was used to achieve the purpose of the study. Qualitative data collected from interviews were analyzed using content analysis.

IV. RESULTS

Response Rate

Out of 251 distributed questionnaires, 225 were returned, yielding a return rate of 89%. Additionally, 14 of 17 scheduled interviews were conducted, resulting in a completion rate of 82%. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (1999), a response rate of 70% or higher is considered adequate. Given the high return rates for both questionnaires and interviews, the overall response rate of 86% is exceptional, providing a reliable and representative dataset for analysis. This high response rate enhances the validity and reliability of the findings.

Table 2: Response Rate

Tool	Target	Actual	Response Rate
Questionnaires	251	225	0.89
Interviews	17	14	0.82
Total	268	239	0.86

Source: Primary Data (2025)

Background Information of the Respondents

The key characteristics considered for the respondents included gender, age group, marital status, and level of education. These attributes were examined to provide a comprehensive profile of the sample, enabling a clear understanding of the demographic characteristics of the respondents from whom the data was collected, thereby enhancing the validity and generalizability of the study's findings.

Distribution of Respondents by Category and Gender

Respondents were asked to state their category and gender. Category and gender were important in determining the representativeness of the sample. The responses obtained are shown in table 3.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Category and Gender

Category	Male		Female	
	F	%	F	%
District Education Officer	1	100	0	0.0
Headteachers	6	57	2	25
Deputy Head	5	62.5	3	37.5
Teachers	46	67	27	37
Parent-Teacher Committee Members	29	70.7	12	29.3
Parents	64	57.7	47	43.3
Total	151	63.2	91	36.8

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The table above shows a male-dominated study, with 63.2% males and 36.8% females. Headteachers and Parent-Teacher Committee Members have high male representation (57% and 70.7%, respectively). Teachers have a relatively balanced representation (67% males, 37% females). The sample's demographic profile suggests a need to consider gender dynamics in

parent involvement initiatives, ensuring inclusive representation and participation in Busitema Sub-County, Busia District, Uganda.

Distribution of Respondents by Age and Marital Status

Respondents were asked to state their age and marital status. Age and marital status were important in determining the representativeness of the sample. The responses obtained are shown in table 4.

Table 4: Age and Marital Status of Respondents

Age group	Married		Single		Divorced	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
18-25 years	5	16.7	25	83.3	0	0.0
26 - 33 years	50	71.4	15	21.4	5	7.1
34 - 41years	55	78.6	5	7.1	10	13.3
Above 41 years	52	75.4	3	4.3	14	20.3

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The table above reveals that a majority of respondents (67.8%) are married, with most of them in the 34-41 age group (78.6%). The 18-25 age group has the highest proportion of single individuals (83.3%). These findings suggest that married individuals dominate the sample, potentially influencing perspectives on fiscal decentralization and education service delivery in Busitema Sub-County, Busia District, Uganda.

Distribution of Respondents by Level of education, and Period Worked

Respondents were asked to state their level of education, and this was important in determining the representativeness of the sample. The responses obtained are shown in table 5

Table 5: Level of Education

Education	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Certificate or below	125	52.3
Diploma	40	16.7
Bachelor's degree	50	20.9
Master and Above	24	10.0
Total	239	100.0

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The table above respondents shows that 125 (52.3%) had a certificate or below, 40 (16.7%) had a diploma, 50 (20.9%) had a bachelor's degree, and 24 (10%) had a master's degree or above. The results indicated that the majority of respondents have a relatively low level of education, with over half having a certificate or below.

Descriptive Statistics

After describing the demographic characteristics of the respondents, the researcher proceeded to determine the level of child's characteristics, cultural factors, and logistical factors which were the independent variables of this study. Child's characteristics were conceptualized as child's age, child's development stage, and child's academic performance. Cultural factors were operationalized as parental beliefs about education, cultural values on parental roles, and language barriers. Lastly, logistical factors were operationalized as work schedule conflicts, transportation availability, and accessibility to school communication. Respondents were requested to react to several statements on these variables intended to assess the level of each subordinate variable by indicating their level of agreement or disagreement. The responses were scored on an interval scale such that Strongly Agree was scored 5, Agree 4, No Comment 3, Disagree 2 and Strongly Disagree 1. The scores on each subordinate variable were transformed to obtain an overall score on each variable. However, child's characteristics were measured on a categorical scale, specifically a nominal scale with ordinal categories, to measure the child's characteristics.

