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School Dropout and Students' Academic Performance in Public Twelve Years Basic Education Schools of Rwanda

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Abstract

The school dropout rate reduces significantly the school productivity including the students' academic performance mostly in twelve years basic education in Rwanda. The purpose of this study therefore sought to establish the relationship between school dropout and student's academic performance in public twelve years' basic education schools of Burera District in Rwanda. Correlation research design was employed. The target population was 3575 people and Yamane (1967) formula was used to get the sample size of 360 respondents. Questionnaire and interview guide were used during data collection. IMB SPSS software version 20 was used in management of quantitative data. The findings revealed that 79.2% strongly agreed that poor attendance can lead to school dropout. It was also noted that 79.4% strongly agreed that getting low Scores in examination can be considered as poor learning perspective. The findings also revealed that there is a statistical relationship between school dropout and student's academic performance in public twelve years' basic education schools. The study concludes that there was a positive and statistically significant relationship between school dropout and students' academic performance in public twelve years' basic education schools in Burera District. The study recommends that school head teachers should be held accountable for reducing the student dropout rate in secondary schools. They should also collaborate with stakeholders to secure effective resources for food preparation in schools. Additionally, the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) should change the method by which it obtains funds to sustain school feeding programs. Although it may be difficult and complicated, schools and parents should work together to provide varied meals for students.

Keywords: *School dropout, students' academic performance, school enrolment and twelve Years Basic education, Rwanda*

1.0 Introduction

Globally, according to the Alliance for Excellent in Education (AEE), over 1.3 million pupils from the United States drop out of school each year, with the majority being young people. Too numerous learners do not complete their education, which is detrimental to the United States' long-term socioeconomic outlook; individuals between between the ages of 18 and 67 who remain uneducated earn the same earnings. The primary cause of school dropout is students' struggle with comprehending or combining social life and schooling; abilities are prized, and numerous learners may confront difficulties, such as socioeconomic status or after-school programmes. Teenagers are disinterested in their studies; they have trouble comprehending the professors and the educational procedures. (Rumberger, 2011). According to Mehta's (2022) report, education serves as the cornerstone for a flourishing and empowered society. Education is essential to an entire country's progress. Nevertheless, politicians and educators are deeply concerned about dropout rates in Indian institutions. It is also a major concern in numerous countries around the world, particularly in developing nations.

The rate of dropping out is expressed as the percentage that comprises pupils who quit school before completing their course of study or grade. It is a key indicator of the educational system's performance. According to UDISE, 2021,22 data, the overall percentage of students who leave in India's schools is 1.5 percent, which is lower than the preceding year's rate of 1.8 percent. According to the UDISE 2021, 22 data, the secondary school age group (9-10) has the greatest rate of dropping out (12.6 percent), which is followed by upper primary (6-8) at 3 percent and primary (1-5) at 1.5 percent. The data also shows that girls have a greater rate of dropping out than boys across all levels of study. According to Kalinga's (2022) report, the nation of the Philippines has recently seen one of the greatest per capita growth rates in the Southeast Asian region. Economic growth, urbanisation, and transportation are all rising, but not everyone reaps the rewards from this economic boom; over twenty-five percent of mankind continuing to live in abject poverty. Children are among those most seriously impacted by this awful situation. Instead, as their families are forced to compel them to find employment or even live on the street. According to the current PSA (Philippine Statistics Authority) estimates, 2.1 million children aged 5 to 17 have been abused through compelled employment, with even more engaging in child labour.

Currently, one in every six Filipino youngsters does not attend school. And this figure is rising, with an abandonment rate of 28% in primary educational institutions and 59% in high school. For those who succeed in managing to complete their education, accessing the job market is so difficult that the young rate of joblessness has reached a staggering 28%, which is four times the number of adults. To capitalize on the potential made accessible by this nation's present phase of economic growth, a focus on younger people and matching what they want is required through enhanced access to outstanding schools, adequate learning places of confinement, and actual work possibilities. Locally, at the moment, more African children are beginning school than ever before, yet dropout rates remain high, resulting in low levels of both primary and secondary school graduation in many countries (UN 2020). According to a recent UNESCO (2020) report, the adjusted net enrolment rate in primary educational institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa increased from 74% in 2007 to 78% in 2018. However, it has been estimated that only about 70% of students

beginning elementary school in Africa's sub-Saharan region finish it. Whenever it comes to finishing secondary school, the number of students graduating drops drastically, going just about 30% (for lower secondary education) and roughly 14% (for more advanced secondary education) of individuals enrolling finish their secondary schooling (UN 2020; African Union 2016).

