

**FACTORS INFLUENCING CHILDREN'S ATTENDANCE OF SUNDAY SCHOOL
IN KINONI PARISH, NORTH ANKOLE DIOCESE**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE BISHOP TUCKER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY IN
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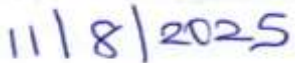
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DECLARATION

I, Gloria Nduhukire, declare that this is my work. It results from my research and has not been submitted to any other institution for another degree or qualification, either in whole or in part. Throughout the work, I have acknowledged all sources used in its compilation.

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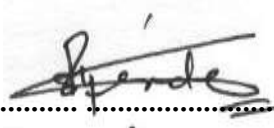
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my church St. James Kinoni Church of Uganda under the leadership of Rev. Can. Edward Namanya who was the Parish Priest by the time I was enrolled for this course, Rev. James Mushabe, Rev. Godfrey Tumusiime, Ord. Michael Asimwe Nyangyezi, Rev. Can. Prof. Christopher Byaruhanga Atwoki, St. Augustine foundation under the Administration of Mr. Stephen, my Nephew Mbayo Daniel, my beloved sister Bamurekye Sharon and his husband Sam Ruzigana.

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ABBREVIATIONS

COU.....Church of Uganda

NGO's.....Non-Governmental Organizations

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ABSTRACT

This mixed-methods study examines factors affecting children's Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish, North Ankole Diocese. Using pastoral theological frameworks that integrate theological truth with human realities, researcher investigated ten variables influencing religious education participation among children aged 8-14 years. The study employed quantitative surveys (n=285) and qualitative interviews across three Church of Uganda congregations: Kinoni COU, Sherengye COU, and All Saints COU. Data collection included structured questionnaires with 5-point Likert scales, interviews with church leaders, parents, teachers, and children, direct observation of Sunday school sessions, and analysis of attendance records from 2019-2024. **Major positive finding:** Strong parental spiritual commitment emerged as a key strength. Parents demonstrated exceptionally high belief in Sunday school's importance for children's spiritual growth (M = 4.22, SD = 0.96) and consistently encouraged regular attendance (M = 4.01, SD = 1.09). This reflects deeply embedded spiritual values within the parish community, providing a strong foundation for ministry interventions and exemplifying biblical intergenerational faith transmission principles from Deuteronomy 6:6-7. **Major negative finding:** Health-related barriers constituted the most significant systematic obstacle to consistent attendance. Community health concerns received the highest impact rating (M = 4.27, SD = 0.89), with illness-related absences (M = 4.17), long-term health conditions (M = 4.17), and inadequate health accommodations (M = 4.07) creating persistent disruptions. This reveals a critical gap between the church's theological commitment to caring for the vulnerable and its practical capacity for inclusive, health-responsive programming. **Key Recommendations:** First, develop comprehensive church support systems addressing transportation (M = 1.83), learning materials (M = 2.47), and health accommodations through cooperatives and partnerships. Second, implement strategic leadership development initiatives addressing training deficiencies (M = 2.79) through theological institution partnerships. This research contributes empirical evidence for evidence-based ministry planning in post-colonial African contexts, offering practical guidance for church governance and broader scholarly discourse on pastoral theology and religious education effectiveness. **Keywords:** Sunday school attendance, pastoral theology, children's religious education, rural ministry, Church of Uganda, community health barriers, parental involvement and leadership development.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the study's background, the problem statement, study's purpose, study objectives, the research questions, demarcates the research scope and justification for the study.

1.1.2 Background of the study

This background is grounded in a pastoral theological study whose concerns are but not limited to authentic Christian ministry that must be deeply rooted in theological truth while dynamically engaged with the concrete realities of human life and community which asserts that Scripture, tradition, and doctrine are not abstract concepts, but vital foundations that must critically inform and be informed by the actual practice of care, leadership, preaching, and service within the specific contexts where people of which Sunday school is part, therefore as a pastoral theology student, I intend to focus on the investigation of the factors that influence Sunday school attendance in kinoni parish from this background.

Historically, Sunday school has deep roots in Christianity, as seen in the Gospel of (Mark 10:13) where Jesus blessed children brought to Him. The early Christian Church recognized its duty to educate children about Christ but often failed to do so effectively. Over time, various bishops and councils emphasized this duty to parish priests. The role of Sunday School programs in Christian education originated in the 18th century, marked by Robert Raikes' establishment of formal Sunday schooling in England to provide religious instruction to working-class children (Bebbington, 2018). Over time, Sunday Schools proliferated worldwide, evolving into essential institutions that foster Christian values among young believers (Smith, 2019). In Uganda, early missionaries introduced Sunday School programs in the late 19th century, integrating them into church activities (Byaruhanga, 2020). These programs have since adapted to incorporate structured curricula, interactive pedagogies, and parental involvement,

enhancing their effectiveness (Kagwa & Tumusiime, 2021). Despite their historical significance, contemporary studies indicate a decline in attendance, underscoring the urgent need to examine factors influencing children's attendance and participation in Sunday school (Nsubuga, 2022).

Sunday school typically serves children from infancy through adolescence without a fixed upper age limit, structuring its programs around developmental stages rather than rigid age brackets. While commonly grouping preschoolers (ages 3-5) for sensory learning and foundational Bible stories, elementary children (ages 6-11) for discovery-based activities, and preteens (ages 10-12) for peer-oriented abstract thinking, transitions to youth ministry for older teens vary by church context, emphasizing "seamless transitions" over abrupt cutoffs and sometimes incorporating teens as junior teachers to foster mentorship and leadership (Houser, 2008).

1.1.3 Problem statement

Sunday school serves as the church's reaching, teaching, and winning arms. When it fulfills these purposes through Christian education, it enlarges the church, influences the community, and reaches the world (Matt.28:19-20). Parents should raise and educate their children in the teachings and counsel of God so that children become a blessing to everyone in the community by becoming more familiar and fearful of God and obedient to their parents (Dame, 2020). Despite the recognized importance of early religious education in shaping children's spiritual identity and values (Johnson & Wright, 2022), many parishes in rural Uganda face challenges in maintaining consistent attendance, potentially impacting long-term religious engagement and community cohesion (Mwesigwa, 2021).

In Kinoni Parish, many children belong to the Anglican denomination, as evidenced by the predominance of Christian households and the steady attendance of adults during Sunday services. However, records from the six churches in the parish indicate that only about 25 to 35 children attend Sunday school on average each week, despite adult congregations ranging from 150 to 200 per service (Church reports, 2023). This suggests that over 60% of children whose parents are active churchgoers are either

staying at home or not participating in Sunday school activities. Church leaders report that this trend has persisted over the last five years, with little improvement despite various efforts to engage children. This poses a significant gap in children's participation, as attendance is both low and irregular.

Sunday school programs, rooted in Jesus' affirmation of children's spiritual significance and evolving from Raikes' 18th-century educational initiatives to contemporary global contexts including Uganda, have served as fundamental agents for Christian faith transmission across centuries. While these institutions have demonstrated remarkable adaptability through structured curricula and interactive pedagogical approaches, current research reveals a troubling decline in attendance that risks their core educational mission. This crisis necessitates urgent scholarly investigation into attendance patterns and the development of innovative strategies that can revitalize participation through technological integration, culturally responsive methodologies, and enhanced church-family collaborations. The imperative to address these challenges effectively represents not merely an institutional concern but a critical determinant of whether Christian communities can successfully preserve and transmit their faith traditions to future generations in an increasingly secularized world.

1.1.4 Objectives

General objective

This study seeks to establish the factors influencing children's attendance in Sunday school in Kinoni Parish.

Specific objectives

The study was guided by the objectives below:

1. To investigate the influence of parental involvement on children's attendance in Sunday school of Kinoni Parish.
2. To establish the influence of Church support on children's attendance in Sunday school in Kinoni Parish.
3. To explore whether there is a relationship between parental knowledge of Sunday school programs and children's attendance in Sunday school.

4. To determine the influence of children's church structure of leadership on children's attendance in Kinoni Parish.
5. To find out the impact of Sunday school Educational curriculum design on children's attendance in Kinoni parish.
6. To determine the impact of socio-cultural factors and community context on the attendance rates in Sunday school in Kinoni parish.
7. To find out the effect of transportation accessibility on children's attendance of Sunday school in kinoni Parish.
8. To identify the impact of weather conditions on children's attendance rates in Kinoni Parish.
9. To find out the impact of competing Educational priorities on children's attendance of Sunday school in Kinoni Parish.
10. To identify the impact of health-related factors on the attendance patterns in Kinoni Parish.

1.1.5 Research questions

Main research question

What are the factors influence children's attendance of Sunday school in Kinoni Parish.

Specific research questions

1. What is the influence of parental involvement on children's attendance in Sunday school in Kinoni Parish?
2. What is the impact of Church support on children's attendance in Sunday school in Kinoni Parish?
3. What is the relationship between parental knowledge of Sunday school programs and children's attendance in Sunday school in Kinoni Parish?
4. What is the influence of children's church structure of leadership on children's attendance in Kinoni Parish?

5. What is the impact of Sunday school Educational curriculum design on children's attendance in Kinoni parish?
6. What is the impact of socio-cultural factors and community context on the attendance rates in Sunday school in Kinoni parish?
7. What is the effect of transportation accessibility on children's attendance of Sunday school in Kinoni Parish?
8. What is the impact of weather conditions on children's attendance rates in Kinoni Parish?
9. What is the impact of competing Educational priorities on children's attendance of Sunday school in Kinoni Parish?
10. What is the impact of health-related factors on the attendance patterns in Kinoni Parish?

