

**ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL-GOING  
CHILDREN SPONSORED BY COMPASSION INTERNATIONAL IN NORTHERN  
UGANDA**

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**UGANDA CHRISTIAN  
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## DECLARATION

I, **EMMANUEL NYIRINGABO**, hereby declare that this dissertation entitled, “Academic Performance Improvement for Primary School-Going Children Sponsored by Compassion International in Northern Uganda” is truly my original work and has never been submitted to any other University or Institution for any award of degree or any other qualification.



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**21<sup>st</sup> March 2025**

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## APPROVAL

I certify that this dissertation entitled “Academic Performance Improvement for Primary School-Going Children Sponsored by Compassion International in Northern Uganda” has been under my supervision and is now ready for submission to the school of postgraduate for external examination.



Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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Date: March 22, 2025

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved wife, Grace Nasan Nyiringabo, for her endless support and prayers in every walk of life. I also extend my heartfelt gratitude to our beloved children for their energy-giving support and motivation.

Special thanks to the Compassion International Uganda team for their generosity in covering my tuition fees. I am particularly grateful to Emmanuel Ahimbisibwe, my immediate supervisor, Lenny Mugisha, the National Director at the time, and the People and Culture team, including Nancy Ahairwe and Darcy Uwera Birungi. I also appreciate the accounts team for promptly clearing the tuition fee bills when needed.

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

UNEB – Uganda National Examinations Board

PLE- Primary Leaving Examinations

CDC – Child Development Centre

GSDRC – Governance and Social Development Resource Centre

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

IICBA – International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa

UNICEF- United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund

FCP- Family Centered Practice

## **ABSTRACT**

Sponsored primary school children need a conducive environment to perform well in school. This study identified effective strategies that Compassion International can implement to improve the academic performance of sponsored primary school children in Northern Uganda. The research objectives were: to find out what keeps Compassion International-sponsored primary children in Northern Uganda from performing well; to investigate how parents contribute to the academic performance of Compassion International-sponsored primary children in Northern Uganda; to examine whether primary school facilities and curriculum are adequate to support the academic progress for Compassion International-sponsored primary children in Northern Uganda; and to explore the ways school practices differ across regions in Northern Uganda. A mixed-methods research design was used. A total sample size of 45 respondents was selected. Data was collected from interviews, survey questionnaires and observation.

The findings revealed that there was a recognition that improving academic performance requires a multifaceted approach. Strategies such as conducting remedial lessons, offering scholarships, and organizing sensitization meetings are commonly employed to enhance students' academic outcomes. The responses however identified several challenges specific to Northern Uganda, including poverty, low parental involvement, language barriers, and poor access to quality education. These challenges directly impacted students' academic performance and needed to be addressed in any effective intervention strategy.

The study concluded that academic performance in Northern Uganda was influenced by factors such as poverty, low parental involvement, inadequate school infrastructure, and limited resources.

A holistic approach involving community, school, and parental collaboration was crucial for improvement. Recommendations included targeted poverty alleviation programs, enhancing parental engagement, improving school infrastructure, and tailoring solutions to the unique needs of different sub-regions. Expanding scholarship programs, fostering community involvement, and implementing a strong monitoring and evaluation system are also key to boosting academic success.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the study

Poverty is a complex and multifaceted issue that has historically affected millions of people worldwide, particularly in developing regions like Northern Uganda. Todd (2019) described poverty as encompassing various dimensions, including hunger, lack of shelter, illness without access to medical care, and educational deprivation. It also manifests as unemployment, fear for the future, and the inability to meet basic needs on a daily basis (Todd, 2019). This broader definition highlighted the interconnectedness of poverty with various aspects of human life. Compassion International, a child-development ministry dedicated to alleviating poverty, defined it as a condition marked by deprivation of basic human needs, denial of opportunities, and lack of internal assets (Sim, 2014). The organization emphasized that poverty is not merely economic but also spiritual, cognitive, physical, and social-emotional (World Bank, 2018). These dimensions are critical to understanding the challenges faced by impoverished communities. Among these dimensions, cognitive development (closely tied to education) played a pivotal role in breaking the cycle of poverty, especially in regions like Northern Uganda.

Education has long been recognized as a powerful tool for social transformation. Nelson Mandela famously stated that "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world" (Duncan, 2013). Compassion International's work in Uganda since 1980 underscores this principle. The organization has partnered with local churches to support children and youth through educational initiatives. In Northern Uganda, the issue of academic underachievement among students has become increasingly alarming. Despite the availability of scholarship

opportunities aimed at supporting outstanding students, many children and youth in this region continue to struggle academically. The gap between these opportunities and the actual performance of students raises critical questions about the underlying causes of this persistent problem. If no action is taken to address these issues, the consequences for individuals and the community could be dire. The academic performance of students in Northern Uganda has consistently lagged behind that of their peers in other regions, particularly Central Uganda.

For instance, data from UNEB indicated that only 6% of candidates from Northern Uganda achieved Division One results in the Primary Leaving Examinations (Monitor, 2021). This stark contrast in performance suggests that students in Northern Uganda face significant barriers that hinder their educational progress. Factors such as inadequate teacher training, poor school infrastructure, and a lack of resources contribute to this troubling trend. Research has shown that absenteeism among teachers and students plays a significant role in poor academic outcomes (Miller, Murnane, & Willett, 2008; Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2007).

When teachers are frequently absent, they are unable to cover the required syllabus adequately, leaving students unprepared for examinations (Ahmed, 2015). Additionally, some parents exhibit neglect by failing to engage with their children's education or provide necessary support at home. This lack of involvement can lead to decreased motivation and poor academic performance among students (Monitor, 2021). Furthermore, many schools in Northern Uganda suffer from inadequate facilities and resources. A lack of teaching materials, such as textbooks and technology, hampers the learning experience for students. In many cases, schools operate under conditions that are not conducive to effective learning, which further exacerbates the challenges faced by students

(Odama, 2017). As a result, children are left without the tools they need to succeed academically. If these issues remain unaddressed, the implications for Northern Uganda could be severe. Poor academic performance limits students' chances of advancing to higher education institutions and securing meaningful employment opportunities. This not only affects individual lives but also has broader implications for community development and economic growth. The region risks being trapped in a cycle of poverty and underdevelopment if educational outcomes do not improve. It is against this background that this study was conducted.

## **1.2 Problem statement**

As of 2022, Compassion International Uganda collaborated with 485 churches and supported over 140,000 beneficiaries (Compassion International, 2022). However, despite these efforts, academic performance among registered beneficiaries remained alarmingly low in Northern Uganda. The disparity in educational outcomes across Uganda's regions is stark. Data from the 2022 Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) revealed that Northern Uganda performed significantly worse than other regions in the Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE). Only 6% of students from Northern Uganda achieved Division One results compared to 52% in Central Uganda, 30% in Western Uganda, and 13% in Eastern Uganda (Monitor, 2021). This underperformance was concerning given that education is a critical pathway out of poverty.

While Compassion International offered annual scholarships for outstanding students across Uganda (with special attention to Northern Uganda), students from this region often failed to meet the academic standards required for these opportunities. The challenges faced by students in Northern Uganda were deeply rooted in socio-economic and historical factors. The region had

endured decades of conflict and instability, which left lasting scars on its communities (GSDRC, 2016). Schools often lacked basic infrastructure such as classrooms, clean water, and teaching materials. Teachers frequently faced inadequate training and support, further compromising the quality of education delivered (Monitor, 2021). Additionally, poverty forced many children to drop out of school to contribute to household income through labor. These barriers collectively hindered students' ability to perform well academically. This study sought to address the pressing issue of low academic performance among Compassion International-sponsored children in Northern Uganda.

### **1.3 Research aim**

The aim of the research was to identify effective strategies that Compassion International can implement to improve the academic performance of sponsored primary school children in Northern Uganda.

### **1.4 Research objectives**

The research objectives were:

- i. To find out what keeps Compassion International-sponsored primary children in Northern Uganda from performing well.
- ii. To investigate how parents contribute to the academic performance of Compassion International-sponsored primary children in Northern Uganda.
- iii. To examine whether primary school facilities and curriculum are adequate to support the academic progress for Compassion International-sponsored primary children in Northern Uganda.

- iv. To explore the ways school practices differ across regions in Northern Uganda.

### **1.5 Research questions**

The research questions were:

- i. What keeps Compassion International-sponsored primary children in Northern Uganda from performing well?
- ii. How do parents contribute to the academic performance of Compassion International-sponsored primary children in Northern Uganda?
- iii. Are primary school facilities and curriculum adequate to support the academic progress for Compassion International-sponsored primary children in Northern Uganda?
- iv. In what ways do school practices differ across regions in Northern Uganda?

### **1.6 Significance of the study**

The research will enhance the understanding of the factors influencing academic performance among primary school children in Northern Uganda. The identified barriers that hinder educational success will serve as a foundation for further research in educational development. It is also anticipated that the findings will contribute to the existing body of literature on education in developing regions, particularly in contexts similar to Northern Uganda.

The study draws on existing theories related to education and poverty alleviation, thereby enriching theoretical discussions in these areas. By examining how parental involvement, school facilities, and regional differences impact academic outcomes, this research will contribute to the

development of new models or adaptations of existing theories that explain educational success in challenging environments.

Practically, this study offers actionable recommendations for Compassion International and other organizations working in Northern Uganda. By identifying effective strategies to improve academic performance among sponsored children, the findings will guide program development and resource allocation. It is anticipated that stakeholders—including educators, parents, and community leaders—will benefit from the insights gained through this research. The study may also inform best practices for enhancing educational support systems and interventions tailored to the unique needs of children in Northern Uganda.

The significance of this study extends to policy implications as well. It is expected that the findings may inform policymakers about the critical issues affecting education in Northern Uganda. By providing evidence-based recommendations, this research may influence decisions related to educational funding, curriculum development, and community engagement initiatives. Additionally, it could contribute to national efforts aimed at achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those focused on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all (Goal 4). The study may also highlight the need for policies that support parental involvement and improve school infrastructure in underprivileged regions.

## **1.7 Scope of the study**

### **1.7.1 Content scope**

The study focused on the academic performance of Compassion International-sponsored primary school children in Northern Uganda. It explored various factors that influenced their educational outcomes, including parental involvement, school facilities, and regional differences in educational practices such as North, Central, Western, and Eastern Uganda. The research aimed to identify barriers that hindered academic success and sought to propose actionable strategies for improvement. By examining the holistic development provided through Compassion International's child development centers, the study aimed to understand how these initiatives could better support children's educational needs.

### **1.7.2 Time scope**

The research covered a period from 2010 to 2024. This timeframe allowed for an examination of the historical context of Compassion International's work in Northern Uganda and its impact on children's education over the years. The study analyzed data from various academic years to identify trends in performance and assess the effectiveness of interventions implemented by Compassion International during this period. By focusing on this specific timeframe, the research aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of how changes in educational strategies affected academic outcomes for sponsored children.

### **1.7.3 Geographical scope**

The geographical scope of the study was limited to Compassion International-assisted child development centers located in Northern Uganda. This included various districts such as Kitgum,

Lamwo, and Kumi, where Compassion International had established partnerships with local churches to support vulnerable children. Each center provided holistic child development programs that addressed spiritual, physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional growth. By concentrating on these specific areas, the research aimed to gather insights into the unique challenges faced by children in Northern Uganda and how targeted interventions could improve their academic performance.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the variables involved, which would assist in identifying research gaps. By examining these themes, this literature review aimed to lay a foundation for identifying specific gaps in current research and informing future interventions aimed at enhancing academic performance among Compassion International-sponsored children in Northern Uganda.