Most policy initiatives focus on the supply side of the education sector, such as boosting school building, providing educational materials, training educational professionals, and improving programming (Grimm, 2011). However, numerous research investigations have found that monetary wealth is the most significant demand-side factor influencing the choices educators make to withdraw youngsters from school. Because of the insufficient capacity to smooth expenditure through borrowing and investment (Jacoby and Skoufias, 1997). Numerous families in nations with lower levels of development are compelled to discover alternate ways to deal with adverse revenue fluctuations. Because schooling is a considerable expense for many people's homes, one long-term option is to withdraw children from school as a means of smoothing expenditure in the near run (Haer & Bakaki 2022). It is reported that more African children are starting educational institutions than at any time before, but rates of dropping out remain high, leading to low levels of secondary school and primary school completion in numerous nations (UN 2020). According to a recent UNESCO (2020) report, the adjusted net participation rate in primary educational institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa jumped from 74% in 2007 to 78% in 2018. While it comes to finishing secondary school, the number of students graduating drops dramatically: only about 30 percent (for lower secondary education) and 14 percent (for more advanced secondary education) of those registered finish their secondary schooling (UN 2020 & African Union 2016).

Most policy initiatives focus on addressing the supply side of the education sector, such as building more schools, providing educational materials, training educational professionals, and improving the educational programme (Grimm 2011). However, multiple studies have found income as the most significant demand-side factor impacting the choices teachers make to withdraw students from education (Glewwe & Jacoby 2004; Cogneau & Jedwab, 2008; Grimm 2011). Due to a restricted capacity to moderate expenditures from borrowing and investments (Jacoby & Skoufias 1997). Numerous families in nations with lower levels of development are compelled to discover alternate ways to deal with negative income fluctuations. Because education is a major expenditure for many people's homes, one long-term option is to withdraw youngsters from school as a means of smoothing expenditures in the near run (Haer & Bakaki 2022). After surviving the humanitarian period, Rwanda's future was clearly expressed and chronicled in the century's Vision 2020, a national declaration that reflects Rwanda's objectives for development. The document identifies different foundations that will contribute to the envisioned growth and development, including human resource development and the creation of an economy based on knowledge. Vision 2020 also emphasizes gender, equity, as well as equality as an interconnected issue, implying the right quantity as well as quality of educational opportunities at all levels.

Public, business, and nonprofit organizations have implemented plenty of initiatives to reduce the number of students who leave school. For example, the UK-funded Innovation for Education project partnered with the national organization Imbutu Organization to support creative educational initiatives in Rwanda. In keeping with the African adage, "It takes an entire community to raise a child," this project produced excellent outcomes, such as increased educator engagement

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in school administration. As a consequence, 9,484 boys and girls are said to have been successfully enrolled to school in the legislative regions of Musanze, Burera, as well as Ngororero (Imbutu Foundation, 2013). Even with such effective attempts, frightening school rates of abandonment are still shown in present-day educational data. Granton H. Hull and Karen K. Kirst-Ashman (2012) counter that inclination by pointing out that every family has a distinct structure with recognisable patterns of linkage. Lim (2010) indicates that three elements should be taken into consideration while analysing families in their study done in the USA: the assets of the family, family practices, and According to these writers, there is a lower probability of dropout among kids who live alongside both professors. The likelihood of dropping out of education increases when family composition changes as well as when life events like divorce, sickness, passing away, and family relocation occur together. It is also proposed that family resources, including family income, teachers' educational experiences, and their line of work, reduce the possibility of school dropouts.