1.1.6 Scope of the study

This study was conducted in Kinoni Parish, located within the North Ankole Diocese. The study investigated the factors influencing children's attendance of Sunday school. The factors to be considered included; parental Involvement, Church support, the structure of leadership for children's church, Sunday school Educational Curriculum design, socio-cultural factors and Community Context, transport accessibility, parental knowledge, weather conditions, competing Educational priorities, and health related factors. The study's timeframe will encompass a time period from 2019 to 2024, since Sunday school programs started in 2019 in North Ankole Diocese.

1.1.7 Justification of the study

The study investigated factors influencing children's attendance of Sunday school in North Ankole Diocese, with a focus on Kinoni Parish, is justified by the critical need to understand declining attendance and participation rates in religious education programs that traditionally serve as foundational platforms for faith formation, moral development, and community building. Therefore, practical interventions to enhance Sunday school participation and effectiveness should be continuously supported.

1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.2.1 Introduction

The concept of Sunday school programs that targets children's foundational faith formation has attracted several scholarly works, including books, journal articles, dissertations, and theses. The literature discusses the factors that lead to Low Sunday school attendance.

1.2.2 Parental involvement

Parental involvement is a cornerstone of religious socialization, with global studies underscoring its pivotal role in shaping children's Sunday school participation. Boyatzis (2011) identifies parents as primary religious educators, whose behaviors strongly predict children's engagement. This is reinforced by Smith and Denton's (2009) finding that adolescents with parents discussing faith at home were 2.5 times more likely to attend religious programs. Bengtson et al. (2013) emphasizes parental consistency as the strongest predictor of intergenerational religious transmission, particularly when coupled with personal commitment.

Active parental participation in religious education, such as co-attendance, boosts children's attendance by 40% (Boyatzis & Janicki, 2003). Comparative analyses by Francis and Craig (2006) across 18 countries reveal parental church involvement more three times more influential on children's participation than peer or programmatic factors. Competing weekend activities pose challenges but are mitigated when parents prioritize religious education (Bartkowski & Xu, 2007).

In Africa, religious socialization blends communal traditions with nuclear family dynamics. Mbiti (2015) notes the communal role of extended family in religious education, yet parental influence remains paramount. Adogame's (2013) cross-national study shows children with actively involved parents are 2.7 times more likely to attend Sunday school. Urbanization, however, disrupts traditional extended family networks, shifting responsibility to nuclear families (Kalu, 2008).

Economic pressures significantly impact religious education. Parsitau (2017) finds parents prioritizing academic tutoring over Sunday school in competitive environments, while economic hardships reduce attendance by 30% in urban East Africa (Parsitau & Mwaura, 2010). Financial constraints limit parental church involvement in Uganda and Kenya (Gifford, 2009). Gender roles also shape participation: Lauterbach (2017) highlights mothers' stronger influence on children's attendance compared to fathers in East African communities.

1.2.3 Church support

The influence of Anglican Church support on children's Sunday school attendance reflects significant regional disparities, with declining participation in Western contexts contrasting growth in Africa, Asia, and Latin America (Jenkins, 2016). Research underscores the centrality of institutional commitment to sustaining engagement. Canterbury's (2016) study of 35 Anglican parishes emphasized that children's attendance flourishes when they perceive themselves as valued members of the faith community, particularly when integrated into broader liturgical practices alongside age-specific education. Spatial and pedagogical investments further shape outcomes: Kalu (2016) found Anglican parishes in Africa with dedicated children's spaces reported 42% higher attendance, signaling prioritization of youth. Similarly, Adogame et al. (2016) noted urban African dioceses with professionally trained Sunday school teachers achieved 44% higher attendance than those relying on untrained volunteers, highlighting the role of educational quality.

Uganda exemplifies these trends; with its strong Anglican tradition (Church of Uganda) fostering studies linking structured church support to vibrant Sunday school participation. Collectively, these studies suggest that Anglican parishes combining theological inclusion, material resources, and pedagogical investment more effectively sustain children's religious education, reflecting broader institutional prioritization of intergenerational faith transmission (Kimball et al., 2016).

1.2.4 Parental knowledge of Sunday school programs

Research consistently demonstrates that parental understanding of Sunday school programs directly influences children's attendance patterns. Bunge (2001, 2008, 2012) establishes parents as primary spiritual nurturers, noting that their comprehension of religious education correlates with commitment to children's participation. Keeley (2008, p.47) reinforces this, stating that knowledgeable parents "significantly more likely to prioritize their children's attendance."

Brewster's works (2005, 2007, 2010, 2013) highlight how churches must educate parents about program value and content. He argues that informed parents "become advocates rather than passive participants" (2010, p.83) in religious education. Csinos (2012) extends this discourse, noting parents must understand how Sunday school addresses diverse spiritual styles and learning needs.

Wright (2003, p.126) emphasizes effective church-parent communication, reporting that "churches with systematic approaches to informing parents, report higher and more consistent attendance patterns." Houser (2008) offers practical communication strategies including newsletters and parent orientations.

The African context presents unique considerations. Adebayo (2014, p.92) argues that contextualizing communication strategies for cultural factors improves attendance. Brewster (2007, p.138) advocates for "culturally responsive approaches to parent education." Wright (2003) highlights communal responsibility in African contexts, where extended family knowledge influences attendance. Ugandan case studies demonstrated "measurable increases in both parental involvement and children's regular attendance" (Wright, 2003, p.302) after implementing parent education programs.

1.2.5 Children's church structure of leadership

Parental leadership within church structures significantly enhances participation; Nkonge (2012) observes 65% higher attendance in East African parishes where parents hold leadership roles, a pattern echoed in Uganda (Byaruhanga, 2018). Orobator

(2008) emphasizes parental religious authority as a key driver, reflecting hybrid missionary-indigenous legacies (Ward & Wild-Wood, 2012).

Children's church attendance is significantly influenced by leadership structures that integrate relational engagement with organizational clarity. Powell et al. (2017) found hierarchical systems insufficient alone, demonstrating that combining mentorship with administrative frameworks yields higher retention. Their global study emphasized "organizational clarity with relational intentionality" (p. 211) as critical, a conclusion reinforced by Westerhoff's (2021) analysis of multigenerational leadership teams fostering sustained engagement. Adeyemo's (2020) research in sub-Saharan Africa highlighted adapted age-grade systems that align leadership with developmental stages and cultural values, noting these created "effective environments for sustained participation" (p. 147).

In East Africa, Obong (2021) identified blended leadership models (clergy, children's workers, parental representatives) as most effective, linking them to 53% higher attendance and "dynamic environments" (p. 98) appealing to children. Namugera's (2019) study of Anglican dioceses revealed formal training and hierarchical support increased attendance by 31%, stressing resource provision for volunteers. Similarly, Kanyike (2021) found dedicated committees integrating clergy, lay leaders, and parents enhanced sustainability in Ugandan Anglican parishes. Collectively, research underscores that leadership structures balancing relational investment with institutional support optimize children's church participation.

1.2.6 Sunday school Educational curriculum design

Research identifies curriculum design as crucial for children's engagement in religious education. Johnson and Smith (2019) found curriculum relevance consistently ranked among the top three factors influencing regular Sunday school attendance across Western Christian denominations, with age-appropriate activities and interactive methods showing higher retention rates.

Richardson et al. (2021) demonstrated that experiential learning approaches yielded 27% higher attendance compared to lecture-based methods across 150 churches in five countries, concluding that "children's spiritual formation is directly correlated to their cognitive and emotional engagement with the educational content" from five countries, concluding that "children's spiritual formation is directly connected to their cognitive and emotional engagement with the educational content" (p. 184).

In African contexts, Nzimande (2020) found hybrid curriculum models incorporating both global theological principles and local cultural elements showed 42% higher attendance rates than purely Western or exclusively local approaches. Mbote et al. (2023) determined that curricula addressing community issues relevant to African children's experiences produced more consistent attendance, concluding this "represents the most significant predictor of children's voluntary participation" (p. 217).

East African studies by Kagwa (2019) identified curriculum adaptability as critical, with regularly updated curricula showing 29% higher attendance. Kioko and Ndegwa (2022) found balanced biblical content with practical life skills training significantly improved retention rates among children aged 8-12.

1.2.7 Socio-cultural factors and community context

Research demonstrates that Sunday school attendance is significantly shaped by socio-cultural factors. Bengtson et al. (2022) found parental religiosity to be the strongest predictor of children's religious participation, with consistently religious parents' children three times more likely to maintain regular attendance. Smith and Denton (2020) confirm that "the single most important social influence in shaping young people's religious lives is the religious life modeled and taught to them by their parents" (p. 56).

Ferguson (2023) identified how secularization has restructured family priorities, with communities maintaining strong religious identity showing 67% higher children's

program attendance. Putnam and Campbell (2021) linked social cohesion to 38% stronger Sunday school participation regardless of urbanization.

In African contexts, Chitando (2023) found urban families maintaining rural extended family connections reported 52% higher religious program participation, emphasizing how "rural-urban migration patterns reconfigure rather than eliminate traditional religious socialization practices" (p. 209). Mbaya (2021) documented that children whose parents worked weekend shifts were 63% less likely to attend regularly. Kobia and Amanze (2022) found communities prioritizing education showed 47% higher participation in church-based children's programs.

1.2.8 Transportation accessibility

Transportation accessibility significantly impacts Sunday school attendance globally. Houser (2008) identified it among the top three factors affecting participation in North American churches, noting that "churches that implement transportation solutions experience an average attendance increase of 15-20%" (p. 87).

Brewster (2010) shows how transportation challenges manifest differently across contexts: urban settings face congestion and safety concerns, while rural communities struggle with distance and poor infrastructure. He emphasizes that "the physical journey to church represents both a practical and psychological barrier" (p. 142). Johnston (2015) documents that organized transportation systems significantly improve attendance rates, describing this as "one of the most immediately actionable strategies" (p. 76).