#### **2.2 Theoretical review**

The theoretical framework for this study was grounded in several key educational theories that provide insights into the factors influencing academic performance among Compassion International-sponsored primary children in Northern Uganda. The primary theories that underpinned this research included: Social Constructivism, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and Ecological Systems Theory. Each of these theories offered a unique perspective on how various elements contribute to educational outcomes, particularly in challenging contexts.

Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943) posits that individuals must satisfy basic needs (physiological needs, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization) before they can achieve higher-level goals like academic success. This theory was chosen for its relevance to understanding the socio-economic challenges faced by families in Northern Uganda. Many children may struggle academically if their basic needs are not met. For instance, if a child is hungry or feels unsafe at school, their ability to focus on learning diminishes significantly. This

framework supported Objectives 1 and 3 by illustrating how unmet basic needs can hinder academic performance among Compassion International-sponsored children.

Social Constructivism, primarily associated with theorists such as Lev Vygotsky (1978), emphasizes the importance of social interactions and cultural context in the learning process. Vygotsky argued that knowledge is constructed through interactions with others and that learning is inherently a social process. This theory was selected for this study because it highlights the role of collaborative learning environments, which are crucial for the academic success of students in Northern Uganda. In this context, the involvement of parents, teachers, and peers can significantly influence children's motivation and engagement in learning activities. Research has shown that when students engage in collaborative tasks, they tend to perform better academically (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). This theory underpinned Objective 2 by emphasizing the importance of parental involvement and community support in enhancing academic performance.

Ecological Systems Theory, developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979), emphasizes the multiple layers of environmental influences on human development. This theory suggests that a child's development is affected not only by immediate surroundings (family and school) but also by broader societal factors. This theory was selected because it provides a comprehensive view of how various systems interact to influence educational outcomes. For example, policies at the national level regarding education funding can impact local schools' resources, which in turn affects student performance (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). This theory underpinned Objectives 3 and 4 by highlighting the importance of examining regional differences in school practices and how these differences affect student outcomes.

While each of these theories has its strengths, they also face criticisms. Maslow's theory has been criticized for its lack of empirical support and rigid hierarchy (Wahba & Bridwell, 1976). Social Constructivism has been critiqued for potentially downplaying individual cognitive processes (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2012). Ecological Systems Theory can be seen as overly complex due to its multiple layers of influence (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). However, despite these criticisms, these theories were selected for their ability to provide a comprehensive understanding of the various factors affecting academic performance among Compassion International-sponsored children.

## **2.3 Review of literature per objective**

### **2.3.1 Factors that affect the academic performance of primary children**

Research into the academic performance of students has consistently highlighted several barriers that hinder achievement, particularly among sponsored children. Compassion International (CI), which supports over 140,000 beneficiaries in Uganda, including many primary school children, aims to provide essential resources for educational success (Compassion International, 2022). However, despite these provisions, many sponsored children continue to struggle academically. Factors such as inadequate teaching materials, insufficient parental involvement, poor school environments, and discipline issues have been identified as significant contributors to this issue.

Globally, studies have shown that access to quality educational resources is crucial for student success. For instance, research indicated that the availability of teaching and learning materials directly affects students' academic performance (Michelle & Florence, 2008). When resources are

lacking, students may find it challenging to engage fully with the curriculum and achieve their academic potential. In Uganda, parents' inability to provide scholastic materials such as books and pens has been found to negatively impact students' academic outcomes (Sad & Gurbazturk, 2013). This challenge is further exacerbated by poverty levels in Northern Uganda, where families often prioritize other basic needs over education (Busingye & Najjuma, 2015). Parental involvement plays a critical role in children's education. Studies have shown that parents who actively participate in their children's schooling (by attending meetings or providing learning materials) positively influence their academic performance (Ali Shoukat, 2013). However, in many cases, parents in Northern Uganda have left the responsibility of educating their children entirely to schools or organizations like Compassion International (World Bank, 2018). This lack of engagement can lead to reduced motivation among students and hinder their ability to perform well academically.

A study conducted in Lira City revealed that when parents provided fees and scholastic materials on time, students showed significant improvement in their academic performance (Ojok & Bakashaba, 2023). The school environment also plays a significant role in determining academic outcomes. Research has shown that schools with inadequate infrastructure—such as poorly equipped classrooms or a lack of clean water—negatively affect students' ability to learn effectively (Odama et al., 2023). In Northern Uganda, many schools face these challenges due to limited funding and resources. Additionally, discipline issues among students have been linked to poor academic performance. Studies have revealed that schools with higher levels of discipline tend to achieve better results because disciplined students are more focused on their studies (Duckworth & Seligman, 2006; Odama et al., 2023).

Globally, inclusive education has been promoted as a way to improve access and equity for all learners. In Uganda, however, the implementation of inclusive education remains inconsistent due to resource constraints and inadequate teacher training (UNESCO IICBA, 2023). This inconsistency disproportionately affects regions like Northern Uganda where educational systems are already under strain. Addressing these challenges requires targeted interventions that involve parents, improve school infrastructure, and promote disciplined learning environments.

### **2.3.2 How parents contribute to the academic performance of primary children**

Parental involvement has been widely recognized as a crucial factor influencing children's academic success. Recent studies indicate that the level of education attained by parents significantly affects their children's performance in school. For example, Namukose and Sendagi (2024) found that educated parents are more likely to assist their children with homework and create a conducive environment for studying. This relationship suggests that parental education can lead to better academic outcomes for children, as parents who understand educational expectations can better support their children's learning. Research has shown that active parental participation in children's education correlates positively with improved academic performance (Ali Shoukat, 2013). A study conducted by Ojok and Bakashaba (2023) in Lira City confirmed this finding, demonstrating that when parents provided fees and scholastic materials, students' academic performance improved significantly. This highlights the importance of engaging parents in educational initiatives and providing them with the tools they need to support their children's learning effectively.

The socio-economic status of families also plays a vital role in children's education. Children from families with higher income levels often have access to better educational resources and support systems. Conversely, those from lower-income backgrounds may face challenges such as lack of study materials or a quiet space for learning (Ali Shoukat, 2013). In a global context, studies have shown that socio-economic disparities can lead to significant differences in educational outcomes. For instance, a report by UNICEF (2020) indicated that children from impoverished backgrounds are often at a disadvantage due to inadequate access to educational resources and parental support. Current literature emphasizes the need for schools to foster strong communication between parents and teachers. Yiki (2024) highlighted that effective communication enhances parental involvement, which in turn positively impacts students' academic performance. The study found that regular updates through newsletters and parent-teacher conferences encouraged parents to engage more actively in their children's education. This aligns with findings from Ayikoru (2024), who noted that parental communication significantly influences academic success in secondary schools.

Moreover, discipline within the home environment is another critical factor affecting academic performance. Research has shown that children whose parents enforce consistent rules and expectations tend to perform better academically (Wentzel, 1998). This suggests that parental guidance and monitoring play essential roles in motivating children to succeed in school. In contrast, a lack of supervision can lead to poor study habits and lower academic achievement. Globally, the role of parental involvement has been extensively studied across various educational contexts. For instance, research conducted in the United States indicated that children whose parents are involved in their education tend to have higher grades and test scores (Henderson &

Mapp, 2002). Similarly, studies in developing countries have shown that parental engagement is crucial for improving educational outcomes among disadvantaged populations (Baker et al., 2016). Therefore, understanding how parents contribute to the academic performance of Compassion International-sponsored primary children in Northern Uganda is vital for developing effective interventions.

### **2.3.3 How primary school facilities and curriculum support the academic progress for primary children**

The quality of primary school facilities and curriculum plays a crucial role in determining students' academic performance. Globally, research has consistently shown that schools with adequate infrastructure tend to achieve better academic outcomes (Duncanson, 2003; Lyons, 2002). In Uganda, however, many schools, particularly in rural areas like Northern Uganda, face significant challenges related to inadequate infrastructure and limited access to essential learning materials. These deficiencies hinder students' ability to engage effectively with the curriculum and reach their full academic potential (Michelle & Florence, 2008). Recent studies have highlighted the strong relationship between school infrastructure and academic performance. For instance, a study conducted in Kichwamba Sub County, Uganda, found a positive correlation between physical infrastructure and pupils' academic performance (Kyakyo, 2023). The research revealed that classrooms with adequate space and proper sanitation facilities created a conducive learning environment that improved student engagement and test scores. Similarly, findings from Ntungamo District emphasized the importance of sanitation facilities in boosting students' academic outcomes (Warner, 2018). These studies suggest that improving school infrastructure can significantly enhance the learning experience for students.

Globally, the availability of well-maintained school facilities has been linked to better educational outcomes. For example, research in developing countries has shown that classrooms equipped with modern teaching tools and sufficient space allow teachers to employ diverse teaching methods aligned with 21st-century skills (UNESCO IICBA, 2023). In Uganda, however, many schools operate under challenging conditions. A study by Akinmoladun and Oluwoye (2023) reported that both students and teachers often work in overcrowded or poorly maintained classrooms. This lack of proper facilities not only affects student engagement but also reduces teacher motivation and effectiveness. The curriculum also plays an essential role in supporting students' academic progress. A well-designed curriculum ensures that students acquire relevant knowledge and skills needed for future success. However, studies have pointed out that the curriculum in many Ugandan primary schools is not fully aligned with the needs of learners in rural areas (Odama et al., 2023). For example, some schools lack access to textbooks that match the national syllabus or fail to incorporate practical learning approaches into their teaching methods. These gaps can limit students' ability to grasp key concepts and perform well academically. Additionally, global perspectives emphasize the importance of extracurricular activities as part of a holistic education system. Research conducted in Rwanyamahembe Town Council Primary Schools found that recreational facilities such as playgrounds positively impacted pupils' engagement and academic performance (Warner, 2018). However, many schools in Northern Uganda lack such facilities due to limited funding (UNICEF, 2020). This absence deprives students of opportunities for physical activity and social interaction, which are critical for cognitive development and overall academic success.

#### **2.3.4 Ways in which school practices differ across regions**

Recent research has highlighted that regional disparities in teaching methods, school management practices, and available resources can lead to unequal educational opportunities for students (Naamara et al., 2017). Understanding these variations is crucial for identifying best practices that could be shared among schools serving Compassion International-sponsored children. One of the primary factors contributing to differences in school practices is the availability of resources. Schools in urban areas, particularly in Central Uganda, often have better access to teaching materials, trained teachers, and infrastructure compared to those in Northern Uganda (Spren & Topher, 2013). For example, a study conducted by the Ministry of Education and Sports (2011) found that schools in the northern region had larger class sizes and fewer qualified teachers than their counterparts in the central region. This disparity results in a higher student-to-teacher ratio, which can limit individual attention and support for students, especially those who may struggle academically.

Furthermore, the curriculum implemented in schools can also differ based on regional contexts. Research indicated that the effectiveness of curriculum implementation is often undermined by contextual factors such as teacher training and resource availability (Spren & Topher, 2013). In Northern Uganda, many teachers face challenges related to inadequate training and support, which can hinder their ability to deliver the curriculum effectively. A study by UNESCO (2023) emphasized that without addressing these contextual barriers, efforts to improve educational quality through curricular reforms would likely fall short. Discipline strategies and student engagement practices also vary significantly across regions. Schools that implement effective discipline strategies and promote positive student-teacher relationships tend to foster better

learning environments (Wentzel, 1998). In contrast, schools facing high levels of indiscipline may struggle with maintaining a conducive learning atmosphere. Research has shown that schools with supportive climates are more likely to see improved discipline and academic results (Theodore et al., 2002). This suggests that fostering a positive school culture is essential for enhancing student engagement and performance.