Lastly, in the words of Rumberger, R.W. (2011), a youngster who has a child who has dropped out of school is more likely to do the same. Despite the fact that the current study was conducted in the USA, the Rwandan chapter of Education for All (2015) National Review appears to concur with some of the research's findings, pointing out that various factors, such as spending at home, teachers' lack of interest in teaching, and responsibilities at home, affect dropping out of school in Rwanda. Apart from the previously discussed reasons, it has also been suggested that the asymmetrical labour distribution in households detrimentally impacts girls' schooling. Lire Ersado (2005) discovered that females often perform more housekeeping duties than their male peers and that urban girls perform fewer household chores than their rural counterparts in a comparative study conducted in Nepal, Peru, and Zimbabwe. Girls are far more inclined than boys to drop out of school as a consequence of the ingrained perception that girls are more adept at home tasks than boys, according to Rwanda's National Education for All Evaluation (2015). Peace Uwineza and Elisabeth Pearson (2009) contend that if households were better off, access to and control over resources would shift.

Traditionally, when materials were scarce, men and boys would use the resources that were available. According to the UNESCO (2019) report, several countries have comparatively elevated starting numbers of students enrolled but low early childhood education graduation rates. The study focused on global progress achieved towards achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE). The substantial number of students who drop out of school before finishing their elementary education must be rectified straight away, according to the UNESCO (2019) Global Assessment on Education. Impact boys and girls differently due to gender-specific standards in society, suggesting that these factors may have a varied impact on the educational attainment of boys and girls. Impact of dropout rates on academic performance of students in Rwandan state twelve-year fundamental educational institutions. The application of rates of dropping out as they relate to academic accomplishment in Rwandan public twelve-year elementary school campuses might have a number of implications.

First of all, because dropouts lose out on valuable learning chances and materials, high rates of dropping out are associated with worse educational achievement among students. This may cause

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an understanding disparity to develop between students who stay in educational institutions and those who leave, which in turn may cause dropouts perform less well academically. Second, high rates of dropping out may be a sign of problems with the atmosphere of the school, resources, or instructional strategies. These factors are capable of having deleterious impact on the overall quality of education throughout public schools. This may result in fewer students repeating their education, which would feed the vicious cycle of low educational achievement and high rates of abandonment. Thus, in order to enhance the educational results in Rwanda's public twelve-year fundamental education system, it is imperative to adopt an integrated approach to studying the consequences of dropout on the academic performance of students along with working towards addressing the fundamental causes of dropout.

1.1 Statement of problem

Rwanda bases its international responsibilities on the old Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the present Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); Rwanda is one of the few underdeveloped nations that did well in the MDGs. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2014), elementary school enrolment jumped from 72.6% in 2000 to 96.5% in 2012. Moreover, the percentage of students who finished elementary school rose from 24.1% in 2000 to 72.7% in 2012. These outcomes were accomplished, through various audacious utilitarian measures, by making elementary school in Rwanda mandatory for nine or twelve years and free of charge (9/12YBE). Every child deserves to attend an all-encompassing, free, and mandatory school, under this regulation. It was nine years when it began, encompassing three years for secondary school and six years for early childhood education. Later, it was enhanced to six years of free universal education following primary school.

The high percentage of school dropouts in Rwanda continues to rise despite these improvements, with the elementary school dropout rate rising to 14.3% in 2014 from 11.4% in 2010. In the lower secondary schools (grades 8, 9, and 10) and upper secondary (grades 11 and 12), the dropout rates were 14.7% and 6.2%, respectively, in 2016. These figures are higher than in 2010, when the total percentage of students who dropped out had been 7.4% (Ministry of Education, MINEDUC, 2016). In this regard, it is noted in the 2017 education report that "a significant abandonment rate of 28.3% has been found in Primary 5, compared to 13.8% for Primary 2, while the smallest dropout rate of 10.2% is observed in Primary 1" (Workforce Development Authority, 2018). According to the 4th Rwanda Population and Housing Census (2012RPHC4), only 64 percent of children with disabilities were enrolled in school, 27 percent had never attended, and 9 percent had dropped out early. The 2017 research by the Rwanda Education Board states that the dropout and repetition incidence among primary and secondary school pupils was very high across multiple districts, including Burera, Ngororero, and Musanze.