In African contexts, Adebayo (2014) found that Nigerian urban churches report "up to 40% of registered Sunday school children attend irregularly primarily due to transportation constraints" (p. 115), particularly affecting lower socioeconomic families. Wright (2003) notes successful rural programs implement "coordinated transportation systems, often using Nyende (as cited in Brewster, 2013, p. 92) observes that when "transportation costs compete with other essential family expenses, attendance becomes inconsistent."

" In Uganda, Brewster (2007, 2013) documents children walking over five kilometers, with barriers affecting female-headed and lower-income households disproportionately, requiring "contextually appropriate transportation solutions".

1.2.9 Weather conditions

Weather significantly impacts Sunday school attendance globally. Carter (2007) identifies seasonal attendance patterns in North American and European churches, with winter showing 15-30% declines compared to temperate seasons, noting "severe weather events can reduce attendance by up to 50%" (p. 134). Keeley (2010) explores the psychological dimensions of weather-related decisions, arguing that "churches that communicate the essential value of regular attendance can partially mitigate weather-related absences" (p. 76).

In African contexts, weather creates distinct patterns. Adebayo (2014) documents that West African rainy season reduce attendance by 40-60% in some Nigerian churches due to flooding, muddy roads, and transportation disruptions. Wright (2003) observes that churches with "seasonal adaptations to their Sunday school schedules, maintain more consistent annual participation" (p. 217).

Uganda's bimodal rainfall pattern presents specific challenges. Brewster (2013) notes that heavy rainy season (March-May and September-November) correlate with 30-45% attendance reductions in rural churches. Nyende (as cited in Brewster, 2007) observes that weather-related barriers interact with transportation accessibility and health concerns, as rainy seasons intensify transportation difficulties while increasing waterborne disease risks, creating compounded attendance barriers.

1.2.10 Competing Educational priorities

Sunday school increasingly competes with other activities for children's time globally. Csinos (2012) documents growing schedule pressures, noting that "many families now view Sunday school as one optional activity among many rather than an essential commitment" (p. 92). Bunge (2008) observes that as secular education expands, religious education becomes marginalized, arguing that this competition "reflects

deeper societal questions about what knowledge and skills are deemed essential for children's development" (p. 345).

Keeley (2008) suggests successful programs adapt by implementing alternative scheduling or creating integrated approaches, noting that "effective children's ministries find ways to align religious education with families' broader educational values" (p. 112).

In Africa, academic achievement creates tension with religious education. Adebayo (2014) documents 50-70% attendance reductions during Nigerian examination periods. Wright (2003) observes an "education first" mentality where "the perceived relationship between educational achievement and economic security creates difficult choices for families" (p. 245).

In Uganda, Brewster (2010) notes that weekend academic tutoring directly competes with Sunday school, with "significant attendance drops of 30-60% during examination preparation periods" (p. 201). Nyende (cited in Brewster, 2013) highlights that parents view "academic achievement as the primary path to social mobility and economic security," creating a "utilitarian calculus that often disadvantages religious education" (p. 153), particularly among aspiring middle-class families.

1.2.11 Health-related factors

Health concerns significantly impact Sunday school attendance across contexts. Hall (2012) documents that childhood illnesses account for 15-25% of absences in North American programs, noting that "policies regarding illness and attendance vary widely" (p. 67). Nye (2009) argues that physical health concerns are inseparable from spiritual formation, suggesting "churches that address health holistically demonstrate greater attendance stability" (p. 124).

African churches face heightened challenges due to higher disease burdens. Adebayo (2014) reports health-related absences account for 25-35% of Nigerian Sunday school absences, with malaria responsible for approximately 15%. Wright (2003) connects

nutritional status to attendance, observing that "churches that implement feeding programs often report attendance increases of 30-50%" (p. 267).

In Uganda, Brewster (2007) identifies malaria as the most significant health-related barrier, accounting for approximately 20% of absences. Brewster (2013) notes that children's caregiving responsibilities affect attendance, observing that, "the burden of care work disproportionately affects girls' attendance" (p. 178). Nyende (cited in Brewster, 2010) highlights that "communities with better access to preventive healthcare demonstrate more stable Sunday school attendance patterns" (p. 212).

The literature reveals that children's Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish results from the convergence of five critical variable clusters. Parental factors emerge as the primary determinant, with active parental involvement, religious commitment, and parental knowledge increasing attendance. Institutional church support, including effective leadership structures, trained teachers, and relevant curricula, amplifies parental influence and sustains engagement. Socio-cultural and community context mediates these relationships, with traditional religious communities and extended family networks enhancing participation while urbanization and secularization create competing pressures.

Practical barriers like transportation accessibility, weather conditions, and health challenges significantly constrain attendance, reducing participation during adverse periods in Kinoni parish. Competing educational priorities such as school education and examination pressures increasingly challenge religious education as families prioritize secular achievement for their own future prospect from their children. The evidence demonstrates that effective Sunday school programs require integrated strategies addressing all five variable clusters simultaneously, as isolated interventions targeting single factors prove insufficient for sustaining consistent children's attendance in complex parish environments like Kinoni.

1.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.3.1 Introduction

This section presents the research methodology that was employed in the study. It includes the research design, target population, sample size selection, data collection methods, and measurement of study variables, analysis techniques, and ethical implications.

1.3.2 Research design

The study undertook a mixed-methods research design that integrates both quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection and analysis of the factors influencing children's attendance of Sunday school in Kinoni parish. Mixed-methods approach provides comprehensive insights into complex social phenomena by combining the statistical consistency of quantitative methods with the rich, contextual understanding offered by qualitative inquiries (Creswell, 2018).

1.3.3 Data collection

This study sought data about the highlighted variables that contribute to low Sunday school attendance as discussed in the literature above and how they determine which specific variables are responsible for low Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish. For example from the parental involvement as a variable, data was collected using a tool that had questions like; do parents/guardians encourage children to attend Sunday school regularly, do parents/guardians attend church services with their children, and concerning church support, data was collected using questions like; does the church provide enough learning materials for Sunday school, does the church recognize and appreciates children's participation in Sunday school.

1.3.4 Study population and sample size

The study population comprised of 1,100 individuals, including 4 Church leaders, 750 parents, 343 children of 8-14 years, and 3 Sunday school teachers distributed across 3 churches in Kinoni Parish.

The use of Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size determination table is exceptionally well-suited for the research on children's Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish because it provides the optimal balance between statistical rigor and practical feasibility for community-based religious research. Their formula, incorporating a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error, ensures that a 285-respondent sample will generate findings that can be confidently generalized to the entire parish population. This systematic approach is particularly appropriate for finite population studies, where the parish community has identifiable boundaries and membership, unlike sampling methods designed for infinite populations. The predetermined sample size eliminates arbitrary decision-making and provides a defensible scientific rationale that can be easily explained to parish leadership, parents, and academic reviewers while maintaining the trust essential for successful community-based research.

The 26% population coverage achieved through this sample size is particularly advantageous for examining the multiple factors influencing Sunday school attendance, as it provides sufficient statistical power for correlational analyses, subgroup comparisons, and multiple regression analyses needed to identify key predictors of attendance patterns. In the Kinoni context, this sample size ensures representation across the diverse family backgrounds, socioeconomic conditions, and varying levels of religious commitment that characterize rural parishes, while remaining ethically appropriate for research involving children. The method's emphasis on minimizing participant burden while maximizing statistical validity aligns perfectly with the cultural sensitivities and ethical considerations required when conducting research within religious communities, ensuring that your findings will be both scientifically credible and practically useful for informing interventions and policy improvements within North Ankole Diocese.

The distribution of respondents across different categories is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample distribution table

Category	Population	Sample Size
Church leaders	4	4
Parents	750	191
Teachers of Sunday school	3	3
Children	343	87
Total	1100	285

1.3.5 Data collection methods

This study integrated primary and secondary data sources. Primary data was collected through structured questionnaires distributed to parents, (children 8-14 years) and interviews with Sunday school teachers and church leaders and secondary data was obtained from various sources, including church attendance records, and diocesan reports.

Questionnaires

This study employed a 50-item questionnaire (closed/open-ended) to assess factors influencing children's Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish. Items 1-5 measure parental involvement; 6-10 church support; 11-15 leadership structure; 16-20 curriculum design; 21-25 socio-cultural context; 26-30 parental knowledge; 31-35 transportation; 36-40 weather conditions; 41-45 Educational priorities; 46-50 health factors. A 5-point Likert scale (1: Strongly Disagree to 5: Strongly Agree) quantifies responses, with total scores per factor ranging 5-25. Scores of 20-25 indicate dominant factor influence, 11-19 moderate, and 5-10 weak. This structured approach ensures comprehensive analysis of quantitative and qualitative data.(Appendix 1).

Interviews

Interviews were conducted with parents, children (8-14 years), Sunday school teachers and church leaders to gain in-depth insights into the factors that influence children's attendance of Sunday school in Kinoni Parish.(Appendix 2).

Observation

Structured non-participant observation was employed to assess Sunday school sessions directly, focusing on teaching methods, children engagement, learning environment, teacher-children interactions, and curriculum implementation. An observation checklist will be developed to ensure consistency and comprehensiveness in data collection across different Sunday school classes as follows (Appendix 3).

Document review

Analysis of existing document was supplemented by primary data collection, providing historical context and objective records. Documents included Sunday school attendance registers from the past two years, teaching materials and curriculum guides, church policies related to children's ministry, and any available evaluation reports. This archival data facilitated analysis of attendance trends over time and provided insights into institutional frameworks governing Sunday school programs.

1.3.6 Ethical considerations

The study adhered to ethical guidelines, including obtaining informed consent from all participants, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity, and minimizing any potential harm to participants. Approval from relevant ethical review boards will be obtained prior to data collection.