Globally, studies have demonstrated that parental involvement plays a significant role in shaping school practices. In regions where parents are actively engaged in their children's education, schools tend to perform better academically (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). However, in Northern Uganda, cultural factors and economic challenges often limit parental involvement. Many parents may prioritize immediate economic needs over educational engagement due to poverty or lack of awareness about the importance of education (Lwanga-Ntale & McClean, 2005). This lack of involvement can further exacerbate existing disparities in educational outcomes. Moreover, historical factors such as conflict have left lasting impacts on educational practices in Northern Uganda. The region has faced significant challenges due to decades of civil unrest, which disrupted education systems and led to a loss of trained educators (Blattman & Annan, 2010). As a result, many schools continue to grapple with issues stemming from this history, including trauma among students and teachers alike. Addressing these historical contexts is essential for developing effective educational interventions.

## **2.4 Research gaps**

A considerable amount of research has been conducted on the challenges related to the academic performance of students. Most studies revealed that academic performance was largely influenced

by factors such as age, social-emotional well-being, physical health, economic status, and the school environment. However, it remained puzzling why sponsored children, who had established support systems and scholarship opportunities, continued to struggle academically even when all provisions were guaranteed. This question highlighted the need for further investigation into the underlying reasons for this phenomenon. The literature indicated that while sponsorship programs often provided essential resources and support, they did not always translate into improved academic outcomes. Studies have shown that various factors could still impede students' success despite the advantages of sponsorship. These included issues such as insufficient parental involvement, inadequate school facilities, and varying educational practices across different regions. Additionally, previous research had pointed out that even with external support, internal factors such as motivation and self-efficacy played significant roles in a child's academic journey. Thus, understanding these complex dynamics is essential for identifying and addressing the underlying factors that hinder educational performance among sponsored children, a gap this study aims to fill by developing targeted strategies tailored to the unique needs of the region.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This section outlines the research methodology used to investigate the academic performance of Compassion International-sponsored primary school children in Northern Uganda. The study aimed to explore various factors that influence academic outcomes, including parental involvement, school facilities, and regional differences in educational practices. Below, information on the study area, research design, research approach, study population, sample size determination and sampling procedures, data collection methods, data analysis procedures, data quality control, ethical considerations, and limitations and de-limitations of the study are provided.

#### **3.2 Study area**

The study was conducted in 30 out of 85 Compassion-assisted child development centers located across the seven clusters of Northern Uganda. These centers are part of a broader initiative by Compassion International, which aims to support vulnerable children by providing holistic development opportunities. The selection of these centers was based on their active involvement in educational programs and their commitment to improving the lives of sponsored children. Northern Uganda has faced significant challenges over the years, including the aftermath of civil conflict and ongoing socio-economic issues (Crisis Group, 2005). These challenges have affected the educational landscape, making it crucial to understand how local conditions impact academic performance. Research indicates that children in conflict-affected areas often experience disruptions in their education, leading to lower academic outcomes (Blattman & Annan, 2010).

Therefore, studying the specific conditions in Northern Uganda provides valuable insights into the factors influencing academic performance among Compassion International-sponsored children.

The child development centers in this region focus on addressing not only educational needs but also social and emotional support. They provide a safe environment where children can learn and grow. According to Compassion International (2022), these centers offer various programs that include academic tutoring, life skills training, and recreational activities. This comprehensive approach is essential for fostering a supportive learning atmosphere that encourages academic success. Moreover, the geographical diversity within Northern Uganda means that schools face different challenges based on their location. For instance, rural schools may struggle with inadequate infrastructure and limited access to resources compared to urban schools (Spren & Topher, 2013). Understanding these regional differences was vital for identifying best practices that can be shared among schools to improve educational outcomes.

### **3.3 Research design**

A research design is a structured plan or framework that guides how a research study is conducted. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2017), it serves as a blueprint for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data to answer the research question or address the research problem. The study utilized a mixed-methods research design, which combined both quantitative and qualitative approaches to gain a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing academic performance among Compassion International-sponsored primary school children in Northern Uganda. This approach was selected due to its ability to provide a fuller picture of complex educational issues by integrating numerical data with rich, contextual insights. One of the key

strengths of mixed-methods research is its capacity for triangulation, which enhances the validity of findings by corroborating evidence from different sources (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). For instance, quantitative data collected through surveys allowed for statistical analysis of trends in academic performance, while qualitative data from interviews provided deeper insights into the experiences and challenges faced by students. This combination enables researchers to cross-verify results and draw more robust conclusions (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

Additionally, mixed-methods research allows for greater flexibility in addressing research questions. It enables researchers to explore various dimensions of a problem, capturing both the breadth of quantitative data and the depth of qualitative insights (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). This flexibility is particularly beneficial in educational research, where understanding the nuances of student experiences is crucial for developing effective interventions. However, mixed-methods research also presents challenges. It requires significant time and resources to collect and analyze two types of data, which can complicate the research process (Hancock et al., 2018). Furthermore, researchers must possess expertise in both qualitative and quantitative methods to effectively integrate findings (Younas et al., 2021). Despite these challenges, the benefits of mixed-methods research made it an ideal choice for this study.

### **3.4 Research approach**

A research approach, on the other hand, refers to the overall strategy or philosophy behind how a study is conducted. It determines whether the study will use a qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods approach. Creswell (2008) explains that qualitative approaches focus on exploring social or human problems through detailed descriptions and interpretations, while quantitative

approaches rely on numerical data and statistical analysis to test hypotheses. Both quantitative and qualitative research approaches were used. Quantitative data were collected through surveys administered to parents, teachers, and students. These surveys aimed to gather measurable information about academic performance, available resources at schools, and levels of parental involvement. The use of quantitative methods is supported by Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010), who argue that such methods can reveal patterns and relationships among variables, allowing for statistical analysis that enhances generalizability.

Qualitative data were gathered through interviews and focus group discussions, which provided deeper insights into the experiences and challenges faced by the children. According to Sammons and Davis (2017), qualitative approaches enable researchers to capture individual perceptions and contextual factors that influence educational outcomes. This aspect of the mixed-methods design is crucial for understanding the nuanced realities of students' lives in Northern Uganda. The combination of these methods allowed for triangulation, a process that enhances the validity of research findings by cross-verifying information from different sources (Denzin, 1978). By integrating quantitative data with qualitative insights, the study aimed to develop a more holistic understanding of the educational challenges faced by Compassion International-sponsored children.

### **3.5 Study population**

A study population refers to the group of individuals or entities from which data is collected to address the research objectives (Sileyew, 2020). For this study, the population included a diverse group of stakeholders who play key roles in the academic performance of Compassion

International-sponsored primary school children in Northern Uganda. These stakeholders were selected because they provided valuable insights into the factors influencing academic outcomes at various levels, including home, school, and community. The study population consisted of 20 Project Directors, 5 Child Development Officers, 20 Teachers/Center Guides/Tutors, and 5 Students. Project Directors and Child Development Officers were selected because of their deep understanding of project implementation, goals, and challenges affecting academic performance. Teachers/Center Guides/Tutors were included due to their direct involvement in classroom teaching and their ability to provide insights into teaching methods, classroom dynamics, and resource availability. Lastly, five students were interviewed to reflect on their educational journeys, challenges, and successes. Their perspectives offered firsthand accounts of the factors influencing their academic performance. This population was chosen because it represented a comprehensive view of the educational ecosystem in Northern Uganda. By including multiple stakeholders with different roles and experiences, the study was able to capture diverse perspectives on the factors affecting academic performance.

### **3.6 Sample size determination and sampling procedure**

Sample size determination is the process of deciding how many individuals or units should be included in a study to ensure valid and reliable results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). For this study, Krejcie and Morgan's sampling table was used to determine the sample size. A total sample size of 45 respondents was selected. This number was deemed sufficient to capture diverse insights while remaining manageable for data collection. The sample size was based on the need for detailed qualitative insights alongside quantitative data.

The sampling procedure involved a purposive sampling technique, which means participants were selected based on their specific roles relevant to the research objectives (Patton, 2015). This method ensured that only individuals with significant knowledge or experience related to academic performance were included. The following table summarizes the study population, sample size, and sampling procedure:

**Table 1: Study Population, Sample Size and Sampling Procedure**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Total Population</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Sampling Procedure</b>
Project Directors & Officers	21	21	Purposive Sampling
Teachers/Center Guides/Tutors	19	19	Purposive Sampling
Students	5	5	Purposive Sampling
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>45</b>	

**Source:** Compassion International (2023)

The purposive sampling approach allowed for an in-depth exploration of factors affecting academic performance while ensuring that data collection was focused on key stakeholders who could provide relevant insights.

### **3.7 Data collection methods**

Data collection is the process of gathering, measuring, and analyzing accurate information to answer research questions (Sileyew, 2020). In this study, several methods were employed to collect data from different stakeholders involved in the academic performance of Compassion

International-sponsored primary school children in Northern Uganda. Each method is described below:

### **3.7.1 Interviews**

Interviews involve direct interaction between the researcher and participants, allowing for in-depth discussions about specific topics (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). They provide rich qualitative data that can reveal complex insights into participants' thoughts and experiences (Patton, 2015). Semi-structured interviews were used. These allowed the adaptation of questions based on responses, allowing for deeper exploration of relevant topics. In this study, Zoom interviews were conducted with 10 Project Directors to gather their perspectives on project goals, strategies, implementation challenges, and outcomes. Interviews with Project Directors provided detailed perspectives on project implementation and challenges.

### **3.7.2 Survey questionnaires**

Surveys involve structured questionnaires designed to gather data from a larger group of respondents (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). Surveys can collect data from many participants quickly and efficiently. Structured surveys were used. These allowed for easy comparison of responses across participants. In this study, Google Forms were used to administer surveys to 20 Project Directors and Child Development Officers. However, only 6 Project Directors and 5 Child Development Officers responded. Surveys administered to Project Directors and Child Development Officers collected quantitative data on their experiences and perceptions.

### **3.7.3 Observation**

Observation involves watching participants in their natural environment to gather information about their behaviors and interactions (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). They provide immediate insights into behaviors that may not be reported in interviews or surveys. Participant observation was used. This method allows researchers to see how environmental factors influence behaviour. In this study, observations were made during Zoom meetings and through visits to selected schools. Observations during Zoom meetings and school visits allowed for real-time insights into interactions and environmental factors affecting academic performance.

### **3.8 Data collection instruments**

Data collection instruments are tools used to gather information for research purposes. According to Creswell (2014), these instruments can include questionnaires, interview guides, observation checklists, and other methods that help researchers collect qualitative and quantitative data. Each instrument which included survey questionnaires, interview guides and observation checklists has its advantages and disadvantages, which can affect the quality of the data collected as discussed below.

#### **3.8.1 Interview guide**

An interview guide is a structured set of questions used during interviews to ensure that the researcher gathers relevant information while allowing for flexibility in responses. According to Creswell (2014), an effective interview guide helps facilitate a focused discussion, enabling the interviewer to explore specific topics while also allowing participants to share their insights and experiences in depth. The interview guide for Project Directors in Appendix 4 consisted of five

open-ended questions designed to elicit detailed responses regarding strategies, community involvement, local challenges, innovative ideas, and recommendations for improving academic performance within the Frontline Church Partner (FCP) program. The open-ended nature of the questions allowed for rich qualitative data that can reveal complex insights into participants' thoughts and experiences (Patton, 2015). The structured format helps keep the conversation on track while ensuring all critical areas are covered.