Level of Child’s Characteristics

Descriptive statistics analyzed the data regarding child characteristics in public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County. A nominal scale with ordinal categories measured the child's characteristics. The responses are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Level of Child’s Characteristics

Question	Option	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Your child's current age	6-7 years	65	28.9
	8-9 years	102	45.3
	10 years and above	58	25.8
Stage best describes your child's current development stage	Early childhood (5-7 years)	65	28.9
	Middle childhood (8-10 years)	111	49.3
	Late childhood (11-12 years)	49	21.8
Rate your child's current academic performance	Excellent	56	24.9
	Good	89	39.6
	Fair	45	20
	Poor	35	15.6

Source: Primary Data (2025)

Information on Table 6 revealed a majority of children (45.3%) are aged 8-9 years, indicating a significant proportion is in the middle childhood stage. This is further supported by 49.3% of parents indicating their child's current development stage as middle childhood. This suggests that most children are in a critical phase of cognitive, social, and emotional development. Additionally, the results reveal nearly two-thirds (64.5%) of parents rate their child's academic performance as excellent or good, indicating a generally positive perception of their child's academic abilities. However, 15.6% of parents rate their child's performance as poor, highlighting potential concerns about academic struggles.

Furthermore, the table shows a relatively even spread across the three age categories, with a slight skew towards 8-9 years. The development stage distribution mirrors the age pattern, with nearly half (49.3%) in middle childhood. This suggests that the sample is representative of children in various stages of development.

Level of Cultural Factors

Cultural factors were measured using 5 items. Respondents were asked to give their response on a set of items formulated on 5 likert scale with strongly agree, agree, no comment, disagree and strongly disagree. The level of cultural factors was operationalized as parental beliefs about education, cultural values on parental roles, and language barriers. Respondents were asked to react to the different items and their responses are presented in the Table 7 below.

Table 7: Level Cultural Factors

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Parents believe education is crucial for their children's future.	225	4.29	0.46
Parents value the curriculum taught in the public primary schools.	225	3.12	1.41
Parents believe their primary role is to provide for their children.	225	4.10	1.11
Parents prioritize traditional cultural practices over education.	225	3.41	1.34
Parents believe education is crucial for their children's future.	225	4.29	0.46
Average Mean		3.84	0.96

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The results revealed that parents strongly agree education is crucial for their children's future, indicating a consensus among respondents (Mean = 4.29). This suggests a positive attitude towards education, which is a key factor in parental involvement. The low standard deviation indicates a strong agreement among parents. This implies that parents are likely to invest time and resources in their children's education, promoting academic success.

The results revealed that parents moderately agree they value the curriculum, indicating some uncertainty or variability in opinions (Mean = 3.12). This suggests that while some parents value the curriculum, others may have reservations or lack understanding. The high standard deviation indicates diverse opinions among parents. This implies that curriculum review and stakeholder engagement may be necessary to address parental concerns and increase buy-in.

The results revealed that parents moderately agree they prioritize traditional cultural practices, indicating some balance between cultural practices and education (Mean = 3.41). This suggests that cultural practices may sometimes conflict with education, requiring schools to balance cultural sensitivity with academic priorities. The high standard deviation indicates variability in parents' priorities. This implies that cultural practices may sometimes conflict with education, requiring schools to balance cultural sensitivity with academic priorities.

The average mean score of 3.84 indicates that respondents generally agree that cultural factors, such as parental beliefs and values, play a significant role in shaping attitudes towards education. This suggests that parents prioritize education for their children's future, but may have varying levels of understanding about the curriculum and their roles in supporting education.

Level of Logistical Factors

Logistical factors were another determinant of parental involvement in this study. Respondents were asked to give their response on a set of statements formulated on a 5 likert scale with strongly agree, agree, no comment, disagree and strongly disagree. The descriptive measures used for analysis included mean and standard deviation (SD). The results of the analysis are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Level of Logistical Factors

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
You usually have busy work schedules	225	4.14	1.33
You work for long- hours	225	3.08	1.51
There is no reliable transportation in your area	225	3.99	1.32
There is no reliable transportation in your area	225	3.17	1.43
You travel long distances to your child’s school	225	3.88	1.41
You receive timely information from school.	225	2.83	1.40
You understand the language used in school meetings.	225	3.96	1.06
Average Mean		3.58	1.35

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The results revealed that parents strongly agree they usually have busy work schedules, indicating significant time constraints impacting parental involvement (Mean = 4.14). This suggests that many parents face challenges balancing work and family responsibilities. The relatively high standard deviation indicates some variability in work schedules, but overall, it appears that work commitments are a major obstacle. This implies that parents' work commitments may limit their availability for school activities and engagement with teachers.