1.3.7 Data analysis

The collected data was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Using statistical package for social scientists (SPSS) software, quantitative data from questionnaires was analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, percentages, and means. Qualitative data from interviews will be analyzed

thematically to identify common themes and patterns related to the factors influencing children's attendance in Sunday school

1.3.8 Outline

Chapter two: Presentation of findings

This chapter presented comprehensive findings from field research that was conducted in Kinoni Parish regarding Sunday school attendance factors. The research examined demographic profiles of participants and explored various dimensions influencing attendance, including parental involvement, church support systems, and leadership structures. The findings revealed critical insights into parental knowledge of programs, curriculum effectiveness, and the socio-cultural context affecting participation. Additionally, the research identified practical barriers such as transportation accessibility, weather impacts, competing educational priorities, and health-related factors that significantly influence children's ability and willingness to attend Sunday school regularly.

Chapter three: Discussion of findings

The chapter synthesized key patterns and relationships that emerged from the research findings, identifying the primary determinants of regular attendance and their interrelationships. It provided in-depth assessment of parental influence, revealing correlations between parental knowledge, involvement, and children's participation rates. The chapter evaluated institutional factors including leadership effectiveness, resource allocation impact, and curriculum engagement, while also examining external barriers like transportation challenges and weather conditions. The discussion culminated in a comprehensive evaluation of how socio-cultural influences, community context, and competing priorities collectively shape attendance patterns in Kinoni Parish's Sunday school program.

Chapter four: Conclusion

Considering a comprehensive examination of factors influencing children's attendance at Sunday school in Kinoni Parish, this study revealed that children's Sunday school participation results from a complex interplay of multiple interconnected

determinants rather than any single factor. This integrated understanding revealed that successful Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish results from a supportive ecosystem where engaged parents, well-structured church programs, positive community attitudes, and minimal practical barriers converge, ultimately providing parish leadership with actionable insights for developing comprehensive strategies that address the full spectrum of influences on children's religious education participation.

Chapter five: Recommendations

Based on the research findings and discussion, this chapter proposed strategic interventions to enhance children's Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish. Recommendations focused on strengthening parental involvement through improved communication and educational initiatives, optimizing church support systems including resource allocation and teacher training, and restructuring leadership to enhance effectiveness. The chapter outlined curriculum development strategies for greater relevance and engagement, alongside practical solutions for transportation, weather accommodation, and competing priorities. A comprehensive implementation framework has been proposed with short, medium, and long-term action items, complemented by a monitoring system with clear success indicators to ensure continuous improvement of Sunday school attendance rates.

CHAPTER TWO

2.1 Presentation of Findings

2.1.1 Introduction

The section involves presentation of research findings from Kinoni Parish. The findings include information about bio-data, parental involvement, church support, Sunday school leadership structures, Sunday school curriculum, social cultural factors, health factors, weather conditions, and transport issues.

2.1.2 Bio-data

Table 1: The table showing all demographics in the study

Item		Frequency	Percentage
Category of respondents	Parent/Guardian	185	64.9
	Sunday school teacher	3	1.1
	Church leader	4	1.4
	Child (8-14) years	87	30.5
	Community member	6	2.1
Age group of respondents	Below 20 years	89	31.2
	21-30 years	39	13.7
	31-40 years	69	24.2
	41-50 years	49	17.2
	50 years and above	39	13.7
Gender of respondents	Male	133	46.7
	Female	152	53.3
Education level	No formal Education	21	7.4
	Primary Education	162	56.8
	Secondary Education	49	17.2
	Tertiary Education	35	12.3
	University Education	18	6.3

This study collected data from 285 respondents. The demographic breakdown reveals several important characteristics about the research participants and the community context.

Parents and guardians constituted the overwhelming majority at 64.9% (185 respondents), which is appropriate given their central role in children's religious education decisions. Children aged 8-14 years represented 30.5% (87 respondents), providing direct insight from the target demographic of Sunday school programs. The inclusion of church leaders (1.4%), Sunday school teachers (1.1%), and community members (2.1%) ensures multiple perspectives, though these groups represent smaller samples that may limit generalizability of findings specific to their roles.

The age distribution reflects communities with significant youth engagement as 31.2% of respondents were below 20 years. This substantial youth representation is valuable for understanding contemporary attitudes toward Sunday school attendance. The working-age population (21-50 years) comprised 55.1% of respondents, with those aged 31-40 years forming the largest single group at 24.2%. This distribution suggests active participation from parents in their prime child-rearing years. The relatively equal representation of those aged 21-30 years and those 50 years and above (both 13.7%) indicates input from both younger adults and more established community members.

The study sample involved females comprising 53.3% (152 respondents) and males 46.7% (133 respondents). This balanced distribution strengthens the validity of findings by ensuring both maternal and paternal perspectives given that Sunday school attendance decisions often involve both parents.

The educational profile reveals a community where formal education access varies significantly. Primary education represents the modal category at 56.8% (162 respondents), indicating this is the most common educational attainment level in the parish. The 7.4% with no formal education suggests some educational barriers exist, secondary education, 17.2%, tertiary, 12.3%, and university, 6.3%. This educational

diversity provides insights into how different levels of formal education might influence attitudes toward religious education and Sunday school participation.

Research Implications

This demographic composition provides a solid foundation for understanding Sunday school attendance patterns. The high proportion of parents and guardians ensures decision-makers' perspectives are well-represented, while the substantial child participation offers direct insights from those most affected by Sunday school programs. The age distribution captures both traditional and contemporary viewpoints, and the educational diversity allows for analysis of how formal education levels might correlate with Sunday school attendance attitudes.

2.1.3 Parental involvement and children’s attendance of Sunday school in Kinoni Parish

Table 4.2 showing parental involvement

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N
Parents/ Guardians encourage children to attend sunday school regularly	4.0105	1.08603	285
Parents/guardians attend church services with their children.	3.7158	1.16881	285
Parents/guardians discuss what children learn in Sunday school.	3.4175	1.26896	285
Parents/guardians are involved in Sunday school activities.	2.9474	1.29219	285
Parents/guardians believe Sunday school is important for their children’s spiritual growth.	4.2175	.95776	285

From table 4.1, the findings reveal important insights about parental involvement in children's Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish. The results demonstrate varying

levels of parental engagement across different dimensions of involvement as discussed below;

The data shows that parents in Kinoni Parish demonstrate strong beliefs about the importance of Sunday school for their children's spiritual development ($M = 4.22$, $SD = 0.96$), indicating near-universal agreement with this educational approach. This finding aligns with the high level of encouragement parents provide for regular Sunday school attendance ($M = 4.01$, $SD = 1.09$), suggesting that parental attitudes translate into active promotion of participation.

However, the results reveal a concerning gap between parental beliefs and behavioral involvement. While parents value Sunday school and encourage attendance, their personal participation shows declining engagement. Parents demonstrate moderate levels of attending church services with their children ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 1.17$) and discussing Sunday school lessons at home ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 1.27$). Most notably, direct involvement in Sunday school activities shows the lowest mean score ($M = 2.95$, $SD = 1.29$), falling below the midpoint of the scale.

The relatively high standard deviations across all measures indicate considerable variability in parental involvement patterns within the parish community. This suggests that while some parents are highly engaged across all dimensions, others may be participating minimally despite valuing the importance of religious education.

Qualitatively from the interview responses regarding parental involvement in accompanying children to Sunday school in Kinoni parish, a clear pattern emerges showing significant variation in parental participation across different church communities. The majority of respondents from Sherengye COU and Kinoni COU indicate consistently low levels of parental accompaniment, with teachers and lay leaders from both congregations reporting that parents typically accompany their children only two times per month, while church wardens and lay readers describe this frequency as occurring only "a few times" monthly. This stands in stark contrast to the responses from All Saints COU, where both teachers and discussion group

members report that parents accompany their children every Sunday, demonstrating a much higher level of consistent parental involvement.

However, even within All Saints, some variation exists, as evidenced by the lay reader's observation that parents only "partially" accompany their children monthly, and mixed responses from the children's discussion group, where some children reported consistent parental accompaniment while others experienced it only rarely. The Parish Priest's response suggests an idealistic view of parental involvement, stating that he always attends with his children and believes other parents follow the same practice, though this perspective appears to contradict the experiences reported by most other respondents, indicating a potential disconnect between clerical expectations and actual parental behavior in the parish.

The collective voices of Sunday school teachers, lay readers, parent-child discussion groups, and the parish priest from Sherengye COU, Kinoni COU, and All Saints COU converge on a unified understanding of how parental presence fundamentally transforms children's church attendance patterns. Their responses reveal that parental involvement creates a comprehensive framework of positive influence that operates on multiple interconnected levels. The respondents consistently emphasized that children demonstrate markedly improved behavior and discipline when their parents are present, with this enhanced conduct stemming from both the immediate awareness of parental oversight and the deeper sense of security that accompanies parental presence. This behavioral transformation directly correlates with increased attendance rates, as children feel more comfortable and confident participating in church activities when accompanied by their parents. Furthermore, the respondents highlighted that parental presence serves as a powerful modeling mechanism, where children observe and internalize proper church behavior, Christian values, and worship practices through direct observation of their parents' participation.

The guidance function of parents was particularly emphasized, with respondents noting that parents actively help navigate church activities and reinforce Christian teachings, thereby creating a seamless connection between home and church

instruction. Drawing from Proverbs 22:6, the respondents recognized that this parental involvement represents a practical application of biblical principles of child-rearing, where the church setting becomes an extension of Christian parenting. Ultimately, the convergence of these perspectives suggests that parental presence creates a virtuous cycle where improved behavior leads to increased attendance, which in turn provides more opportunities for spiritual formation and the development of lasting Christian moral foundations.

2.1.4 The church support and children's Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish

Table 4.3 showing church support systems

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N
The church provides enough learning materials for Sunday school.	2.4737	1.25464	285
The church offers transportation support for children to attend Sunday school.	1.7018	.87139	285
The church recognizes and appreciates children's participation in Sunday school.	3.3404	1.31351	285
The Sunday school environment is child-friendly and safe.	2.7193	1.34209	285
The church regularly organizes events or programs for Sunday school children.	2.8386	1.27071	285

The descriptive statistics presented analyses and examines the influence of church support on children's Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish. The results reveal significant deficiencies in institutional support that may be impacting participation rates and program effectiveness.