1.2 Objective of the study

The objective of this study was to establish the relationship between school dropout and student's academic performance in public twelve years' basic education schools of Burera District in Rwanda.

2.0 Literature Review

The literature review was discussed in sections.

2.1 The School Dropout Concept

UNICEF (2022), according to the definition of dropping out, it occurs when a child of elementary school age does not attend consistently for a year or longer or does not enroll at the institution or leaves it before successfully completing the educational stage that they are doing homework, whether out of choice or due to other circumstances. UNESCO (2022) defines an abandoned student as somebody who quits school before finishing their secondary education and does not finish their studies. Dropout is a way to define educational poverty in the field of education, and the student leaving a program of study in one of its different stages, according to the Arab Organisation for Educational institutions Culture, and Science. De Witte and Csillag (2013) indicate that school dropout is a learner's incapacity to continue with education, usually owing to their capabilities, while Reddy and Sinha (2010) are of the view that the system is to blame for the learner's inability to continue in school. In either of these cases, I believe both perspectives on this subject are adequate to address school dropout issues in Rwanda. But it is important to acknowledge that identifying school dropout issues might be extremely difficult as the reason for non-completion is influenced by many factors, including aspects connecting to what matters to the pupil and the surroundings of the house, classroom, and neighborhood in which the kid was raised (Rumberger & Lim, 2014).

From personal and observational experiences, even though dropouts provide an assortment of justifications for their academic abandonment, these may not always address the root problems, particularly in Rwandan society, where education and schooling are recognized as the most efficient means of alleviating poverty and, consequently, the process that ensures the self-perpetuation of poverty through social structures and systems. Despite being a global event, school dropout has different aspects and causes depending on psychological, socioeconomic, and economic variables in different parts of the world. Nevertheless, there are certain lessons to be learned from world-wide standards for containing the threat. Foraker (2017) claims that as a result of how German schools diversified their curriculum based on the skills and preferences of their students, rates of abandonment were comparatively low.

Fetler (2019) significantly discovered that dropout rates proved to be lower in schools with greater academic achievement levels. Colbey (2015) noted that teachers aim for positive outcomes, like excellent grades and future employment, but also try to prevent adverse consequences like children mistreating their educators, school dropouts becoming delinquent, schoolgirls objecting to conventional marriage customs, their incapacity to perform necessary household chores, etc. In an effort to avoid these characteristics, teachers may choose to continue sending their children home from the classroom or remove those who are already enrolled. Numerous causes, such as a lack of school supplies and literature, inadequate instruction, a shortage of teachers, long walking distances to school, the expensive cost of educational materials, pregnancy, marriage before marriage, poverty in the household, etc., have been implicated in Rwanda's high rate of dropping out of school.

While many educators are swift to blame poverty for the number of students who leave school, educators, political figures, and instructional authorities—those with a thorough comprehension of the livelihood habits as well as the mindset of instructors towards learning—frequently voice questions about this claim. The majority of them claim that educators, particularly those in high school, are more focused on the academic success of their pupils. This indicates that the core phenomena of dropping out of school in various parts of Zimbabwe have multiple intricate elements.

2.2 Academic achievement and Drop out

Numerous studies have investigated how educational environments affect the performance of pupils (Rumberger & Thomas, 2017). Push-out theories, in particular, suggest that particular educational institution procedures and regulations deter pupils from concluding their high school education. These hypotheses concentrate on elements of education, like specific disciplinary processes and accountability applications, that make schools uncomfortable and weaken young people's bonds with them (Jordan & McPartland, 2016). Educational institutions may have straightforward rules about behavior, participation, or bad grades that include long-term suspensions, referrals to other programs, and involuntary withdrawal from school. Additionally, schools may implement regulations and processes that impact the circumstances that maintain students' interest in learning, which may lead to individuals choosing to withdraw from education (Rumberger, 2014). Push-out theorists contend that the choice someone makes to drop out of school is not entirely explained by their unique personality traits. Rather, a confluence of personal and institutional circumstances motivates the departure (Fine, 2017). Contextual aspects of schools, like population, location, ethnic makeup, and impoverished circumstances, have all been linked to academic accomplishment.