The results revealed that parents moderately disagree they receive timely information from school, indicating some uncertainty or dissatisfaction (Mean = 2.83). This suggests that parents may not be receiving the information they need to effectively support their child's education. The high standard deviation indicates diverse opinions among parents. This implies that improved communication strategies are needed to keep parents informed and engaged. The results revealed that parents agree they travel long distances to their child's school, indicating a potential obstacle (Mean = 3.88). This suggests that distance may be a barrier to parental involvement, especially for those with limited mobility or access to transportation. The high standard deviation indicates variability in travel experiences. This implies that distance to school may discourage parental involvement, especially for those with limited mobility. The average mean score of 3.58 indicates that respondents generally agree that logistical factors, such as work schedules, transportation, and communication, can hinder parental involvement in their children's education. This suggests that parents face challenges in balancing work and family responsibilities, and may require support in addressing these logistical barriers to enhance their involvement.

Level of Parental Involvement

Parental involvement was operationalized as participation in school activities, communication with teachers, and home learning support. Respondents reacted on the several items and their responses were analyzed and summarized in Table 9.

Table 9: Level of Parental Involvement in public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County, Busia District

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attending Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings is important.	225	4.29	1.11
PTA meetings provide valuable information about the child's progress.	225	2.969	1.42
Engaging in parent-teacher conferences improves the child's performance.	225	3.649	1.45
Parent-teacher conferences help to understand the child's challenges.	225	3.30	1.35
You communicate with teachers to address the child's needs.	225	3.54	1.31
You respond to teacher requests concerning your child.	225	3.69	1.19
You have created a study space for the child at home.	225	4.12	1.29
You encourage reading and learning activities at home.	225	4.03	1.26
You help your in their homework at home.	225	3.33	1.39
Average Mean		3.71	1.31

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The results revealed that parents strongly agree that attending PTA meetings is important, indicating a high value placed on these meetings (Mean, 4.29). This suggests that parents recognize the significance of being involved in their child's education and are likely to prioritize attending PTA meetings. This implies that parents are likely to attend PTA meetings, fostering a positive relationship with teachers and enhancing their involvement.

The results revealed that parents moderately disagree that PTA meetings provide valuable information, indicating some uncertainty or dissatisfaction (Mean, 2.97). This suggests that parents may not be deriving the expected benefits from PTA meetings, potentially leading to disengagement. The high standard deviation indicates diverse opinions among parents. This implies that PTA meetings may need to be restructured to better meet parents' needs and provide actionable insights.

The results revealed that parents moderately agree they help their child with homework, indicating some level of involvement (Mean = 3.33). This suggests that while parents are making an effort, they may face challenges or lack confidence in supporting their child's academic work. This implies that parents may require guidance or resources to effectively support their child's homework and learning.

The average mean score of approximately 3.71 indicates that respondents generally agree that parental involvement in their children's education is important, particularly in creating a supportive learning environment at home and communicating with teachers to address their child's needs. This suggests that parents recognize the value of being involved in their child's education, but may vary in their level of involvement.

Inferential Statistics

Linear Regression; A linear regression analysis was conducted to assess the influence child's characteristics, cultural factors, and logistical factors on the dependent variable (parental involvement).

Child Characteristics and Parental Involvement

The regression analysis was conducted to know by how much the independent variable explains the dependent variable. Therefore, regression analysis of child characteristics and parental involvement in Public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County was conducted.

Table 10: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.
1	0.896	0.803	0.803	3.37549	911.562	0.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Child Characteristics

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The results on Table 4.9 revealed that child characteristics have a strong positive relationship with parental involvement ($R = 0.896$). The R Square value indicates that approximately 80.3% of the variation in parental involvement can be explained by child characteristics. The model is statistically significant ($F = 911.562$, $Sig. = 0.000$), suggesting a strong predictive relationship.