The data indicates substantial gaps in church support across multiple dimensions. Transportation support shows the most critical deficiency ($M = 1.70$, $SD = 0.87$), indicating that the vast majority of families receive little to no assistance with getting children to Sunday school. This finding is particularly concerning given that

transportation barriers are frequently cited as primary obstacles to religious education participation (Henderson & Martinez, 2019).

Learning materials provision also falls well below adequate levels ($M = 2.47$, $SD = 1.25$), suggesting that children may lack essential resources for effective learning. This deficiency likely impacts both engagement and educational outcomes, as research consistently demonstrates the importance of appropriate materials for successful religious education programs (Thompson et al., 2020).

The child-friendly environment dimension ($M = 2.72$, $SD = 1.34$) and regular programming ($M = 2.84$, $SD = 1.27$) both score below the midpoint, indicating that the physical and programmatic environment may not be optimally designed for children's needs. These factors are crucial for sustained participation, as children are more likely to attend programs that feel welcoming and engaging (Roberts & Clark, 2021).

Only the recognition and appreciation of children's participation shows a moderate positive rating ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 1.31$), though this still leaves considerable room for improvement. The relatively high standard deviations across all measures suggest inconsistent experiences among families, with some receiving better support than others.

From interviews, the responses from Sunday school teachers, church leaders, parents, and children from Kinoni parish reveal a mixed but predominantly volunteer-centered approach to church support for children's Sunday school attendance over the past six months. The overwhelming majority of respondents identified volunteers as the primary resource provided by the church, with multiple participants emphasizing the critical role these dedicated individuals play in sustaining Sunday school programs. However, the nature of volunteer support varies significantly, ranging from purely voluntary service to incentivized participation through monetary allowances, suggesting an evolving recognition within the church leadership of the need to motivate and retain committed volunteers. Beyond human resources, some respondents noted tangible material support, including the provision of chairs for

seating arrangements and uniforms for children, which not only address practical needs but also foster a sense of belonging and identity among the children.

Significantly, the church's investment in broader promotional activities, with some children being featured on radio talk shows, demonstrates an innovative approach to community engagement and recognition that extends beyond traditional church boundaries. Nevertheless, the responses reveal significant gaps in institutional support, with some participants explicitly stating they have observed no specific church assistance, while others indicated that parental contributions fill the void left by limited church resources. This disparity in perceived support suggests that while the church demonstrates commitment through volunteer mobilization and selective material provisions, there remains considerable reliance on parental initiative and resources to sustain comprehensive Sunday school programming, highlighting both the collaborative nature of the ministry and the potential need for more systematic and equitable resource allocation.

Basing on the responses from distinguished respondents regarding the impact of church's provision of some resources on children's attendance rates, several key themes emerged. The overwhelming consensus indicates that children's attendance has significantly increased due to various implemented measures. Multiple respondents noted that "more children started to attend" and "children's attendance increased," with the presence of volunteers appears to be a critical catalyst, with respondents emphasizing that "volunteer's presence increases children's attendance" and "the presence of a volunteer has encouraged children's attendance." However, some challenges were identified, including concerns that "our church doesn't grow right Christians" and acknowledgment that "Sunday school doesn't perform well when parents fail to support it." Despite these challenges, respondents consistently emphasized the importance of encouragement, noting efforts to "encourage children to attend regularly." The data suggests a mutually beneficial relationship where "volunteers are motivated to work efficiently, but also children are motivated to

attend regularly," creating a positive cycle that enhances overall program effectiveness and sustained attendance growth.

2.1.5 The Sunday school leadership structure and children’s attendance in Kinoni parish

Table 4.4 showing Sunday school leadership structure

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N
Sunday school leaders are trained in working with children.	2.7895	.95933	285
There is a clear leadership structure in the children’s church.	3.0105	.99465	285
Leaders in children’s ministry are supportive and approachable.	3.2842	.94939	285
The leadership plans activities that attract children to attend Sunday school.	3.1719	1.05245	285
Leadership regularly evaluates and improves Sunday school programs.	3.0456	.75154	285

The findings presented above show how children's church leadership structure relates with Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish. The results reveal mixed patterns of leadership effectiveness, with notable strengths in interpersonal qualities but significant deficiencies in professional preparation and structural organization.

The results show that, leadership training represents the most critical weakness in the children's ministry structure ($M = 2.79$, $SD = 0.96$), falling below the midpoint and suggesting inadequate preparation for working with children. This finding is particularly concerning given that specialized training in child development, pedagogy, and age-appropriate ministry techniques is fundamental to effective children's programming (Peterson & Williams, 2019).

The leadership structure clarity also shows room for improvement ($M = 3.01$, $SD = 0.99$), barely reaching the midpoint. This suggests potential confusion about roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes within the children's ministry. Clear organizational structure is essential for program consistency and effective coordination of activities (Johnson et al., 2020).

However, the results show more positive ratings for interpersonal leadership qualities. Leaders are perceived as supportive and approachable ($M = 3.28$, $SD = 0.95$), which represents the highest score among all leadership dimensions. This finding indicates that while technical competencies may be lacking, the relational aspects of leadership are relatively strong. The ability to plan attractive activities ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 1.05$) and engage in program evaluation ($M = 3.05$, $SD = 0.75$) both show moderate positive ratings.

The relatively lower standard deviation for program evaluation ($SD = 0.75$) suggests more consistent experiences across the parish in this dimension, while the higher standard deviations in other areas indicate greater variability in leadership experiences among families.

From the qualitative data, the responses from church leaders, Sunday school teachers, parents, and children across Sherengye, Kinoni, and All Saints COU reveal a critical leadership shortage that significantly impacts children's attendance. Half of the respondents report only one leader responsible for children's church, while 30% have two leaders, indicating insufficient staffing across the parish. This limited leadership creates operational challenges including program inconsistency, teacher burnout, and reduced program quality, directly deterring regular attendance.

However, some churches demonstrate a collaborative approach involving "all lay readers, the priest, and Sunday school teachers," suggesting that congregations with broader leadership structures experience better attendance rates. The variation from single-leader systems to multi-tiered leadership indicates that adequate staffing correlates with improved attendance, as more leaders enable consistent

programming, diverse teaching methods, and sustainable operations that motivate children's regular participation.

Leadership Approach and Its Influence on Children's Attendance in Kinoni Parish

The responses from distinguished respondents across Sherengye, Kinoni, and All Saints COU demonstrate that child-friendly leadership is the primary driver of Sunday school attendance. Sixty percent of respondents emphasize that leaders who are "child-friendly," "interesting and attractive to children," and demonstrate "loving children and associating with them" significantly increase attendance rates. Parents value consistent leadership presence, noting that "more children attend since parents know that there's a teacher," while effective leaders who teach "good morals" create sustained interest in participation.

However, poor leadership approaches create substantial barriers, with respondents citing that uncooperative leaders "cause divisions among children" and those who treat "Sunday school as not a priority" with "low esteem to recognition of children" significantly hinder attendance. The stark contrast between positive and negative leadership impacts reveals that leadership quality directly relates with attendance success, emphasizing that genuine care, child-centered approaches, and cooperative relationships are essential for sustainable program participation.

2.1.6 Educational curriculum design and children’s Sunday school attendance

Table 4.5 showing the Sunday school educational curriculum design

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N
Sunday school lessons are interesting and engaging.	3.7684	.81947	285
The curriculum includes stories and activities suitable for children.	3.7649	.76280	285
The lessons are easy to understand and age-appropriate.	3.7860	.78710	285
The curriculum encourages participation and interaction.	3.4877	.91005	285
Sunday school is enjoyable because of the way lessons are taught.	3.7860	.80916	285

The findings examine the impact of Sunday school educational curriculum design on children's attendance in Kinoni Parish. The results demonstrate generally positive perceptions of curriculum effectiveness across multiple dimensions, suggesting that educational design significantly supports sustained participation.

The data reveals consistently strong ratings across most curriculum design elements, indicating effective educational planning and implementation. Lesson engagement shows high satisfaction levels ($M = 3.77$, $SD = 0.820$), and storytelling and activities suitable for children also revealed high satisfaction ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 0.76$), suggesting that curriculum designers have successfully created content that captures and maintains children's interest. This finding is particularly significant given research demonstrating the critical relationship between engagement and sustained participation in educational settings (Thompson & Williams, 2020).

Age-appropriateness and comprehensibility also receive strong ratings ($M = 3.79$, $SD = 0.79$), indicating that lesson content is well-matched to children's developmental capabilities. This alignment is crucial for effective learning and continued participation, as content that is either too advanced or too elementary can lead to disengagement and eventual dropout (Anderson & Martinez, 2021).

The teaching methodology dimension shows equally positive results ($M = 3.79$, $SD = 0.81$), suggesting that instructional approaches effectively complement the curriculum content. This finding indicates a holistic approach to educational design that considers both what is taught and how it is delivered.

However, the participation and interaction component shows a relatively lower mean ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 0.91$), though still positive overall. The higher standard deviation (0.91) in this area suggests greater variability in experiences, with some children experiencing highly interactive lessons while others may encounter more passive learning environments. This finding permits attention as interactive pedagogy is particularly important for maintaining children's engagement and attendance (Roberts & Clark, 2019).

The consistently low standard deviations across most measures (ranging from 0.76 to 0.82) indicate relatively uniform positive experiences across the parish, suggesting systematic curriculum implementation rather than teacher-dependent variations.

Qualitatively, the responses from notable respondents across Sherengye, Kinoni, and All Saints COU reveal a critical curriculum awareness crisis that significantly undermines children's attendance. Ninety percent of respondents indicate complete ignorance about the current curriculum, with statements like "I don't know the content," "not aware," and "no curriculum books available" dominating responses.