### **3.8.2 Survey questionnaire**

A survey questionnaire is a data collection instrument consisting of a series of questions designed to gather information from respondents. According to Creswell (2014), survey questionnaires can be used to collect quantitative data, allowing researchers to analyze trends, patterns, and relationships among variables. They can include closed-ended questions, which provide specific response options, and open-ended questions, which allow for more detailed responses. Survey questionnaires were designed for teachers, students and FCPs and are under Appendices 1,2 and 3. The survey questionnaires for teachers, students and FCPs were designed to assess various factors influencing academic performance. The questionnaire included multiple-choice questions with coding for responses, facilitating easy data analysis. It had a section on demographics and the study objectives.

### **3.8.3 Observation checklist**

An observation checklist is a structured tool used to systematically record specific behaviors, events, or conditions during an observational study. According to Creswell (2014), observation checklists help researchers gather qualitative data in a consistent manner by providing a clear

framework for what to look for during observations. This observation checklist allowed for the collection of real-time data about participants and their environments. The observation checklist for this study was designed to assess various factors related to the academic performance of Compassion International-sponsored children in Northern Uganda. The checklist included specific items that observers were instructed to look for during school visits and Zoom meetings. These were: school environment, teaching methods, student engagement, parental involvement, support services and nonverbal cues. The checklist provided a systematic way to collect data, ensuring that all relevant aspects are observed and recorded.

### **3.9 Data analysis procedures**

Data analysis is the process of systematically applying statistical and logical techniques to describe and evaluate data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). It helps researchers make sense of the information collected during a study, allowing them to draw conclusions and make informed decisions. The analysis was divided into two main categories: quantitative data analysis and qualitative data analysis.

#### **3.9.1 Quantitative data analysis**

Quantitative data analysis involves the use of statistical methods to analyze numerical data collected through surveys or experiments. According to Creswell (2014), this type of analysis allows researchers to quantify variables and identify relationships or patterns among them. The first step involved checking the collected survey responses for completeness and accuracy. Incomplete or inconsistent responses were identified and addressed. Each response was coded according to a predefined coding scheme, which assigned numerical values to categorical

responses. This coding facilitated easier data entry and analysis. Statistical software (Excel) was used to perform various analyses. This helped identify trends in academic performance based on different factors. Graphs and charts were created to visually represent the findings, making it easier to interpret the results and communicate them effectively.

### **3.9.2 Qualitative data analysis**

Qualitative data analysis involves examining non-numerical data, such as text from interviews or open-ended survey responses, to identify themes, patterns, and insights (Creswell, 2014). This type of analysis provides a deeper understanding of participants' experiences and perspectives. Interviews conducted with Project Directors were transcribed verbatim to capture all details accurately. The transcripts were analyzed using thematic coding, where key themes and categories were identified based on the content of the responses. This involved reading through the transcripts multiple times to ensure that important ideas were not overlooked. The identified themes were further analyzed to understand how they relate to the research questions. This included looking for patterns in how different Project Directors discussed similar topics. The final step involved interpreting the findings in light of the research objectives. Insights gained from qualitative analysis were used to complement quantitative findings, providing a more comprehensive understanding of factors influencing academic performance.

### **3.10 Data quality control**

Data quality control refers to the processes and procedures implemented to ensure that the data collected during research is accurate, reliable, and valid. The data quality control process focused on ensuring both validity and reliability throughout the research study.

### **3.10.1 Validity**

Validity refers to the extent to which a research instrument measures what it is intended to measure. According to Carole (2008), validity ensures that the results and interpretations of a test are justifiable based on the specific purposes the test aims to fulfill. In other words, a valid instrument accurately reflects the concepts being studied. To ensure data validity, the data collection instruments (interview guides, questionnaires) underwent thorough review and approval by the supervisor. This step guaranteed that the instruments were of high quality and aligned with the research objectives. Interviews and focused group discussions conducted online via Zoom were recorded for reference. This practice allowed for accurate transcription and analysis, ensuring that participants' responses were captured correctly. To encourage honest responses, questionnaires were administered in a way that allowed respondents to remain anonymous if they chose. This approach helps reduce social desirability bias, where participants might provide answers they think are more acceptable rather than their true feelings.

### **3.10.2 Reliability**

Reliability concerns the consistency and trustworthiness of data obtained from an instrument. Mohajan (2017) explains that reliability refers to the extent to which a measuring tool produces stable and consistent results over time, minimizing random errors that could affect the findings. It was anticipated that respondents would provide authentic responses due to the study's focus on topics relevant to social and community workers who uphold principles of integrity and consistency. All respondents completed forms and submitted information online. An option was provided for respondents to edit their submissions within an agreed-upon timeline, allowing them

to refine their answers if necessary. The questionnaire underwent revisions to correct any errors before final submission for approval. This iterative process helped enhance the reliability of the data collection instrument. The researcher employed systematic observations where practical, adhering to predefined criteria and checklists. This structured approach minimized potential biases during data collection.

### **3.11 Ethical considerations**

Ethical considerations refer to the principles and guidelines that researchers must follow to ensure that their research is conducted in a moral and responsible manner. According to Creswell (2014), ethical considerations involve protecting the rights and welfare of participants, ensuring informed consent, maintaining confidentiality, and minimizing harm. These principles help establish trust between researchers and participants, allowing for a more honest and open exchange of information.

In this study, several ethical considerations were taken into account to protect the participants involved. First, informed consent was obtained from all respondents before collecting data. This means that participants were fully informed about the purpose of the study, what their participation would involve, and any potential risks or benefits. They were given the opportunity to ask questions and were assured that their participation was voluntary. Confidentiality was also a key focus. Participants were assured that their responses would be kept private and used only for research purposes. To enhance confidentiality, the survey questionnaires allowed respondents the option to remain anonymous if they wished. This approach encouraged honest and candid responses without fear of repercussions. Additionally, care was taken to ensure that participants

felt comfortable sharing their thoughts and experiences. The researcher maintained a neutral and non-judgmental stance during interviews and discussions, which helped create an environment where participants could express themselves freely. Open-ended questions were used to avoid leading respondents in any specific direction. Finally, the study aimed to minimize any potential harm to participants. The researcher employed purposive sampling to select individuals who had firsthand knowledge relevant to the research questions, ensuring that the data collected was both relevant and representative.

By adhering to these ethical considerations, the study aimed to respect the rights of participants while gathering valuable insights into factors affecting academic performance among Compassion International-sponsored children in Northern Uganda.

### **3.12 Limitations and de-limitations of the study**

Limitations are factors that may affect the results of a study and are often beyond the researcher's control. According to Creswell (2014), limitations can include issues such as sample size, response bias, and external factors that may influence the outcomes. These limitations can impact the generalizability of the findings and should be acknowledged in any research. One major limitation faced was the relatively small sample size of participants, particularly among Project Directors and Child Development Officers. With only a limited number of respondents, it may be challenging to generalize the findings to all stakeholders involved in Compassion International-sponsored programs across Northern Uganda. Additionally, there was a potential for response bias, as participants may have provided answers they believed were more favorable or acceptable rather than their true opinions. This could have influenced the accuracy of the data collected.

Delimitations are boundaries set by the researcher that define the scope of the study. They specify what is included or excluded in the research and help narrow down the focus (Creswell, 2014). Delimitations are intentional choices made by researchers to limit their study to specific aspects. In this study, delimitations included focusing solely on Compassion International-sponsored children in Northern Uganda and selecting specific stakeholders such as Project Directors, Child Development Officers, Teachers, and Students for data collection. The study did not include perspectives from other potential stakeholders, such as government officials or community leaders, which could provide additional insights into educational challenges. Furthermore, the research was limited to a specific time frame, focusing on current academic performance factors without considering historical trends or changes over time.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings of the study based on the data collected from Project Directors, Child Development Officers, Teachers, and Students. It begins with an overview of the response rate, highlighting the level of participation achieved in the research. The chapter then provides a detailed analysis of the results, focusing on the key factors influencing the academic performance of primary school children in Northern Uganda. Finally, the chapter includes a discussion of these findings in relation to the study objectives and existing literature, drawing meaningful conclusions from the data.

#### **4.2 Response rate**

The response rate refers to the proportion of participants who completed the data collection process compared to the total number of individuals invited to participate (Bryman, 2012). A high response rate is essential for ensuring that the findings are representative of the population being studied. In this research, a total of 45 individuals were targeted, including Project Directors, Child Development Officers, Teachers, and Students. The following table summarizes the response rate for each group:

**Table 2: Response rate**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Total Invited</b>	<b>Total Responded</b>	<b>Response Rate (%)</b>
Project Directors	16	16	100
Teachers/Center Guides/Tutors	19	19	100
Students	10	10	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Primary data (2023)

The overall response rate for this study was approximately 100%. This high response rate indicates a strong level of engagement from participants. A high response rate is crucial as it enhances the credibility and reliability of the study's findings.

### **4.3 Results**

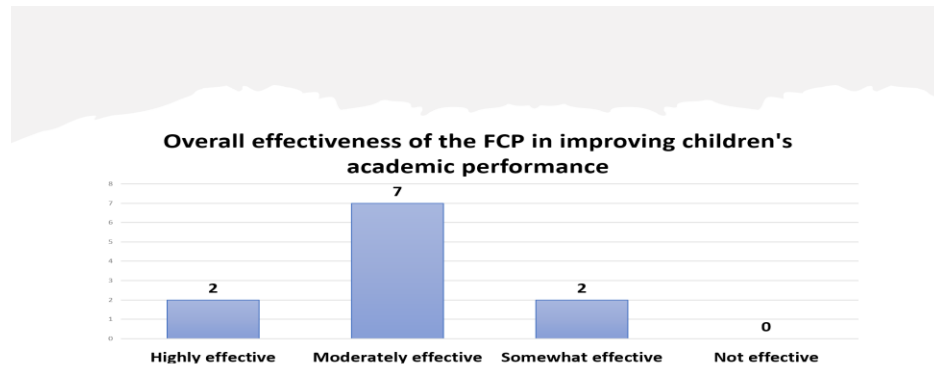
The research uncovered several key insights into the factors influencing the academic performance of primary school children in Northern Uganda. These insights shed light on the complex interplay of challenges faced by these young learners. The following are the primary insights.

#### **4.3.1 Project Directors and Child Development Officers**

Based on the responses from the survey questionnaires for FCP staff, here are key insights. These insights highlight the challenges and opportunities faced by FCPs in their efforts to improve the academic performance of children in their programs. They also underscore the importance of continuous assessment and collaboration to achieve better outcomes.

**The overall effectiveness of the FCP in improving children's academic performance.**

The majority of FCP staff members rated the overall effectiveness of the FCP in improving children's academic performance as "Moderately effective." This suggests that there is room for improvement in achieving higher levels of effectiveness in academic support programs.