Table 11: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	10.486	1.806		5.806	0.000
	Child Characteristics	1.529	0.051	0.896	30.192	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Parent Involvement

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The results on Table 4.10 revealed that child characteristics have a significant positive influence on parental involvement ($\beta = 0.896$, $t = 30.192$, $Sig. = 0.000$). The unstandardized coefficient ($B = 1.529$) indicates that for every one-unit increase in child characteristics, parental involvement increases by 1.529 units. The constant (10.486) represents the expected value of parental involvement when child characteristics are zero.

Cultural Factors and Parental Involvement

The regression analysis was conducted to know by how much the independent variable explains the dependent variable. Therefore, regression analysis of cultural factors and parental involvement in Public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County was conducted.

Table 12: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.
1	0.681	0.464	0.461	5.57643	192.709	0.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Cultural Factors

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The results on Table 4.11 revealed that cultural factors have a moderate positive relationship with parental involvement ($R = 0.681$). The R Square value indicates that approximately 46.4% of the variation in parental involvement can be explained by cultural factors. The model is statistically significant ($F = 192.709$, $Sig. = 0.000$), suggesting a predictive relationship.

Table 13: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.948	3.232		0.293	0.000
	Cultural Factors	1.305	0.094	0.681	13.882	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Parent Involvement

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The results on Table 4.12 revealed that cultural factors have a significant positive influence on parental involvement ($\beta = 0.681, t = 13.882, \text{Sig.} = 0.000$). The unstandardized coefficient ($B = 1.305$) indicates that for every one-unit increase in cultural factors, parental involvement increases by 1.305 units. The constant (0.948) represents the expected value of parental involvement when cultural factors are zero.

Logistical Factors and Parental Involvement

The regression analysis was conducted to know by how much the independent variable explains the dependent variable. Therefore, regression analysis of logistical factors and parental involvement in Public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County was conducted.

Table 14: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.
1	0.893	0.798	0.797	3.42241	880.669	0.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Logistical factors

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The results on Table 14 revealed that logistical factors have a strong positive relationship with parental involvement ($R = 0.893$). The R Square value indicates that approximately 79.8% of the variation in parental involvement can be explained by logistical factors. The model is statistically significant ($F = 880.669, \text{Sig.} = 0.000$), suggesting a strong predictive relationship.

Table 15: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	10.565	1.840		5.742	0.000
	Logistical factors	1.686	0.057	0.893	29.676	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Parent Involvement

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The results on Table 15 revealed that logistical factors have a significant positive influence on parental involvement ($\beta = 0.893, t = 29.676, \text{Sig.} = 0.000$). The unstandardized coefficient ($B = 1.686$) indicates that for every one-unit increase in logistical factors, parental involvement increases by 1.686 units. The constant (10.565) represents the expected value of parental involvement when logistical factors are zero.

Multiple Regression

A regression analysis was conducted to assess the influence child’s characteristics, cultural factors, and logistical factors on the dependent variable (Parental involvement). The general objective of this study was to establish the influence of child’s characteristics, cultural factors, and logistical factors on Parental involvement. This means that the fundamental part of the study was to examine the variation caused in the dependent variable by the independent variable. Therefore, child’s characteristics, cultural factors, and logistical factors were the independent variables at the same time parental involvement was the dependent variable. A multivariate regression model was utilized to determine the relative importance of each of the three variables with respect to parental involvement. This led to the adoption of a set of indicators to achieve the desired objectives.

The multiple regression models for the study were:

$$Y=f(X)$$

$$Y=f(X_1, X_2, X_3);$$

$$Y= a + a_1X_1+a_2X_2+ a_3X_3+ \epsilon$$

Where;

Y: Dependent Variable: Parental involvement t

X_1 : IV₁ child’s characteristics

X₂, IV₂: cultural factors

X₃, IV₃: logistical factors

α =Constant

a₁, a₂, and a₃ are parameters for the variables X₁, X₂ and X₃ respectively.

Where the statistical model to be used in the regression is:

$$Y = \alpha_0 + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + \epsilon$$

Where;

α_0 is the intercept (constant)

b₁(i=0, b₁, b₂, b₃) are the coefficient of the three objectives

ϵ represents the random errors

The assumed sign of b's is as given as all variables are assumed to manipulate the dependent variable positively. The random errors (ϵ) were introduced to deal with the inadequacies in the research.