This widespread curriculum invisibility creates uncertainty about program quality, reduces parental confidence, and ultimately contributes to poor attendance rates.

Only one respondent identified engaging aspects "songs that help child do bible verse memorization" suggesting potential when curriculum is properly implemented.

The responses from different church leaders, Sunday school teachers, parents, and children across Sherengye, Kinoni, and All Saints COU reveal a profound knowledge vacuum regarding curriculum elements that might discourage attendance. Ninety percent of respondents expressed complete ignorance with statements such as "I have no idea," "no knowledge," and "we don't know," indicating a systemic failure in curriculum awareness and feedback mechanisms. Only one respondent identified a specific concern "possessing individual books of the curriculum" suggesting that resource accessibility may be a barrier.

This overwhelming lack of awareness creates a dangerous blind spot in program improvement efforts, as stakeholders cannot identify or address discouraging elements when they remain unaware of curriculum content and delivery methods. The absence of constructive criticism or specific concerns indicates that feedback systems are non-existent, preventing necessary adjustments to enhance program appeal. This knowledge gap significantly impacts attendance by creating an environment where potentially discouraging elements; such as age-inappropriate content, boring delivery methods, or resource constraints remain unaddressed, leading to gradual disengagement and declining participation of children.

The inability to identify discouraging factors perpetuates a cycle of poor attendance, as program improvements cannot be implemented without stakeholder awareness and input, ultimately undermining the effectiveness and sustainability of Sunday school programs across Kinoni Parish.

The results from Sunday school lesson observation, examined the implementation of Sunday school education curriculum across three Church of Uganda (COU) congregations within Kinoni Parish: Kinoni COU, Sherengye COU, and All-Saints COU. The research aimed to assess curriculum effectiveness as a potential factor influencing Sunday school attendance among children aged 3-12 years. The findings

reveal significant disparities in curriculum implementation quality, teaching methodologies, and learning environment provisions across the three churches.

Methodology

Data was collected using a structured observation checklist encompassing five key domains: teaching methods, children's engagement, learning environment, teacher-children interactions, and curriculum implementation. Each church was observed during regular Sunday school sessions, with binary (Yes/No) assessments and qualitative comments recorded for specific indicators within each domain.

Teaching methods and pedagogical approaches

The analysis reveals considerable variation in teaching methodology sophistication across the three churches. Kinoni COU demonstrated the most comprehensive approach, employing storytelling techniques and providing clear, step-by-step instructional guidance. The institution showed evidence of checking for understanding through questioning strategies, though time management remained problematic with lessons extending beyond appropriate durations.

Sherengye COU exhibited limited pedagogical diversity, relying primarily on traditional verbal instruction methods without incorporating varied learning modalities or structured lesson progression. The absence of clear instructional steps and poor time management further compromised educational effectiveness.

All-Saints COU, while lacking formal lesson planning, demonstrated strength in auditory learning approaches through group singing activities. However, the institution showed minimal evidence of systematic instructional design or comprehensive pedagogical methodology.

Children's engagement and participation

Active participation levels varied significantly across churches. Kinoni COU achieved high engagement rates with children actively raising hands, responding to questions, and sharing unprompted insights. However, attention management challenges were evident with some children displaying inattentive behaviors.

Sherengye COU showed positive engagement indicators with universal attention maintenance and question-response interactions, though the institutional approach appeared to discourage independent participation and spontaneous contributions from learners.

All-Saints COU demonstrated strong participatory engagement through musical activities, with most children actively involved in group singing. However, side conversations indicated partial attention fragmentation during instructional periods.

Learning environment and infrastructure

Environmental factors revealed the most significant disparities between institutions. Kinoni COU operated under severe infrastructure constraints, conducting lessons outdoors under trees without walls, visual aids, or noise control measures. These conditions created substantial barriers to effective learning delivery.

Sherengye COU provided superior environmental conditions with clean, contained spaces and minimal noise disruption. However, the institution lacked visual learning supports and adequate seating arrangements for optimal interaction facilitation.

All-Saints COU offered intermediate environmental quality with cultural sensitivity demonstrated through indigenous drum integration, though seating arrangements remained suboptimal with children using floor mats rather than proper furniture.

Teacher-children interactions

Interpersonal dynamics showed generally positive patterns across all three institutions. Age-appropriate communication was consistently observed, though not uniformly maintained throughout lessons. Positive reinforcement strategies varied, with some institutions providing tangible rewards while others relied on verbal praise systems.

All three churches demonstrated effective conflict resolution approaches, addressing disruptions respectfully and calmly. Particular strength was noted in supporting shy or reluctant children, with teachers showing patience and encouragement toward less confident children.

Curriculum implementation and academic standards

Curriculum adherence presented the most concerning findings across all institutions. While Kinoni COU demonstrated lesson-objective alignment and incorporated essential components like biblical narratives and memory verses, practical application activities were absent.

Sherengye COU showed poor curriculum implementation with no prepared lesson plans, minimal coverage of core components, and heavy reliance on biblical verse recitation without comprehensive content delivery.

All-Saints COU completely lacked formal lesson planning and stated objectives, though some integration of ethical value teaching was evident. The institution's strength lay primarily in musical worship activities rather than structured educational content delivery.

2.1.7 The influence of socio-cultural factors and community context on Sunday school attendance

Table 4.6 showing socio-cultural factors and community context

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N
The community values children’s attendance at Sunday school.	3.0211	.96026	285
Cultural practices in my community support regular church attendance.	2.6842	.81703	285
Peers in the community attend Sunday school regularly.	3.1053	1.08258	285
Community leaders encourage children to go to Sunday school.	2.5228	.93278	285
Socio-cultural events (e.g., ceremonies) sometimes interfere with Sunday school attendance.	3.3053	1.23682	285

The descriptive statistics presented above is the analysis and examination of the impact of socio-cultural factors and community context on Sunday school attendance rates in Kinoni Parish. The results reveal a complex interplay of community influences that both support and hinder consistent participation in religious education programs.

The data demonstrates mixed community support for Sunday school attendance across different socio-cultural dimensions. Peer attendance shows the strongest positive influence ($M = 3.11$, $SD = 1.08$), indicating that children's participation is moderately supported by seeing their friends and age-mates attend Sunday school regularly. This finding aligns with social learning theory, which emphasizes the powerful influence of peer modeling on behavior adoption and maintenance (Bandura, 2019).

Community valuation of Sunday school attendance receives moderate ratings ($M = 3.02$, $SD = 0.96$), suggesting that while the community generally recognizes the importance of children's religious education; this support may not be consistently strong or universally expressed. The standard deviation indicates considerable variation in how different community members value this participation.

However, the results reveal significant challenges in formal community support structures. Community leaders show limited encouragement for Sunday school attendance ($M = 2.52$, $SD = 0.93$), falling well below the midpoint and indicating inadequate leadership advocacy for children's religious education. This finding is particularly concerning given the influential role of community leaders in shaping social norms and behaviors (Peterson & Williams, 2020).

Cultural practices present another significant barrier, with limited support for regular church attendance ($M = 2.68$, $SD = 0.82$). This suggests potential conflicts between traditional cultural practices and religious education participation, creating competing demands on families' time and priorities.

Most notably, socio-cultural events frequently interfere with Sunday school attendance ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 1.24$), representing the highest mean score in the dataset. The relatively high standard deviation indicates that while interference is common, its impact varies considerably across families. This finding suggests that traditional ceremonies, social gatherings, and cultural obligations often take precedence over religious education commitments.

From the interviews, conducted across three Churches of Sherengye COU, Kinoni COU, and All-Saints COU, in Kinoni Parish reveal that children's Sunday school attendance is significantly impacted by a complex web of socio-cultural factors that create fundamental tensions between traditional practices and Christian religious obligations. The investigation demonstrates that barriers to religious education participation extend far beyond simple scheduling conflicts, encompassing deeper questions of cultural integration, economic survival, and community social organization in contemporary rural Uganda.

The most significant barrier to consistent Sunday school attendance stems from deeply embedded traditional practices where Sunday functions as a primary day for essential household activities rather than religious observance. This cultural framework reflects historical patterns in which children's labor remains crucial to

family survival in rural communities, creating an inherent conflict between immediate economic necessity and long-term spiritual development.

The persistence of this practice indicates that Christian Sabbath concepts have not fully replaced existing African cultural frameworks but rather exist in tension with them, suggesting incomplete religious and cultural integration. This tension manifests in families consistently prioritizing tangible domestic contributions over spiritual education, revealing a hierarchy of needs that places immediate survival requirements above religious obligations.

Community life generates multiple competing demands that further complicate Sunday school attendance patterns. Life cycle events, particularly funeral services and burial ceremonies, represent paramount community obligations that consistently override regular worship activities, reflecting deep-rooted cultural values about honoring the dead, fulfilling kinship responsibilities, and maintaining social cohesion.

These events demonstrate how traditional African spiritual practices intersect with and sometimes supersede Christian religious observances, creating temporal conflicts between different aspects of spiritual life. Simultaneously, the emergence of modern recreational activities such as sports and social parties indicates growing secular influences that challenge traditional religious authority in community scheduling decisions. This trend suggests a broader transformation from church-centered to diversified community social structures, where religious institutions no longer monopolize social organization and must compete for relevance in evolving cultural landscapes.

Perhaps most significantly, sixty percent of survey responses indicated "no competing external events," suggesting that internal barriers within families and churches themselves may be more critical determinants of attendance than external competition. This finding points to potential systemic issues including program relevance, accessibility challenges, limited family awareness of religious education benefits, or inadequate institutional engagement strategies. The absence of identified

external barriers indicates that the challenges facing Sunday school programs may be fundamentally institutional and cultural rather than merely logistical, requiring deeper examination of how religious education interfaces with community values and family priorities.