**Figure 1: Overall effectiveness of the FCP in improving children's academic performance**

**Source: *Project Directors and Child Development Officers Dataset***

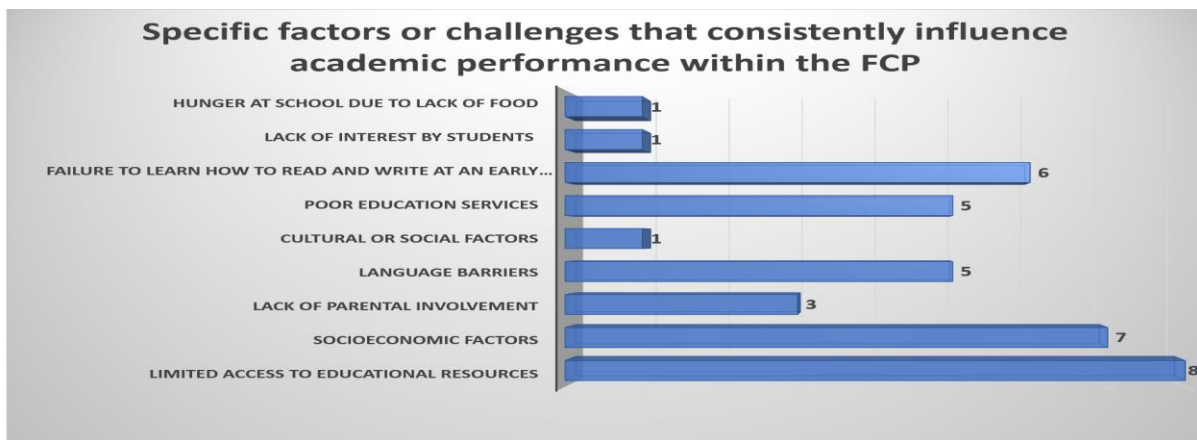
The responses from FCP staff members regarding the overall effectiveness of the FCP in improving children's academic performance reveal a mixed perception. While two staff members consider the program to be highly effective, indicating a substantial positive impact, the majority of respondents, constituting seven staff members, view it as moderately effective. This suggests that the program is generally performing reasonably well but may have areas for improvement. Additionally, two staff members find it somewhat effective, signifying that the program has limited positive effects in their assessment. Importantly, none of the respondents rated the program as "Not effective," indicating a consensus that the FCP does have a positive impact, even though there is

room for enhancement. These insights provide valuable feedback for refining the program's strategies and interventions to further enhance academic performance outcomes.

### Multiple Factors Influencing Academic Performance:

FCP staff members consistently observed a range of factors that influence academic performance within the FCP, including "Limited access to educational resources" and "Socioeconomic factors."

This underscores the complexity of challenges faced by children in their academic journeys.



**Figure 2: Specific Factors that influence academic performance**

*Source: Project Directors and Child Development Officers Dataset*

The data indicates the frequency of specific factors or challenges that FCP staff members have observed to consistently influence academic performance within the FCP. "Limited access to educational resources" is mentioned by 8 respondents, highlighting concern about the availability of essential learning materials. "Socioeconomic factors" are noted by 7 respondents, indicating that economic conditions may impact academic outcomes. "Lack of parental involvement" is cited by 3 respondents, suggesting that parental engagement in children's education is not consistent. "Language barriers" are mentioned by 5 respondents, suggesting that language differences might

hinder effective learning. "Cultural or social factors" are observed by 1 respondent, hinting at potential cultural challenges affecting academic progress. "Poor education services" are noted by 5 respondents, possibly indicating inadequate quality of teaching. "Failure to learn how to read and write at an early age" is recognized by 6 respondents, pointing to foundational literacy challenges. "Lack of interest by students" and "Hunger at School due to lack of food" are each cited by 1 respondent, highlighting potential motivational and nutritional barriers to learning. Overall, these insights provide a comprehensive overview of the multifaceted factors that impact academic performance within the FCP.

Many FCPs have established external partnerships or collaborations to support their goals in improving academic performance. These partnerships can provide valuable resources and support for the FCP's initiatives. FCP staff members expressed varying levels of satisfaction with the support and resources provided by external stakeholders, such as Compassion International. This indicates the importance of effective communication and collaboration between FCPs and external partners to address any areas of dissatisfaction. The majority of FCPs have tools for tracking the academic performance progress of each participant and developing summary reports for sharing with stakeholders.

The interview responses from the 16 Project Directors provide valuable insights into strategies and challenges related to improving academic performance within the FCP in Northern Uganda. Here are some key statistics and percentages:

### Strategies for Academic Enhancement:

Strategy	Percentage response
Conducting remedial lessons	91%
Debate	45%
Implementing school feeding programs	55%
Offering full scholarships for high-performing participants	55%
Rewarding best-performing students	64%
Enroll the best performers in better schools	82%
Sensitization meetings	74%
Consultations	64%
Sensitization meetings	74%
School fees and scholastic materials	53%
Monitoring attendance is also used to ensure parental engagement.	37%

**Table 3: Strategies for Academic Enhancement**

*Source: Project Directors and Child Development Officers Dataset*

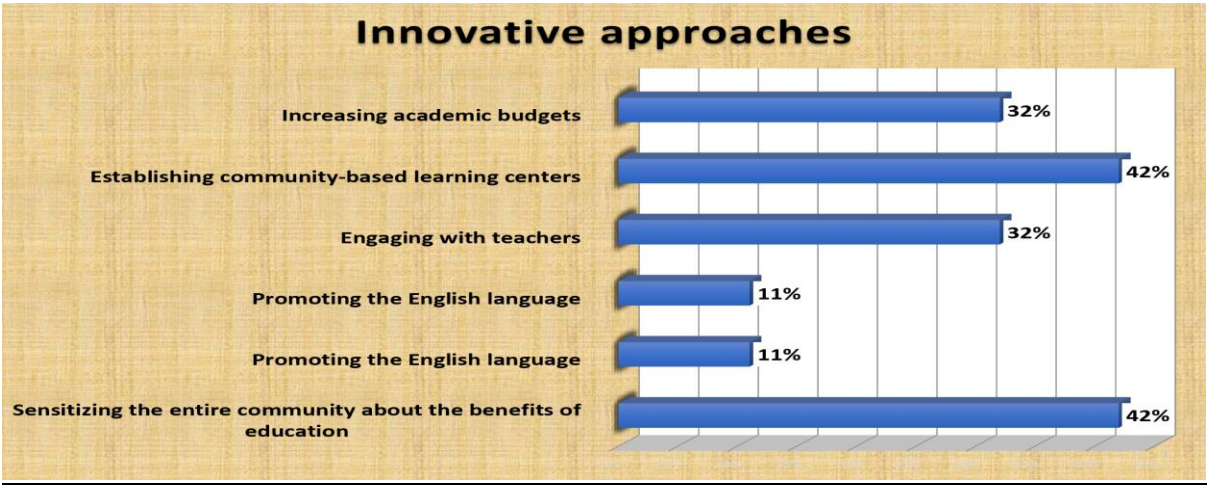
The data on strategies employed to enhance academic performance within the FCP in Northern Uganda reveals a comprehensive approach, with a notable emphasis on remedial lessons (91%), sensitization meetings (74%), and consultations (64%) to engage students and caregivers. Moreover, initiatives such as offering full scholarships for high-performing participants (55%) and rewarding best-performing students (64%) demonstrate a commitment to motivating and

incentivizing students. Additionally, the practice of enrolling the best performers in better schools (82%) underscores the pursuit of excellence. This multifaceted strategy, combined with the significant percentage focusing on parental engagement through school fees and scholastic materials (53%), highlights a holistic effort to improve academic performance, with an acknowledgment of the importance of monitoring attendance (37%) to ensure parental involvement.

**Challenges Affecting Academic Performance.**

Directors highlighted various challenges affecting academic performance, with 82% noting the high poverty levels in the region as a significant barrier. Other challenges included poor education services (55%), lack of parental involvement (64%), and issues related to hunger and poor caregiver involvement (36%). Early marriages (27%) and domestic violence (16%) were also mentioned as factors affecting academic performance.

**Innovative Approaches:**



**Figure 3: Innovation approaches**

*Source: Project Directors and Child Development Officers Dataset*

The data on innovative approaches to improving academic performance within the FCP in Northern Uganda indicates that a substantial percentage of the project Directors recognize the importance of community-wide sensitization about the benefits of education (42%). This suggests a commitment to creating a supportive educational environment not only within the FCP but also in the broader community. Additionally, the acknowledgment of engaging with teachers (32%) and increasing academic budgets (32%) reveals a focus on enhancing the quality of education through teacher involvement and financial resources. The repetition of "Promoting the English language" (11%) in the responses suggests a potential area for improvement, as it received a comparatively lower percentage. Overall, the insights reflect a multifaceted approach to fostering a more conducive learning environment and resource allocation to drive academic improvement. Recommendations for improving academic performance included continuous monitoring (53%), motivation (58%), and support for students. Creating academic programs (27%), using technology (26%), and organizing seminars (32%) were also proposed. Encouraging older students to mentor younger ones (53%) and providing professional development for teachers in remote areas (42%) were suggested to create a supportive learning ecosystem. Directors observed improvements in students' academic performance over time, with 74% noting positive changes. Factors contributing to these changes included better teaching quality (53%), career guidance (53%), remedial lessons (53%), parental involvement (58%), continuous sensitization (42%), and assessments (42%). The establishment of positive teacher-pupil relationships (53%), the availability of teaching materials (42%), and cooperation between teachers and parents (42%) were also mentioned as contributing factors.

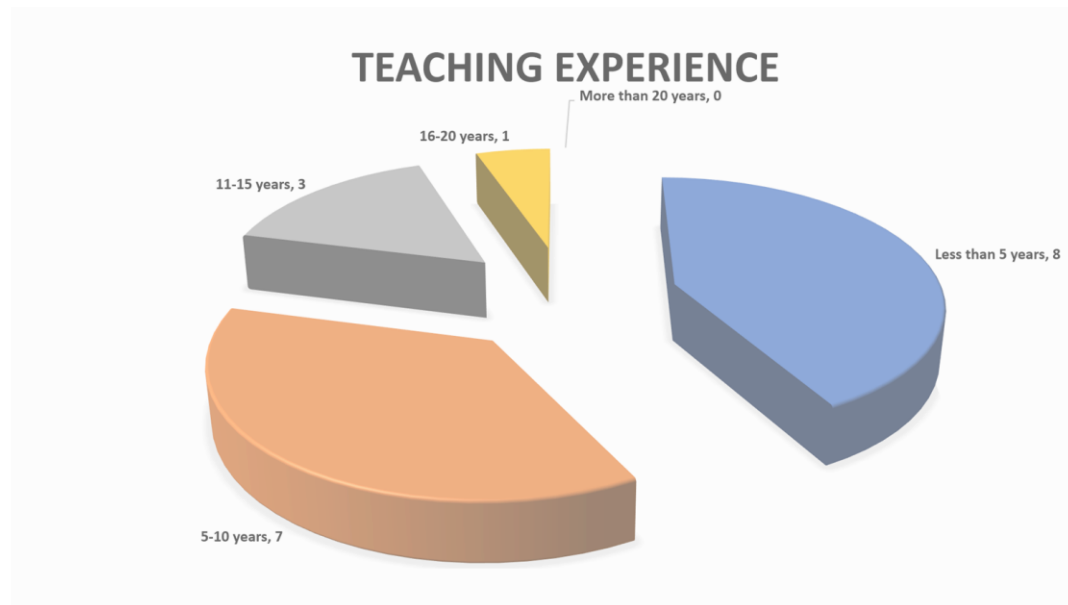
Overall, the responses highlight the multifaceted efforts undertaken by the FCPs in Northern Uganda to enhance academic performance, address challenges, and involve the community in

supporting student's education, with varying degrees of success indicated by the percentages provided.

### 4.3.2. Teachers

From the responses based on the dataset for survey questionnaires for teachers, the following are the key insights.