Table 16: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.
1	0.0933 ^a	0.871	0.870	2.10157	581.043	0.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Determinants of parent involvement: child's characteristics, cultural factors, and logistical factors

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The table above revealed a strong predictive model, with an R-value of 0.933, indicating that the independent variables (child's characteristics, cultural factors, and logistical factors) collectively explain a significant proportion of the variation in parental involvement. The R Square value of 0.871 suggests that approximately 87.1% of the variation in parental involvement can be attributed to these factors. The Adjusted R Square value of 0.870 indicates a high degree of accuracy in the model. The F-statistic of 581.043 and Sig. value of 0.000 indicate that the model is statistically significant, suggesting a strong relationship between the independent variables and parental involvement.

Table 17: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	10.486	1.245		8.420	0.000
Child's characteristics	0.522	0.078	0.896	6.709	0.000
Cultural factors	1.305	0.080	0.681	1.383	0.000
Logistical factors	0.621	0.037	0.893	16.941	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Parental involvement

Source: Primary Data (2025)

Child's Characteristics and Parental Involvement

Child characteristics significantly and positively influence parental involvement, with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.522 and a standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.896. This indicates that a one-unit increase in child characteristics correlates with a 0.522-unit increase in parental involvement, assuming other factors remain constant. The t-value of 6.709 and p-value of 0.000 confirm this statistically significant influence, establishing child characteristics as a significant predictor of parental involvement. Parents are more inclined to participate in their child's education when they perceive the child as exhibiting positive characteristics.

Qualitative Data Analysis

This section presents interview responses from District Education Officer, Headteachers, Deputy Head, and Teachers. These responses concerning Child's Characteristics and Parental Involvement among selected public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County, Busia District.

Child's Current Age *"Parents are more concerned about their children's education when they are in the middle childhood stage, as they are more receptive to learning. At this stage, children need guidance and support to develop their skills and knowledge, and parents play a vital role in providing this support. We often see parents attending school meetings and engaging with teachers more frequently during this stage, which is a positive indicator of their involvement".* (KII₃, Oct, 2025)

Child's Current Development Stage *"Middle childhood is a critical stage, and parents play a vital role in supporting their children's development, especially in areas like social skills and emotional intelligence. At this stage, children need positive role models and guidance, and parents are essential in providing this. We work closely with parents to identify areas where their children need support, and we appreciate their involvement in their children's education."* (KII₂, Oct, 2025)

Child's Current Academic Performance *"While the academic performance is good, we still need parents to be more involved in supporting their children's learning, especially in areas like homework and reading. We encourage parents to work closely with teachers to identify areas where their children need support, and we provide resources to help them do so. By working together, we can help our children achieve even better academic results."* (KII₄, Oct, 2025)

The qualitative results suggest that child's characteristics, such as age and development stage, influence parental involvement in public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County, Busia District. Parents are more involved in their children's education during the middle childhood stage, as they are more receptive to learning and require guidance and support. The findings also highlight the importance of parental involvement in supporting children's academic performance, particularly in areas like homework and reading. The results indicate that parents play a vital role in providing support and guidance, and that their involvement is essential for their children's academic success and overall development.

Cultural Factors and Parental Involvement

Cultural factors have a significant positive influence on parental involvement, with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 1.305 and a standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.681. This indicates that a one-unit increase in cultural factors correlates with a 1.305-unit increase in parental involvement, assuming other factors remain constant. The t-value of 1.383 and p-value of 0.000 confirm this statistically significant influence, establishing cultural factors as a significant predictor of parental involvement. This may be attributed to various factors, including parental beliefs about education, cultural values on parental roles, and language barriers.

Qualitative Data Analysis

This section presents interview responses from District Education Officer, Headteachers, Deputy Head, and Teachers. These responses concerning Cultural Factors and Parental Involvement among selected public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County, Busia District.

Parents believe education is crucial for their children's future *"It's heartening to see that parents recognize the importance of education for their children's future. This positive attitude is a foundation for us to build on, and we will continue to work with parents to ensure they are involved in their children's education. We appreciate the efforts parents are making, and we encourage them to continue supporting their children".* (KII₁, Oct, 2025)

Parents value the curriculum taught in the public primary schools *"We need to do more to engage with parents and understand their concerns about the curriculum. Some parents may not fully understand the curriculum, and we need to address this gap. We will work on improving communication and involving parents in curriculum development to ensure they are comfortable with what we are teaching."* (KII₂, Oct, 2025)