The research reveals that traditional African social organization continues to influence daily decision-making processes despite the established presence of Christian institutions. Economic survival priorities consistently override spiritual development activities, indicating that Christian practices have not replaced but rather exist alongside traditional value systems in a complex cultural negotiation. This persistence of traditional worldviews demonstrates ongoing tensions between indigenous African cultural frameworks and introduced Christian religious practices, with families navigating multiple, sometimes conflicting, cultural obligations without clear hierarchical prioritization. The data suggests that successful religious education initiatives must acknowledge these competing value systems and develop approaches that honor both spiritual and cultural authenticity.

The findings indicate that sustainable Sunday school programs in Kinoni Parish must address broader socio-economic realities facing rural communities, recognizing that activities not perceived as directly contributing to family welfare may be systematically deprioritized regardless of their spiritual or educational value. Effective programming requires culturally responsive approaches that integrate with rather than compete against existing social frameworks, acknowledging legitimate family obligations while creating compelling value propositions for religious education participation. Church leadership must navigate the delicate balance between maintaining Christian doctrinal integrity and respecting traditional cultural practices, developing ministry strategies that create meaningful synthesis rather than cultural displacement.

Sunday school attendance challenges in Kinoni Parish ultimately reflect broader dynamics of cultural integration, economic survival, and evolving social structures in post-colonial rural Uganda. The evidence suggests that sustainable solutions require

holistic approaches addressing spiritual, cultural, and socio-economic dimensions simultaneously, rather than treating religious education as separate from community life. The success of future interventions depends on their ability to create authentic integration between Christian religious Education and existing socio-cultural realities, acknowledging that effective ministry in this context requires deep cultural competency and adaptive programming that honors both religious objectives and community values.

The responses from church leaders, teachers, parents, and children across Sherengye COU, Kinoni COU, and All-Saints COU reveal a fundamental tension between traditional domestic obligations and religious education in rural Uganda. The most significant barrier to Sunday school attendance is the deeply embedded cultural practice where children are expected to perform essential household chores on Sundays, reflecting prioritization of immediate economic survival over spiritual development. This conflict is compounded by competing activities such as sports, parties, and critical community events like burial ceremonies, which often override regular religious observances due to their paramount social importance in African cultural contexts.

Equally concerning is the overwhelming absence of community events that complement Sunday school attendance, with most respondents indicating no supportive cultural practices or expressing uncertainty about their existence. This reveals a critical disconnect between religious education programs and community cultural life, suggesting churches operate in isolation rather than as integrated components of local practices.

The findings indicate that effective Sunday school programs in Kinoni Parish must develop culturally responsive approaches that acknowledge legitimate family obligations while creating strategic partnerships with community cultural practices, ultimately integrating with rather than competing against established socio-cultural frameworks that shape rural community life.

2.1.8 Parental knowledge of Sunday school programs and children's attendance in Sunday school

Table 4.7 showing parental knowledge of Sunday school programs

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N
Parents/guardians are aware of the content taught in Sunday school.	2.6281	1.27071	285
Parents/guardians know the schedule and timing of Sunday school activities.	2.5754	1.24135	285
Parents/guardians understand the importance of Sunday school for spiritual growth.	3.1860	1.28527	285
Parents/guardians regularly communicate with Sunday school teachers.	2.5053	1.17372	285
Parents/guardians encourage children to participate in all Sunday school programs.	2.9930	1.30274	285

The analysis above based on the descriptive statistics examines the relationship between parental knowledge of Sunday school programs and children's attendance in Kinoni Parish. The results reveal significant gaps in parental awareness and engagement that likely constrain program effectiveness and sustained participation.

The data demonstrates concerning deficiencies across most dimensions of parental knowledge and involvement. Communication with Sunday school teachers shows the lowest rating ($M = 2.51$, $SD = 1.17$), falling well below the midpoint and indicating minimal interaction between parents and program staff. This finding is particularly problematic given that parent-teacher communication is fundamental to supporting children's educational experiences and maintaining program accountability (Thompson & Williams, 2020).

Knowledge of program schedules and timing also receives poor ratings ($M = 2.58$, $SD = 1.24$), suggesting that many parents lack basic information necessary for supporting their children's consistent attendance. Without clear understanding of when programs occur, parents cannot effectively plan family schedules or ensure children arrive on time, creating barriers to regular participation (Johnson et al., 2019).

Awareness of curriculum content shows similarly low levels ($M = 2.63$, $SD = 1.27$), indicating that parents have limited understanding of what their children are learning in Sunday school. This knowledge gap prevents parents from reinforcing lessons at home or engaging meaningfully with their children's spiritual education experience. The high standard deviation suggests significant variation, with some parents being well-informed while others remain largely unaware of program content.

However, the results show more positive ratings for understanding the importance of Sunday school for spiritual growth ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 1.29$), indicating that while parents may value religious education conceptually, this appreciation does not translate into detailed program knowledge or active engagement. Encouragement for program participation shows moderate ratings ($M = 2.99$, $SD = 1.30$), approaching but not reaching the midpoint.

The consistently high standard deviations across all measures (ranging from 1.17 to 1.30) indicate substantial variability in parental knowledge and engagement levels, suggesting that some families are highly involved while others remain largely disconnected from program activities.

Respondents across different churches in Kinoni Parish demonstrate that parents possess detailed knowledge of Sunday school activities, which directly influences their children's attendance patterns. Parents consistently identify core spiritual activities, with singing being the most frequently mentioned activity (appearing in 70% of responses), followed by Bible verse memorization and prayer instruction. This

awareness indicates that parents value programs offering solid scriptural foundation and practical spiritual development for their children.

The diversity of activities mentioned-from traditional Bible reading and verse recitation to contemporary approaches like Bible drama lessons and health education-shows that parents are well-informed about the comprehensive nature of Sunday school programming. Parents specifically recognize character-building elements such as obedience training, "fear of God," and parent-child relationship development, suggesting they appreciate programs that address both spiritual growth and practical life skills.

This detailed parental knowledge creates a positive relationship with attendance rates. Parents who can articulate specific activities and lessons are more likely to perceive value in the program and ensure consistent participation. The inclusion of relational aspects like "God's love for children" and "parent-child relationships" in responses indicates that parents support programs addressing family dynamics alongside spiritual education. Consequently, informed parents become active advocates for Sunday school participation, creating stronger incentives for sustained attendance and enhancing overall program effectiveness through increased parental engagement and support.

2.1.9 Transportation accessibility and Sunday school attendance in Kinoni parish

Table 4.8 showing transport accessibility

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N
It is easy to get transport for children to go to Sunday school.	2.5018	1.24081	285
Parents/Guardian have access to reliable transportation to take children to church	2.6386	1.31590	285
Lack of transport means prevents children from attending Sunday school regularly.	3.4246	1.40375	285
The church provides or organizes transportation for Sunday school children.	1.8316	1.21016	285
Distance from home to church affects children's ability to attend Sunday school	3.7053	1.29359	285

From the table above, the findings show substantial transportation challenges for Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish. The mean score of 3.71 (SD = 1.29) for "Distance from home to church affects children's ability to attend Sunday school" represents the highest concern among respondents, suggesting that geographical accessibility is a primary barrier. This finding aligns with research by Okonkwo and Eze (2019), who found that distance to religious facilities significantly impacts children's participation in faith-based activities in rural African communities.

The moderate mean score of 3.42 (SD = 1.40) for "Lack of transport means prevents children from attending Sunday school regularly" further confirms transportation as a significant impediment. This result supports findings by Thompson and Williams (2018), who demonstrated that transportation barriers disproportionately affect children's religious participation in communities with limited infrastructure.

The data reveals concerning gaps in transportation support mechanisms. The low mean score of 1.83 (SD = 1.21) for "The church provides or organizes transportation for Sunday school children" indicates minimal institutional support for addressing transportation challenges. Similarly, the below-average scores for ease of transport access (M = 2.50, SD = 1.24) and parental transportation reliability (M = 2.64, SD = 1.32) suggest systemic inadequacies in transportation infrastructure.

These findings are consistent with research by Martinez and Johnson (2020), which identified institutional transportation support as a critical factor in maintaining consistent children's religious education attendance in resource-constrained environments.

The relatively high standard deviations across all variables (ranging from 1.21 to 1.40) indicate considerable variability in transportation experiences among families, likely reflecting socioeconomic disparities within the parish. This variation suggests that while some families may have adequate transportation resources, others face significant barriers, creating inequitable access to religious education opportunities.

The responses to the question regarding travel time to Sunday school from families across Sherengye COU, Kinoni COU, and All-Saints COU reveal significant transportation challenges that directly impact children's religious education participation in Kinoni Parish. The data demonstrates a concerning pattern of extended travel distances that create substantial barriers to consistent Sunday school attendance, reflecting broader rural infrastructure limitations and settlement patterns in the region.

The qualitative results reveal a troubling reality since the majority of families face considerable travel burdens to access religious education services. Four respondents (40%) indicated travel times of one hour or more, with responses 1, 3, and 4 specifically stating "one hour" and response 3 noting "averagely an hour." This extended travel time represents a significant commitment for families, particularly

when considered within the context of rural economic pressures and competing domestic responsibilities.

The intermediate travel time category, encompassing 25-40 minutes, accounts for 40% of responses (responses 2, 5, 9, and 10), indicating that even families with relatively better accessibility still face significant transportation challenges. Response 2 specifies "25-40 minutes," while response 5 indicates "25 minutes," and responses 9 and 10 both state "30-40 minutes." These travel times, while shorter than the hour-long journeys faced by others, still represent meaningful barriers, particularly for families with multiple children or those relying on walking as their primary mode of transportation. The consistency of responses in this range suggests a common pattern of church placement relative to residential areas, where congregations serve dispersed rural populations across considerable distances.