#### Teaching Experience:



**Figure 4: Teaching experience**

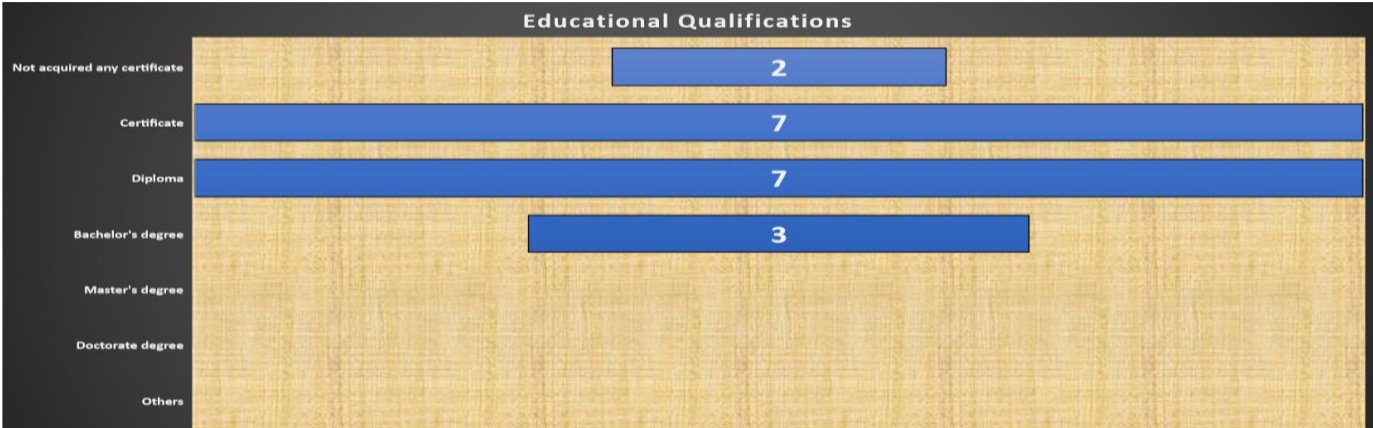
*Source: Teacher's response dataset*

The data on teaching experience reveals the distribution of teachers across various categories based on their years in the profession. Most respondents, 42% of teachers, have less than five years of teaching experience, signifying a relatively new cohort in the field. Another substantial group, 37%, falls into the 5-10 years category, suggesting a slightly more seasoned group of educators. Teachers with 11-15 years of experience make up 16% of the dataset, demonstrating a moderate

level of experience. There is a teacher with 16-20 years of experience, accounting for 5%, showcasing a small but notable population of long-serving educators. Surprisingly, there are no teachers in the dataset with more than 20 years of teaching experience. Overall, this distribution illustrates a diverse range of teaching experience, with the majority being relatively early-career educators.

**Educational Qualifications:**

A significant portion of the teachers (42%) had a bachelor's degree, while 32% had a diploma. This suggests that most of the teachers have at least a basic level of formal education.



**Figure 5: Education Qualification for teachers who responded.**

*Source: Teacher’s response dataset*

The educational qualifications data reflects the academic background of the surveyed teachers. Among the respondents, 11% of teachers have not acquired any formal certificate, indicating a small portion without formal education credentials. The majority, constituting 37%, hold a certificate as their highest educational qualification, denoting a substantial presence of teachers with basic training. Similarly, 37% of teachers possess a diploma, representing another significant

group with slightly advanced qualifications. A smaller proportion, 16%, have achieved a bachelor's degree, highlighting a group with higher academic attainment. Interestingly, no respondents in the dataset hold a master's or doctorate degree, and there are no records of other qualifications. This distribution underscores the diversity of educational backgrounds among teachers, with a notable presence of those with certificates and diplomas, while fewer have attained higher degrees.

### Factors Influencing Academic Performance

The factors most believed to significantly influence students' academic performance are teaching quality (53%) and parental involvement (26%), as chosen by the teachers. This highlights the importance of both teaching effectiveness and parental support in student success.

Factors	No of respondents	Percentage
Parental involvement	5	26%
Teaching quality	10	53%
Availability of resources	3	16%
Classroom environment	0	0%
Student motivation and effort	1	5%

**Table 4: Factors Influencing Academic Performance**

*Source: Teacher's response dataset*

As perceived by the surveyed teachers, reveals valuable insights. Among the factors listed, teaching quality stands out as the most influential, with 53% of respondents considering it a significant determinant of student performance. Parental involvement is also deemed crucial, with

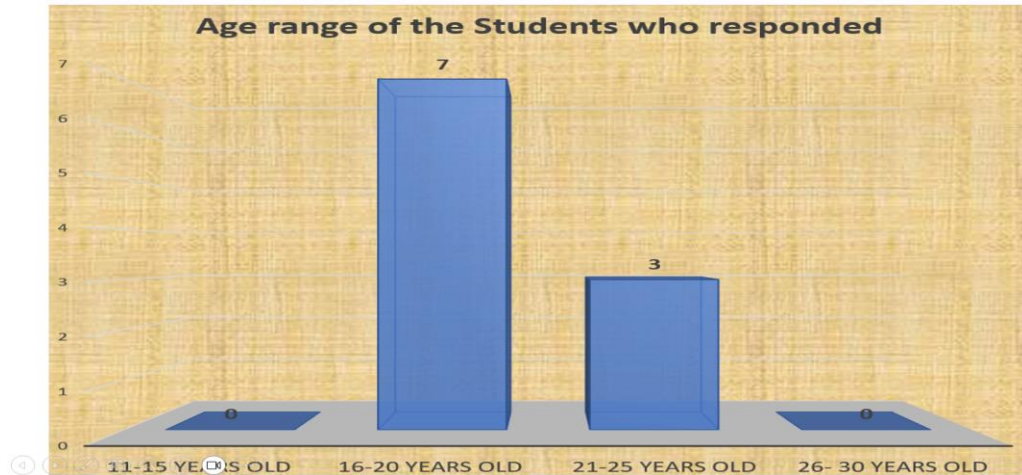
26% of teachers recognizing its impact. Availability of resources is viewed as a contributing factor by 16% of respondents. Interestingly, none of the surveyed teachers attribute student performance to the classroom environment, and only 5% mention student motivation and effort as a factor. These findings underscore the importance of effective teaching and parental engagement in shaping students' academic success, as perceived by the teachers in the dataset.

A majority of teachers (63%) find the educational resources and materials available for teaching to be highly effective. This indicates that they have access to adequate teaching materials. Most teachers (53%) are somewhat satisfied with the level of collaboration and communication among teachers and school administrators, suggesting that there may be room for improvement in this area. These insights provide a snapshot of the teachers' demographics, beliefs about academic performance factors, and their satisfaction levels with resources and collaboration within the educational institution.

### **4.3.3. Students**

#### **Demographics:**

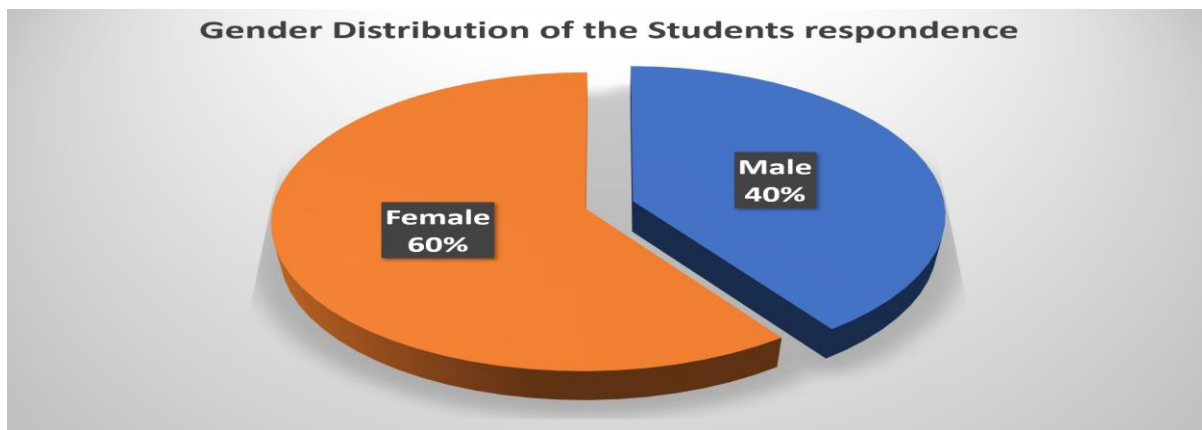
The age range of the responding students was primarily between 16-20 years old (70%) and 21-25 years old (30%)"



**Figure 6: Age range of the students who responded.**

Source: N=10, 11-15 Years old =0, 16, 20 Years Old -7, 21-25 Years Old-3, 26- 30 Years Old 0.

This means that most of the students who participated in the survey were in the age group of 16 to 20 years old, accounting for 70% of the respondents. Additionally, 30% of the respondents fell into the age group of 21 to 25 years old. This information provides an overview of the age distribution among the survey participants.



**Figure 7: Gender**

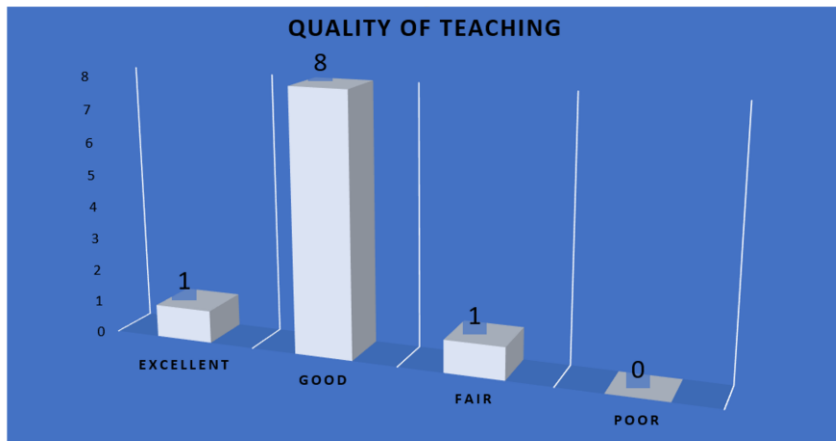
*Source: Students dataset*

The gender distribution is almost evenly split between males (45%) and females (55%). Most respondents are pursuing a degree (53%) as their current level of education. The students were from various clusters, with no single cluster dominating the responses.

### **Academic Performance Factors:**

Parental support and involvement were identified as the most significant factors influencing academic performance by 53% of the respondents/students.

### **Quality of teaching**



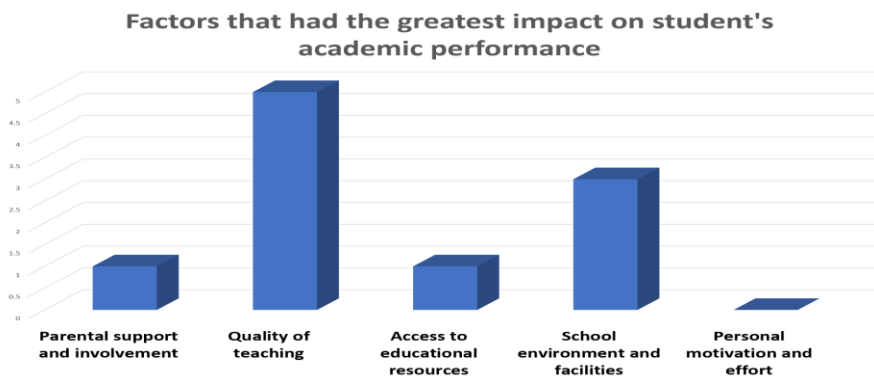
**Figure 8: Quality of teaching**

*Source: Students dataset*

Access to educational resources and personal motivation and effort were also reported as important factors. The student's perception of the overall effectiveness and excellence of the teaching they received during their time in school. "Excellent" was chosen by 1 student, indicating they believed the teaching was of very high quality, and "Good" was chosen by 8 students, suggesting they found the teaching to be of a generally good standard. "Fair" was chosen by 1 student, indicating that they perceived the teaching to be acceptable but not outstanding, and "Poor" was chosen by 0

students, implying that no student in the survey considered the teaching quality to be of low standard during their time in school. Quality of teaching" (80%) was identified as the factor with the greatest impact on academic performance by most respondents. The majority of respondents rated the overall quality of teaching during their time in school as "Good" (60%). "Personal motivation and effort" (50%) is also seen as a significant factor.