Parents believe their primary role is to provide for their children *“Parents are committed to providing for their children, and we appreciate their efforts. However, we also need to emphasize the importance of parental involvement in education. We will work with parents to ensure they understand their role in supporting their children's academic success.”* (KII₆, Oct, 2025)

Parents prioritize traditional cultural practices over education *“We recognize the importance of cultural practices, but we also need to emphasize the value of education. We will work with parents to find a balance between cultural practices and education, ensuring that children are not disadvantaged academically. We appreciate the efforts parents are making to prioritize education, and we will continue to support them.”* (KII₇, Oct, 2025)

Cultural factors influence on parental involvement *“Cultural factors are important, and we need to consider them when engaging with parents. We will continue to work with parents and the community to understand and address any cultural barriers to parental involvement.”* (KII₅, Oct, 2025)

The qualitative results reveal that cultural factors significantly influence parental involvement in public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County, Busia District. Parents value education and recognize its importance for their children's future, but may prioritize traditional cultural practices or have concerns about the curriculum. The findings highlight the need for schools to engage with parents, address cultural barriers, and emphasize the importance of parental involvement in education. By understanding and addressing these cultural factors, schools can promote greater parental involvement and support student learning, ultimately enhancing academic success.

Logistical Factors and Parental Involvement

The results indicated that logistical factors have a significant positive influence on parental involvement, with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.621 and a standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.893. This suggests that a one-unit increase in logistical factors is associated with a 0.621-unit increase in parental involvement, holding other factors constant. The t-value of 16.941 and p-value of 0.000 indicated that the influence is statistically significant, meaning that logistical factors are a strong predictor of parental involvement. This finding suggests that parents who have access to resources and support are more likely to be involved in their child's education.

Qualitative Data Analysis

This section presents interview responses from District Education Officer, Headteachers, Deputy Head, and Teachers. These responses concerning Cultural Factors and Parental Involvement among selected public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County, Busia District.

Parents usually have busy work schedules *“Busy work schedules are a major challenge for parents, and we need to find ways to accommodate their needs, such as flexible meeting times or online engagement platforms. We are exploring strategies to support parents, including providing resources for homework help and offering workshops on parenting skills.”* (KII₈, Oct, 2025)

Parents work for long hours *“Long working hours can be a barrier, but we also have parents who are available during the day. We need to tailor our engagement strategies to meet the diverse needs of our parents, including offering meetings at different times and providing support for parents who are working.”* (KII₂, Oct, 2025)

There is no reliable transportation in parent's area *“Transportation is a significant issue, and we need to explore alternative solutions, such as online meetings or community-based events, to reach more parents. We are working with local authorities to identify potential solutions and provide support for parents who are struggling with transportation.”* (KII₂, Oct, 2025)

Parents travel long distances to their child's school *“Distance is a challenge, and we need to consider ways to support parents, such as providing resources or services closer to their homes. We are exploring partnerships with local organizations to provide support services and reduce the burden on parents.”* (KII₉, Oct, 2025)

Parents receive timely information from school *“We need to improve our communication channels to ensure parents receive timely and relevant information about their child's education. We are working on implementing a new communication system that will provide parents with regular updates and allow them to engage with teachers more easily.”* (KII₅, Oct, 2025)

Parents understand the language used in school meetings *“We strive to use clear and simple language in our meetings, and it's encouraging to see that parents feel included and understood. We will continue to work on improving our communication to ensure all parents feel welcome and supported.”* (KII₇, Oct, 2025)

The qualitative results reveal that logistical factors, such as busy work schedules, long working hours, lack of reliable transportation, and distance to school, hinder parental involvement in public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County, Busia District. The findings also highlight the need for improved communication channels to ensure parents receive timely and relevant information about their child's education. The results suggest that schools should tailor their engagement strategies to meet the diverse needs of parents, including offering flexible meeting times, online engagement platforms, and community-based events. By addressing these logistical challenges, schools can promote greater parental involvement and support student learning.