Students learn more in medium-sized institutions than in smaller and particularly larger ones, although there are fewer learning gaps in smaller middle and high schools compared to larger ones (Lee & Smith, 2018). Teachers in smaller schools have greater accountability for their pupils than those who teach in larger institutions (Lee & Loeb, 2020). Thus, kids might receive less tailored care in large institutions since teachers and counselors may not know them as well as they do in small schools. The intellectual profile of a school is additionally connected to the demographic makeup of its student population. According to Goldschmidt and Wang (2019), there is an upward relationship between the proportion of Latino enrolled students and the early high school graduation rate. In schools wherein the student body is over 40% minority, Rumberger (2014) found a positive correlation between the percentage of minority students and the dropout rate. Furthermore, even after adjusting for personal considerations like socioeconomic status, he discovered that children attending schools with poor socioeconomic status have a higher likelihood of dropping out. We account for factors related to the school's location and capacity as well as the cultural background and socioeconomic level of its student body in the ensuing analyses.

2.3 Link between Academic achievement and students drop out

In the beginning, educators are expected to provide pupils with immediate information regarding failure via established achievement evaluation techniques. Students who are having difficulty may

grow weary of hearing unfavorable remarks and conclude that school is not an appropriate environment for them. Overall, research in 1989 demonstrates that high school students' concerns about graduation and decreased expectations become more acute when they fail a portion of a competency exam. Secondly, educators may concentrate on children whose previous academic achievement is somewhat below their grade level and ignore those whose academic achievement is much below grade level if academic achievement is determined by the percentage of students who earn test results above a certain threshold. This tactic might assist a school in meeting its proficiency goal. It is likely that the pupils who are barely below grade level will pass the test and raise the educational institution's overall performance rating. Even if students who are substantially below grade level make progress, it's possible they won't meet the necessary passing mark, and the school's performance would suffer. Third, if educators push difficult students to leave school, transfer, or adopt a homeschooled schedule in order to improve the school's ranking, there might be a clearer connection between that action and a greater likelihood of dropping out.

Additionally, studies demonstrate that schools purposefully remove particular students from high-stakes examinations in response to educational accountability mechanisms. According to Darling and Hammond (2016), schools with the highest rates of retention in grades and dropout have seen a rise in test results at the educational level. A study conducted on Chicago publicly funded educational institutions found that high-stakes examinations increased the number of students remaining in the assessments before the entrance exam years, especially for low-achieving youngsters and kids attending underperforming schools. Stated differently, pupils who perform worse would be excused from the rigorous tests for an additional year (Jacob, 2015). Low-achieving and low-socioeconomic pupils in Florida were significantly more likely to be placed in disability classifications that are exempt from testing following the adoption of an educational institutions accountability system (Figlio & Getzler, 2022). As a result of increased incentives, Texas schools classified more kids as having special needs and encouraged absences (Cullen & Reback, 2016). The departure of low-achieving students also resulted in the impression of growing test scores and a closing achievement disparity (Radigan & Heilig, 2018).

3.0 Research Methodology

This study employed correlation research design. The target population was 3575 people and Yamane (1967) formula was used to get the sample size of 360 respondents. Questionnaire and interview guide were used during data collection. IMB SPSS software version 20 was used in management of quantitative data and thematic analysis for qualitative data. Inferential statistics like correlation and regression analysis were computed. Tables were used to present quantitative findings and textual model for qualitative findings.

4.0 Findings

The finding of this study was present due to objective which was to establish the relationship between school dropout and student's academic performance in public twelve years' basic education schools of Burera District in Rwanda.

4. 1 School Dropout in twelve years' basic education schools of Rwanda in Burera district

The tables 1 illustrate how the participants responded to the following statements.