**Factors that had the greatest impact on student's academic performance**

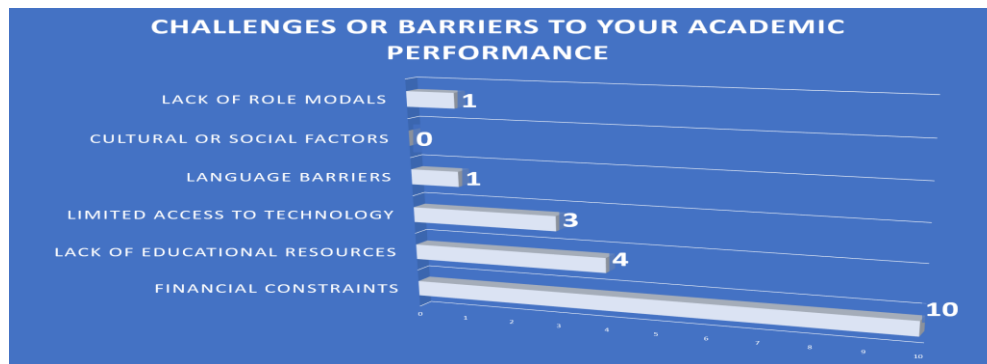


**Figure 9: Factors that had the greatest impact on the student’s academic performance.**

*Source: Students dataset*

These responses from figure 9 shed light on the perceived significance of various factors, with a notable emphasis on the quality of teaching as a key influencer. This finding underscores the critical role educators play in students' academic journeys and emphasizes the importance of focusing on instructional quality to enhance academic outcomes. Moreover, the limited mention of personal motivation and effort suggests that external factors may have a more substantial perceived impact than individual student attributes in this setting. These insights guide the study's broader understanding of the factors at play and inform potential areas for intervention and improvement within the education system in Northern Uganda

## Challenges or barriers to your academic performance



**Figure 10: Challenges to Academic Performance**

*Source: Students dataset*

The findings highlight that financial constraints were the most prevalent challenge faced by the surveyed students, followed by issues related to educational resources and technology access. These challenges underscore the importance of addressing economic disparities and providing adequate resources to support students in their academic pursuits. Overall, the findings highlight that financial constraints were the most prevalent challenge faced by the surveyed students, followed by issues related to educational resources and technology access. These challenges underscore the importance of addressing economic disparities and providing adequate resources to support students in their academic pursuits. Challenges and barriers to academic performance include financial constraints (40%), lack of educational resources (40%), and limited access to technology (10%).

### **Support Systems:**

A majority of the students reported being very satisfied (70%) with the support and guidance provided by their teachers. Emotional and psychological support provided by the school was rated

positively, with 60% rating it as excellent or good. Over half of the students (60%) participated in extracurricular activities or programs to support their academic development. About 90% of the students received some form of career guidance or support in exploring future educational and vocational opportunities. The majority of students (70%) reported being very satisfied with their academic performance during their time in school. Most students (53%) believed that their educational experiences in school significantly prepared them for their current endeavors or career paths. Students highlighted various support systems that played a significant role in their academic success, including motivation from teachers (30%), social workers (20%), parents (10%), the environment (10%), and self-motivation (5%).

These findings suggest that factors such as parental support, quality of teaching, access to resources, and emotional support are crucial in influencing the academic performance of primary school children in Northern Uganda. Additionally, career guidance and extracurricular activities are positively impacting students' educational journeys. These insights highlight the experiences and perceptions of students in advanced education and provide valuable information for understanding the factors that influence their academic performance. These insights collectively highlight the multifaceted nature of the challenges faced by primary school children in Northern Uganda. Understanding these factors is crucial for Compassion International and other stakeholders to develop effective strategies for improving academic performance in the region.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations. The study concluded that academic performance in Northern Uganda is influenced by factors such as poverty, low parental involvement, inadequate school infrastructure, and limited resources. A holistic approach involving community, school, and parental collaboration is crucial for improvement. Recommendations include targeted poverty alleviation programs, enhancing parental engagement, improving school infrastructure, and tailoring solutions to the unique needs of different sub-regions. Expanding scholarship programs, fostering community involvement, and implementing a strong monitoring and evaluation system are also key to boosting academic success.

#### **5.2 Summary of findings**

Combining the insights from the interviews and questionnaire responses of Project Directors, staff, students, and teachers, there is a recognition that improving academic performance requires a multifaceted approach. Strategies such as conducting remedial lessons, offering scholarships, and organizing sensitization meetings are commonly employed to enhance students' academic outcomes. This indicates a comprehensive commitment to addressing various aspects of education. Many responses highlight the importance of community involvement, including parents, caregivers, and local leaders. Sensitization meetings, engagement with caregivers, and community-wide awareness campaigns are seen as essential in improving academic performance. This underscores the significance of a collaborative effort involving all stakeholders.

The responses identify several challenges specific to Northern Uganda, including poverty, low parental involvement, language barriers, and poor access to quality education. These challenges directly impact students' academic performance and need to be addressed in any effective intervention strategy. Teachers play a crucial role in academic improvement. The responses emphasize the importance of teacher-student relationships, extra remedial lessons, and teacher engagement. Strategies to support and empower teachers are integral to enhancing education quality. There is a call for increased resources, both in terms of academic budgets and access to educational materials. This highlights the need for financial investment in education to ensure students have the necessary tools for success.

Offering scholarships to high-performing students and enrolling them in better schools is a recognized strategy for improving academic outcomes. This indicates a focus on recognizing and nurturing talent. The importance of promoting the English language as a medium of instruction is acknowledged. However, there seems to be room for improvement in this aspect. Many responses mention the significance of continuous assessment, feedback, and monitoring of students. Regular feedback to parents is also seen as vital for academic progress. While not highly emphasized, some respondents suggest utilizing technology and establishing community-based learning centers as innovative approaches to improve academic performance.

In summary, the overall insights underscore the complexity of improving academic performance and the need for a holistic approach involving the community, teachers, students, and adequate resources. They also highlight the specific challenges faced in Northern Uganda and the importance of addressing them to facilitate better educational outcomes.

### 5.3 Conclusions

In our quest to address the academic challenges faced by children in Northern Uganda, especially those under the sponsorship of Compassion International, we embarked on a journey of exploration. This research study aimed to unravel the intricate factors that influence the academic performance of these young learners. To guide our investigation, we posed the Central Research Question (CRQ): What factors influence children's academic performance in Northern Uganda? Through rigorous inquiry and analysis, we have uncovered a complex tapestry of challenges that these children encounter in their pursuit of education. Our findings illuminate the multifaceted nature of academic struggles in this region, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach to address these issues. Below are the conclusions drawn from our study and the actionable insights that can shape a brighter future for these children.

- 1. Poverty:** Children in Northern Uganda grapple with distinct educational challenges compared to their peers in other regions of the country. 82% of respondents noted poverty as a significant barrier. Widespread poverty in the North disrupts the learning process, as hunger, inadequate shelter, and lack of basic learning materials hinder academic progress. It is evident that without addressing these fundamental needs, academic success remains elusive for many.
- 2. Parental Influence:** The role of parents emerges as a pivotal factor in determining a child's academic journey at 64%. Active parental involvement goes beyond financial support; it encompasses emotional support and motivation. Parents act as a safety net, reinforcing

their children's confidence and determination. Conversely, disengaged parents leave children without this crucial support, impacting their academic performance negatively.

- 3. School Quality Matters:** The quality of schools in Northern Uganda significantly impacts students' learning outcomes. Insufficient resources, including textbooks, classrooms, and qualified teachers, hinder effective learning. The lack of these essentials not only hampers students' performance but also underscores the need for substantial improvements in educational infrastructure.
- 4. Tailored Solutions for Unique Challenges:** Recognizing that different regions in Northern Uganda face distinct challenges is crucial. What works in one area may not be effective elsewhere. Therefore, solutions must be tailored to address the specific contextual needs and circumstances of each region, reflecting the localized nature of educational challenges.
- 5. Community Support:** Active engagement of the local community, including community leaders and parents, is instrumental in creating an environment conducive to learning. Community-driven initiatives, such as awareness campaigns and regular meetings, foster a sense of collective responsibility for education, which, in turn, positively influences student performance.
- 6. Motivation and Scholarships:** Motivation plays a pivotal role in a child's academic journey. Recognizing and rewarding academic excellence can ignite students'

determination to excel. Scholarships, such as those offered by Compassion International, serve as powerful incentives that inspire students to strive for academic success.

In summary, this research has unveiled the intricate web of factors influencing children's academic performance in Northern Uganda. Poverty, parental engagement, school conditions, and community support all intersect to shape the educational landscape. Motivation, coupled with scholarship opportunities, further contributes to student success. To create a comprehensive plan for improvement, these findings must be woven into the fabric of Compassion International's strategy, ensuring that each factor is addressed effectively.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Drawing upon the valuable insights garnered through this research, a series of purposeful and effective actions are proposed to empower Compassion International in bolstering the academic performance of sponsored primary school children in Northern Uganda. These actions, rooted in the findings of the study, aim to create a tangible and positive impact on the educational journeys of these young learners. By aligning efforts with the recommendations presented here, Compassion International can proactively pave the way for improved academic outcomes and brighter futures for the children they serve in this region. Below the researcher discusses six recommendations for bolstering the academic performance of sponsored primary school children in Northern Uganda.

- 1. Targeted Poverty Alleviation Initiatives:** Collaborate with local organizations and government agencies to develop and implement poverty alleviation programs tailored to the specific needs of Northern Ugandan families. Prioritize economic empowerment, food

security, and access to basic healthcare to address the root causes of poverty that hinder academic success.

- 2. Parental Engagement Workshops:** Organize regular workshops and seminars for parents and caregivers in Northern Uganda. These sessions should emphasize the critical role parents play in their children's education and equip them with practical strategies for supporting learning at home. Establish support networks for parents to exchange experiences and ideas.
- 3. Infrastructure and Resource Enhancement:** Forge partnerships with local schools to enhance infrastructure and ensure the availability of essential educational resources, including textbooks, stationery, and teaching materials. Consider providing scholarships to enable students to access better-equipped schools that offer a quality education.
- 4. Customized sub-Regional Approaches:** Recognize the unique challenges faced by different sub-regions in Northern Uganda and develop customized strategies for each area. Solutions should be tailored to address specific needs, acknowledging that what works in one sub-region may not be effective in another.
- 5. Community Mobilization, Scholarship Programs and Motivational Initiatives:** Collaborate closely with community leaders, local authorities, and parents to foster a supportive learning environment. Organize awareness campaigns, regular community meetings, and initiatives that encourage active community participation in school

activities.: Continue and expand scholarship programs for outstanding students, with a particular focus on the Northern region. Introduce motivational initiatives such as academic competitions, recognition ceremonies, and mentorship programs to kindle students' enthusiasm for excelling in their studies.

- 6. Monitoring and Evaluation and Advocacy and Partnerships.** Implement a robust system for monitoring and evaluating the impact of these initiatives. Regularly assess the academic performance of sponsored children and gather feedback from parents, teachers, and community members to facilitate necessary program adjustments. Advocate for improved education policies and increased government investment in education specifically tailored to Northern Uganda. Establish partnerships with local educational institutions, NGOs, and government agencies to leverage resources and expertise for comprehensive solutions.