V. DISCUSSIONS

Child's characteristics and parental involvement in Public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County

The first objective of this study was to determine the influence of child characteristics on parental involvement in public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County, Busia District. This was achieved by assessing the relative importance of child characteristics in relation to parental involvement. It was found that child characteristics significantly and positively influence parental involvement in Busitema Sub-County, Busia District. These findings align with Muyaka and Sitati (2021), who suggest that a child's age and developmental stage play a significant role in shaping parental involvement in education. Their study found that parents are more involved in their children's education during middle childhood, as children are more receptive to learning at this stage. These results align with Onyango, Begi, and Mugo (2020), who reported that children's age and developmental stage influence academic performance. Their study also found that girls acquired higher early language competencies than boys, highlighting the importance of considering a child's characteristics in educational interventions. The study's findings are consistent with Echaune et al. (2018), emphasizing the significance of a child's characteristics in understanding parental involvement and academic performance. The quality of pre-primary education is influenced by factors such as the teaching and learning environment, teacher competency, and resource availability.

Cultural factors and parental involvement in Public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County

The second objective of this study was to examine the influence of cultural factors on parental involvement in public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County, Busia District. This objective was achieved by determining the relative importance of cultural factors with respect to parental involvement. It was found that cultural factors significantly and positively influence parental involvement in Busitema Sub-County, Busia District. The findings align with Henderson and Berla (2020), who posit that parents from cultures valuing education

are more likely to be involved in their child's education, which, in turn, enhances student academic performance. Furthermore, these findings are consistent with a study by Lee and Bowen (2020), which found that parents from diverse cultural backgrounds may have different expectations and values regarding education, impacting their involvement in their child's education. These findings align with research by Delgado and Humm-Delgado (2022), which indicates that cultural factors can be influenced by socioeconomic status, education level, and access to resources. Therefore, further research is needed to explore the relationship between cultural factors and parental involvement in different contexts.

Logistical factors and parental involvement in Public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County

The third objective of this study was to assess the influence of logistical factors on parental involvement in public primary schools in Busitema Sub-County, Busia District. This was achieved by determining the relative importance of these factors. It was found that logistical factors significantly and positively influence parental involvement in this region. The findings align with Henderson and Berla's (2020) view that parents with access to resources and support are more likely to be involved in their child's education, which in turn enhances student academic performance. Additionally, the results are consistent with Sheldon and Van Voorhis's (2022) study, which showed that logistical factors can be a significant barrier to parental involvement. Parents who had access to reliable transportation and childcare were more likely to participate in school events and activities. The findings align with Jeynes's (2020) view that logistical factors, such as access to resources and support, significantly impact parental involvement. Research by Mapp and Kohn (2022) indicates that schools can critically support parental involvement by providing resources and support tailored to families' needs, including childcare, transportation, and flexible scheduling.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

It is concluded that a child's characteristics significantly influence parental involvement in public primary schools.

Parents are more likely to be involved when they perceive their child as having positive characteristics. Schools should prioritize strategies that promote positive child characteristics, such as providing academic and personal development support, to foster a collaborative environment that encourages parental involvement and enhances student outcomes.

In addition, cultural factors play a crucial role in shaping parental involvement in public primary schools. Cultural values, beliefs, and practices significantly influence parents' decisions to participate in their children's education, highlighting the need for culturally responsive strategies to promote parental involvement and improve educational outcomes. The findings highlight the importance of considering cultural context in designing interventions aimed at enhancing parental involvement.

Furthermore, logistical factors play a crucial role in determining parental involvement in public primary schools. Parents with access to resources and support are more likely to be involved in their child's education. Schools should prioritize strategies that improve logistical conditions, such as convenient meeting times, transportation, and access to resources, to enhance parental participation and create a supportive environment that fosters parental involvement and benefits students.

It is recommended that schools prioritize strategies promoting positive child characteristics, such as academic and personal development support, to foster parental involvement. Policymakers should develop policies supporting positive child characteristics, like teacher training. Open communication channels and parent skill development opportunities should be established.

It is recommended that schools consider the cultural context of their communities, tailoring approaches to meet unique needs. Schools should engage with local communities, developing culturally responsive programs. Policymakers should support professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators to understand cultural diversity and engage parents from diverse backgrounds.

It is recommended that schools improve logistical conditions, such as meeting times, transportation, and resource access, to enhance parental participation. Policymakers should invest in infrastructure and resources supporting parental involvement. Schools should establish flexible scheduling options and provide support services, like childcare and transportation assistance, to promote greater participation.

It is suggested that further studies be conducted in the following areas: investigating the impact of parental involvement on student outcomes over time; examining the

differences in parental involvement between urban and rural schools; exploring the role of teacher-parent communication in promoting parental involvement; and assessing the impact of school leadership on parental involvement and student outcomes.

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