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Table 1: Teachers perception on School Dropout in twelve years’ basic education schools of Rwanda in Burera district

Statements	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	Std
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Poor attendance indicate the dropout of student in secondary schools .	9	6.0	7	4.7	8	5.4	7	4.7	118	79.2	1.536	1.171
Low grade point average indicate the dropout of student in secondary schools.	2	1.3	7	4.7	8	5.4	9	6.0	123	82.6	1.503	1.171
Low standardized test composite scores indicate the dropout of student in secondary schools.	5	3.4	7	4.7	9	6.0	9	6.0	119	79.9	1.537	1.17
Number of grade retentions indicate the dropout of student in secondary schools.	8	5.4	8	5.4	12	8.1	6	4.0	115	77.2	1.537	1.17
Free/reduced lunch program indicate the dropout of student in secondary schools.	0	0.0	7	4.7	10	6.7	10	6.7	122	81.9	1.543	1.21

Results in Table 1 indicated the perception of parents on the types of domestic violence that influence children's cognitive development in Burera District, Rwanda. Accordingly, 118 (79.2%) Teachers strongly agreed that poor attendance indicates the dropout of students in secondary schools, 123 (82.6%) Teachers strongly agreed that a low-grade point average indicates the dropout of students in secondary schools, 119 (79.9%) Teachers strongly agreed that low standardized test composite scores indicate the dropout of student in secondary schools, 115(77.2%) Teachers strongly agreed that Number of grade retentions indicate the dropout of student in secondary schools, 122(81.9%) Teachers strongly agreed that Free/reduced lunch program indicate the dropout of student in secondary schools. As shown the high number of respondents strongly agreed that the above statement indicate the types domestic violence in

Burera District. Rwanda According to Sang (2021), Between 2004 and 2007, dropout rates in Kericho District, Kenya, were examined in this study. In 64 schools, data was gathered from principals and guidance and counseling teachers. Dropout rates were higher in day schools than in boarding institutions, mixed schools than in single-sex institutions of learning, and single-stream schools than in schools with multiple streams. The findings may aid school administrators in making judgments on school size, regime, and type by focusing on internal efficiency indicators such as dropout rates.

4.2. The level of academic performance in twelve years’ basic education in Rwanda in Burera District

This study determined the level of academic performance in twelve years’ basic education in Rwanda especially in Burera District

Table 2: Students ’s Perception towards the level of academic performance in twelve years’ basic education in Rwanda especially in Burera District

Statements	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	Std
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Exam results demonstrate my academic performance.	4	4.4	3	3.3	2	2.2	9	10.0	72	80.0	1.422	1.016
My academic achievement can be determined by my abilities as a student.	4	4.4	3	3.3	4	4.4	8	8.9	71	78.9	1.455	1.040
My intellectual capacity reflects how well I do in school	5	5.6	4	4.4	4	4.4	9	10.0	68	75.6	1.733	1.234
Students’ academic performance is shown by their success rate	6	6.7	5	5.6	8	8.9	11	12.2	60	66.7	1.577	1.199

Results presented in Table 2 show that 80.0% strongly agreed that exam results demonstrate their academic performance, and 78.9% strongly agreed that academic achievement can be determined by their abilities as a student. Additionally, 75.6% strongly agreed that intellectual capacity reflects how well they do in school, and 66.6% strongly agreed that students' academic performance is shown by their success rate. According to Escardíbul (2018), improving a school's accountability score leads to better success for all students and a decrease in dropout rates. However, the study does provide some evidence that greater academic achievement leads to decreased dropout rates. It suggests that accountability mechanisms negate any indirect benefits from increased rates of

dropping out and instead prioritize dropout preventative measures. This might involve increasing the dropout age and including zero marks on end-of-grade evaluations in the school's achievement aggregate among pupils who drop out.

4.3: The relationships between school dropout and student’s academic performance
Table 3 Correlation between school dropout and student’s academic performance