By embracing these actions, Compassion International can enact substantial positive change in enhancing academic performance

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1- SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE CODING FOR STUDENTS

Coding for survey questionnaires for responses received from 10 Students in advanced education (University or other high institutions of learning)

#### 1. Name

Not applicable Code

#### 2. Age Range

11-15 Years old	1
16-20 Years Old	2
21-25 Years Old	3
26- 30 Years Old	4

#### 3. Gender:

Code

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| a. Male   | 1 |
| b. Female | 2 |

#### 4. Current level of education

Code

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| a. Pursuing Certificate | 1 |
| b. Pursuing Diploma     | 2 |
| c. Pursuing a degree    | 3 |

<b>5. Cluster of location</b>	<b>Code</b>
a. Adjuman/Gulu Cluster	1
b. Agago/Kitgum/Lamwo Cluster	2
c. Amolatar/ Dokolo/Alebtong/Kalaki Cluster	3
d. Arua/Moyo Cluster	4
e. Lira/Apac/Oyam cluster	5
f. Nebbi/Pakwach Cluster	6
g. Omoro/Pader Cluster	7
h. Serere/Kaberamaido cluster	8

**6. How would you rate the overall quality of teaching during your time in school?**

	<b>Code</b>
b) Excellent	1
c) Good	2
d) Fair	3
e) Poor	4

**7. Which of the following factors do you believe had the greatest impact on your academic performance? (Select one)**

	<b>Code</b>
a. Parental support and involvement	1
b. Quality of teaching	2
c. Access to educational resources	3

- |                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| d. School environment and facilities | 4 |
| e. Personal motivation and effort    | 5 |
| f. Other (please specify)            | 6 |

**8. Did you have access to educational materials and resources, such as textbooks, during your time in school?**

- |                    | <b>Code</b> |
|--------------------|-------------|
| a. Yes, always.    | 1           |
| b. Yes, sometimes. | 2           |
| c. No, rarely.     | 3           |
| d. No, never.      | 4           |

**9. How often did you have access to a computer or the internet for educational purposes?**

- |            | <b>Code</b> |
|------------|-------------|
| a. Daily   | 1           |
| b. Weekly  | 2           |
| c. Monthly | 3           |
| d. Rarely  | 4           |
| e. Never   | 5           |

**10. Did you participate in any extracurricular activities or programs that supported your academic development?**

**Code**

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| a. Yes, Always      | 1 |
| b. Yes, Sometimes . | 2 |
| c. Yes, Reraly.     | 3 |
| d. No, never.       | 4 |

**11. How satisfied were you with the support and guidance provided by your teachers?**

- |                          | <b>Code</b> |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| a) Very satisfied        | 1           |
| b) Somewhat satisfied    | 2           |
| c) Neutral               | 3           |
| d) Somewhat dissatisfied | 4           |
| e) Very dissatisfied     | 5           |

**12. Did you face any challenges or barriers to your academic performance? (Select all that apply)**

- |  | <b>Code</b> |
|--|-------------|
| a) financial constraints                             | 1           |
| b) Lack of educational resources                     | 2           |
| c) Limited access to technology                      | 3           |
| d) Language barriers                                 | 4           |
| e) Cultural or social factors                        | 5           |
| f) Other (please specify) __Lack of role modals_____ | 6           |

**13. How would you rate the level of emotional and psychological support provided by the school during your time as a student?**

	<b>Code</b>
a) Excellent	1
b) Good	2
c) Fair	3
d) Poor	4

**14. Did you receive any career guidance or support in exploring future educational and vocational opportunities?**

	<b>Code</b>
a) Yes	1
b) No	2

**15. Overall, how satisfied were you with your academic performance during your time in school?**

	<b>Code</b>
a) Very satisfied	1
b) Somewhat satisfied	2
c) Somewhat dissatisfied	3
d) Very dissatisfied	4

**16. How do you think your educational experiences in your school days prepared you for your current endeavours or career path?**

	<b>Code</b>
a) Yes, significantly.	1
b) Yes, to some extent.	2
c) No, it did not have any impact.	3

**17. Were there any specific teachers, mentors, or support systems that played a significant role in your academic success? Can you share any examples or stories?**

	Code
Theme 1 - Yes, Motivation from the Teachers	1
Theme 2 - Yes, Motivation from the Social worker	2
Theme 3 - Yes, Motivation from the Parent	3
Theme 4 - Yes, Motivation from the environment	4
Theme 5 - Yes, Motivation from Self	5
Theme 6 - No, Motivation from the Teachers	6
Theme 7 - No, Motivation from the Social worker	7
Theme 8 - No, Motivation from the Parent	8
Theme 9 - No, Motivation from the environment	9
Theme 10 - No, Motivation from Self	10

## APPENDIX 2- SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE CODING FOR TEACHERS

### Coding Survey Questionnaires for Teachers

#### 1. Cluster of location

Code

a. Adjuman/Gulu Cluster	1
b. Agago/Kitgum/Lamwo Cluster	2
c. Amolatar/ Dokolo/Alebtong/Kalaki Cluster	3
d. Arua/Moyo Cluster	4
e. Lira/Apac/Oyam cluster	5
f. Nebbi/Pakwach Cluster	6
g. Omoro/Pader Cluster	7
h. Serere/Kaberaido cluster	8
I. Kumi/Soroti	9

#### 2. Gender:

Code

a. Male	1
b. Female	2

#### 3. Age range:

a. Under 25	1
b. 25-34	2
c. 35-44	3
d. 45-54	4

e. 55 and above	5
-----------------	---

**4. Years of teaching experience:**

a. Less than 5 years	1
b. 5-10 years	2
c. 11-15 years	3
d. 16-20 years	4
e. More than 20 years	5

**5. Educational qualifications:**

a. Not acquired any certificate	1
b. Certificate	2
c. Diploma	3
d. Bachelor's degree	4
e. Master's degree	5
f. Doctorate degree	6
g. Others	7

**6. Teaching specialization:**

a. Primary education	1
b. Secondary education	2
c. Special Skills Education	3

**7. How long have you served as a centre Guide?**

a). Less than a year	1
b). Between 1 and 2 years	2
c). Between 2 and 3 years	3
d). Between 3 and 4 Yeas	4
e). Between 4 and 5 years	5
d). Above 5 years.	6

**8. How would you rate the overall academic performance of the students in your class?**

a. Excellent	1
b. Good	2
c. Average	3
d. Below average	4

**9. Which of the following factors do you believe have the most significant influence on a student's academic performance? (Select one)**

a. Parental involvement	1
b. Teaching quality	2
c. Availability of resources	3
d. Classroom environment	4
e. Student motivation and effort	5

**10. How satisfied are you with the level of parental involvement and support in your classroom?**

a. Very satisfied	1
b. Somewhat satisfied	2
c. Somewhat dissatisfied	3
d. Very dissatisfied	4

**11. How frequently do you provide feedback and assessment results to students and their parents?**

a. Weekly	1
b. Biweekly	2
c. Monthly	3
d. Termly	4
e. Annually	5

**12. In your opinion, how effective are the educational resources and materials available to you for teaching purposes?**

a. Highly effective	1
b. Moderately effective	2
c. Somewhat effective	3
d. Not effective	4

**13. How often do you engage students in interactive and hands-on learning activities?**

a. Daily	1
b. Several times a week	2
c. Once a week	3
d. Rarely	4
e. Never	5

**14. Are there any specific challenges or obstacles that impact students' academic performance in your classroom? (Select all that apply)**

a. Limited access to resources	1
b. Socioeconomic factors	2
c. Language barriers	3
d. Behavioural issues	4
e. Lack of parental involvement	5

**15. How would you rate the level of support and professional development opportunities provided by the school or educational institution?**

a. Excellent	1
b. Good	2
c. Fair	3
d. Poor	4

**16. How satisfied are you with the level of collaboration and communication among teachers and school administrators?**

a. Very satisfied	1
b. Somewhat satisfied	2
c. Somewhat dissatisfied	3
d. Very dissatisfied	4

### APPENDIX 3- SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE CODING FOR FCP STAFF

#### Coding for Responses to Survey Questionnaires for FCP staff

##### 1. Name of the cluster

##### Code

a) Adjuman/Gulu Cluster	1
b) Agago/Kitgum/Lamwo Cluster	2
c) Amolatar/ Dokolo/Alebtong/Karaki Cluster	3
d) Arua/Moyo Cluster	4
e) Lira/Apac/Oyam cluster	5
f) Nebbi/Pakwach Cluster	6
g) Omoro/Pader Cluster	7
h) Serere/Kaberaido cluster	8
I) Kumi-Soroti Cluster	9

##### 2. FCP Identification Number

##### Code

UG0157	1
UG0535	2
UG0569	3
UG0599	4
UG0837	5
UG0927	6

##### 5. Role at the FCP

##### Code

a) FCP Director.	1
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b) Child development officer (SDR, Health or HBP).	<b>2</b>
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**6. How long have you been in the child development ministry? Code**

a. Less than 5 years	<b>1</b>
b. 5-10 years	<b>2</b>
c. 11-15 years	<b>3</b>
d. 16-20 years	<b>4</b>
e. More than 20 years	<b>5</b>

**Assessing factors that influence academic performance.**

**7. How would you rate the overall effectiveness of the FCP in improving children's academic performance?**

**code**

a. Highly effective	<b>1</b>
b. Moderately effective	<b>2</b>
c. Somewhat effective	<b>3</b>
d. Not effective	<b>4</b>

**8. How do you measure and assess the academic performance of the children within the FCP?**

a. Standardized tests	<b>1</b>
b. Continuous assessments by teachers	<b>2</b>
c. Parent and caregiver feedback	<b>3</b>

d. Other (please specify) _____	<b>4</b>
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**9. Have you observed any specific factors or challenges that consistently influence academic performance within the FCP? (Select all that apply)**

a. Limited access to educational resources	<b>1</b>
b. Socioeconomic factors	<b>2</b>
c. Lack of parental involvement	<b>3</b>
d. Language barriers	<b>4</b>
e. Cultural or social factors	<b>5</b>
f. poor education services	<b>6</b>
g. Failure to learn how to read and write at an early age?	<b>7</b>
h. Lack of interest by students	<b>8</b>
i. Hunger at School due to lack of food	<b>9</b>

**10. Are there any external partnerships or collaborations established to support the FCP's goals in improving academic performance?**

a. Yes	<b>1</b>
b. No	<b>2</b>

**11. How satisfied are you with the level of support and resources provided to the FCP by external stakeholders, for example, Compassion International?**

a. Very satisfied	<b>1</b>
b. Somewhat satisfied	<b>2</b>

c. Somewhat dissatisfied	3
d. Very dissatisfied	4

**12. Do you have a tool for tracking the academic performance progress of each participant in the FCP?**

a) Yes	1
b) No	2

**13. Do you analyze the summary report of the academic performance of supported participants to share with the stakeholders (schools, caregivers, church leadership, Compassion International) to guide decision-making?**

a. Yes	1
b. No	2

**14. How would you rate the level of collaboration and communication between the FCP team and the schools where the interventions are implemented?**

a. Excellent	1
b. Good	2
c. Fair	3
d. Poor	4

15. Do you feel like you have all the freedom to do what it takes within your capacity to support the academic performance improvement of participants in your FCP?

a.	Yes	<b>1</b>
b.	No	<b>2</b>

## **APPENDIX 4 - INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

### **Interview Questions 1: Project Directors (11)**

1. What specific strategies or interventions have been implemented to enhance academic performance within the Frontline Church Partner (FCP)?
2. How do you involve parents, caregivers, teachers, and community members in supporting the FCPs efforts to improve academic performance?
3. In your opinion, what are the specific Northern Uganda realities that are affecting the academic performance of the students?
4. 4 Is there anything that is outside the box that challenges the current status quo that you should adventure into to improve the academic performance of Students in your FCP?
5. What are your recommendations for academic performance improvement of participants in northern Uganda?