		Poor attendance	Low grade point average	Low standardized test composite scores	Number of grade retentions	Free/reduced lunch program	Scores in examination	Students’ competences	Intellectual capacity	Success rate of students
Poor attendance	Pearson Correlation	1.000								
	Sig. (2-tailed)									
	N	357								
Low grade point average	Pearson Correlation	.387**	1.000							
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000								
	N	357	357							
Low standardized test composite scores	Pearson Correlation	.180**	.426**	1.000						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	.000							
	N	357	357	357						
Number of grade retentions	Pearson Correlation	.212**	.363**	.296**	1.000					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000	.000						
	N	357	357	357	357					
Free/reduced lunch program	Pearson Correlation	.069	.046	.066	.059	1.000				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.287	.482	.307	.362					
	N	357	357	357	357	357				
Scores in examination	Pearson Correlation	.781**	.251**	.133*	.134*	.027	1.000			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.023	.038	.672				
	N	357	357	357	357	357	357			
Students’ competences	Pearson Correlation	.805**	.270**	.145*	.165*	.887**	.030	1.000		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.025	.011	.000	.638			
	N	357	357	357	357	357	357	357		
Intellectual capacity	Pearson Correlation	.855**	.276**	.122	.136*	.031	.865**	.885**	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.059	.036	.637	.000	.000		
	N	357	357	357	357	357	357	357	357	
Success rate of students	Pearson Correlation	.693**	.309**	.073	.708**	.675**	.760**	.748**	.695**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.023	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	357	357	357	357	357	357	357	357	357
**.					Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					
*.					Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).					

Findings from Table 3 indicated a strong relationship was established between exam scores and the following statements: with poor attendance ($r=.781^{**}$, $p\text{-value}=0.000$), low grade point

average (.270**, p-value=0.000), with low standardized test composite scores (.133*, p-value=0.023). The relationship is positive since the p-value was less than 0.05, explaining that exam results affect poor attendance, low grade point average, low standardized test composite scores, number of grade retentions, and free/reduced lunch program, and vice versa. For students' competences, a strong relationship was established with poor attendance at ($r=.805^{**}$, p-value=0.000), low grade point average (.251**, p-value=0.000), with low standardized test composite scores (.145*, p-value=0.025), verbal abuse: ($r=.165^*$, p-value=0.000). The association is positively related because the p-value was less than 0.05, explaining that exam scores affect poor attendance, low grade point average, low standardized test composite scores, number of grade retentions, and free/reduced lunch program, and vice versa. For students' success rate, a strong relationship was established with poor attendance at ($r=.693^{**}$, p-value=0.000), low grade point average (.309**, p-value=0.000), with low standardized test composite scores (.073*, p-value=0.025), free/reduced lunch program ($r=.887^{**}$, p-value=0.000). The association is positively related because the p-value was less than 0.05, explaining that exam scores affect poor attendance, low grade point average, low standardized test composite scores, number of grade retentions, and free/reduced lunch program, and vice versa. (Alexandre, 2020) looked at the changes in personal characteristics of high school dropout students between the eighth and twelfth grades. Students in the National Educational Longitudinal Study: 1988-1994 took part in three waves of data collecting but dropped out before finishing high school. According to the report, in the 10th and 12th grades, academic performance and relationships with instructors and classmates were much worse than the national average. The research emphasizes the significance of interventions during the crucial transition to high school.

5.0 Summary of findings

The objective of this study was to find out to establish the relationship between school dropout and student's academic performance in public twelve years' basic education schools of Burera District in Rwanda. It was noted that there is significant correlation between students' academic achievement and school dropout rates in Rwanda's public 12-year basic education schools. The association was positive, with a p-value of less than 0.05. Students' competences also showed a strong relationship with Scores in examination, Students' competences, with a p-value of less than 0.05, kids' intellectual capacity and success rate also demonstrated a high correlation with low grade point average, low attendance, low composite scores on standardized tests, number of grade retentions, and free or reduced lunch programme.

6.0 Conclusion

The study concludes that there was a positive and statistically significant relationship between school dropout and students' academic performance in public twelve years' basic education schools in Burera District. The findings revealed strong positive correlations between exam scores and factors like poor attendance, low grade point average, low standardized test scores, grade retentions, and participation in the free/reduced lunch program. Similarly, students' competences and success rates were positively correlated with these academic performance indicators. This suggests lower academic achievement increases the risk of students dropping out of school. The

study highlights the need for interventions to improve academic performance and address underlying factors contributing to school dropout.

7.0 Recommendations

Basing on the presented findings and drawn conclusion, the recommendations were addressed:

- School head teachers should be held responsible to reduce the students' dropout rate in secondary school.
- School head teachers should also collaborate with other stakeholders to get effective resources for use in food preparation.
- MINEDUC should change the method by which it obtains funds to sustain it. Even if it is difficult and complicated, schools and parents should collaborate to provide variety in feeding pupils.

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