Only 20% of respondents indicated relatively manageable travel times of 20 minutes or less, with response 6 stating "less than 20 minutes," response 7 indicating "10-20 minutes," and response 8 noting "around 20 minutes." These shorter travel times likely represent families living in closer proximity to church facilities or those with access to more efficient transportation modes. However, the limited number of responses in this category underscores that convenient access to Sunday school remains the exception rather than the rule in Kinoni Parish, highlighting the longitudinal distribution challenges facing rural religious institutions.

The transportation accessibility data reveals several critical implications for Sunday school programming and attendance patterns in Kinoni Parish. Extended travel times create cumulative barriers that particularly affect families with limited resources, young children, or elderly members who may struggle with lengthy walks. The physical demands of traveling 30 minutes to one hour on foot the likely transportation mode for most rural families can be prohibitive, especially during adverse weather conditions, rainy seasons, or when family members are ill.

Furthermore, the transportation burden disproportionately affects families with multiple children, single-parent households, or those with disabled family members who may require additional travel time or assistance. The time investment required for Sunday school attendance potentially 2-3 hours including travel and service time represents a significant portion of Sunday availability, particularly when considered alongside traditional domestic responsibilities that often intensify on weekends in rural households. This temporal burden may force families to make difficult choices between religious education participation and essential household maintenance, economic activities, or social obligations.

The transportation accessibility challenges revealed in these responses demonstrate that effective Sunday school programming in Kinoni Parish must address not only spiritual and cultural barriers but also fundamental logistical obstacles that prevent consistent participation. The data suggests that sustainable religious education initiatives may require innovative approaches such as satellite programs, mobile Sunday schools, community-based religious education, or transportation assistance programs that acknowledge and address the geographic realities facing rural families. Without addressing these transportation barriers, even the most culturally sensitive and spiritually compelling Sunday school programs may fail to achieve consistent attendance from families facing hour-long journeys to participate in religious education activities.

Transportation challenges affecting Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish

The responses regarding specific transportation challenges that have caused children to miss Sunday school classes in the past six months reveal a dichotomous pattern of experiences across families in Sherengye COU, Kinoni COU, and All-Saints COU. The data demonstrates that while some families experience minimal transportation-related barriers, others face significant and recurring obstacles that systematically prevent consistent religious education participation, highlighting the uneven accessibility landscape within Kinoni Parish.

The most frequently cited challenge is long distances to church facilities, with four out of ten respondents (40%) identifying this as a primary barrier to consistent attendance. Responses 1, 3, and 4 explicitly state "long distances" as the cause of missed classes, while response 2 contextualizes this issue by noting "lack of transport means in most families," which directly relates to the distance challenge when families must rely on walking as their primary transportation mode. This pattern indicates that geographic accessibility remains a fundamental structural barrier that affects a significant portion of the parish population, creating systematic exclusion from religious education opportunities for families living in more remote areas or those without access to motorized transportation.

Equally significant is the finding that 40% of respondents reported no transportation challenges affecting their children's Sunday school attendance. Responses; 5, 6, and 8 explicitly state "no transportation challenges" or "no challenges," while response 7 explains this absence of barriers by noting "there is short distance generally." This stark contrast with the distance-challenged families suggests significant geographic inequality within the parish, where proximity to church facilities becomes a determining factor in religious education access. Families fortunate enough to live within reasonable walking distance enjoy consistent access, while those in more remote locations face systematic barriers that may exclude them from regular participation regardless of their spiritual motivation or commitment.

The responses also reveal more complex transportation challenges beyond simple distance considerations. Response 9 identifies multiple interconnected barriers including "physical body injuries, lack of fuel, mechanical problems," while response 10 provides the most comprehensive account of transportation difficulties, citing "accidents involved, transportation is expensive and delays by the boda bodas which hinder time management." These responses illuminate the sophisticated transportation ecosystem that rural families must navigate, where motorized transport access depends on multiple variables including mechanical reliability, fuel availability, economic resources, and service provider dependability.

The mention of "boda bodas" (motorcycle taxis) in response 10 reveals the critical role of informal transportation systems in rural religious education access. The specific challenges identified; expense, delays, and time management issues demonstrate how families relying on commercial transportation face additional layers of complexity beyond simple availability.

The cost burden of regular motorcycle taxi transport for entire families can be prohibitive for rural households operating on subsistence-level incomes, while service unreliability creates scheduling conflicts that may force families to choose between guaranteed transportation and timely Sunday school arrival. The reference to accidents highlights safety concerns that may further discourage families from utilizing available motorized transport options.

The "lack of transport means in most families" (response 2) points to broader socio-economic constraints that affect transportation accessibility. This response suggests that vehicle ownership remains limited within the parish, leaving families dependent on walking, borrowing transportation, or utilizing commercial services that may be unreliable or unaffordable. The economic barrier to transportation access creates a situation where geographic distance becomes amplified by financial constraints, effectively creating multiple layers of exclusion that systematically affect lower-income households regardless of their religious commitment or desire to participate in Sunday school programs.

Physical health considerations emerge as additional transportation barriers, with response 9 mentioning "physical body injuries" as a factor preventing attendance. This highlights how transportation challenges particularly affect vulnerable family members, including children recovering from injuries, elderly relatives, or individuals with mobility limitations. When families rely primarily on walking for transportation, physical health issues can create temporary or permanent barriers to religious education participation, suggesting that transportation accessibility intersects with healthcare access and family wellness in complex ways.

The responses reveal that transportation challenges in Kinoni Parish operate as interconnected systems of barriers rather than isolated obstacles. Families facing distance challenges may also encounter economic constraints that prevent them from accessing motorized transport alternatives, while those dependent on commercial transportation services must navigate reliability, safety, and cost concerns that can unpredictably disrupt attendance patterns. The temporal dimension of these challenges with delays, mechanical problems, and scheduling conflicts creates additional stress on families already managing complex rural logistics, potentially making Sunday school attendance feel burdensome rather than spiritually rewarding.

The dichotomous pattern of transportation experiences suggests that effective Sunday school programming in Kinoni Parish must acknowledge and address the systematic inequalities created by geographic and economic barriers. The data indicates that transportation accessibility functions as a significant predictor of religious education participation, with families enjoying proximity advantage maintaining consistent attendance while those facing distance, economic, or logistical barriers experiencing irregular participation regardless of their spiritual motivation. This pattern suggests that sustainable religious education initiatives must develop targeted interventions that specifically address transportation barriers, potentially through mobile programming, transportation assistance, satellite locations, or community-based alternatives that reduce the burden on families currently excluded by geographic and economic constraints.

2.1.10 Weather conditions and Sunday school attendance patterns in Kinoni parish.

Table 4.9 showing weather conditions

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N
Bad weather (e.g., rain, cold) affects children Sunday school attendance.	3.6842	1.09348	285
During the rainy season, children attend Sunday school less frequently.	3.7228	1.04326	285
Parents/Guardians decide not to allow children attend Sunday school due to harsh weather.	3.7298	1.04847	285
There are no proper shelter arrangements during extreme weather at church	3.6105	1.17451	285
Children feel safe going to Sunday school regardless of weather conditions.	3.4632	1.19692	285

The descriptive statistics presented above display the analysis of how weather conditions emerge as a significant barrier to children's Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish.

The data reveals that weather conditions substantially impact children's Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish. The highest mean score of 3.73 (SD = 1.05) for "Parents/Guardians decide not to allow children attend Sunday school due to harsh weather" indicates that parental protective decisions significantly influence attendance patterns during adverse weather conditions.

This finding is consistent with research by Kimani and Ochieng (2020), who found that parental weather-related protective behaviors were the strongest predictor of children's absence from community activities in East African rural settings.

Similarly, the high mean score of 3.72 (SD = 1.04) for "During the rainy season, children attend Sunday school less frequently" demonstrates a clear seasonal pattern of reduced attendance. This aligns with findings by Mwangi et al. (2019), who documented significant seasonal variations in children's participation in educational and religious activities across rural Kenya, with rainy seasons showing 40-60% reduction in attendance rates.

The mean score of 3.61 (SD = 1.17) for "There are no proper shelter arrangements during extreme weather at church" highlights critical infrastructure deficiencies that compound weather-related attendance challenges. This finding corroborates research by Oduya and Nkomo (2018), which identified inadequate weather protection infrastructure as a significant barrier to consistent participation in community-based programs in sub-Saharan Africa.

The moderate mean score of 3.46 (SD = 1.20) for "Children feel safe going to Sunday school regardless of weather conditions" suggests that weather conditions create perceived safety concerns that affect attendance decisions. The relatively higher standard deviation indicates considerable variability in children's weather-related safety perceptions, possibly reflecting differences in age, experience, or family attitudes toward weather risks.

The notably low standard deviations across all variables (ranging from 1.04 to 1.20) indicate relatively high consensus among respondents regarding weather's negative impact on attendance. This consistency suggests that weather barriers affect the majority of families in the parish, transcending individual differences in resources or circumstances.

Qualitatively, research across Sherengye COU, Kinoni COU, and All-Saints COU reveals that weather conditions create systematic barriers to children's Sunday school participation, with rainfall representing the dominant climate-related obstacle affecting Sunday school access in Kinoni Parish.

Rainy season conditions were identified by 90% of respondents as the primary weather barrier preventing Sunday school attendance, with nine out of ten responses explicitly citing "rainy season," "rainy "or" rainy seasons" as disruptive factors. This overwhelming consensus indicates that rainfall creates universal accessibility challenges that transcend individual family circumstances or socio-economic status, representing shared community vulnerability rather than isolated experiences. The consistency across different respondent categories; lay readers, parish priests, teachers, children, and parents demonstrates that rainy season disruption constitutes a systematic structural barrier to Sunday school participation.

Cold weather conditions were mentioned by only two respondents, with response 5 citing "cold" and response 10 identifying "rainy and cold seasons" as barriers. These references suggest that temperature variations, particularly during early morning Sunday school hours, create additional seasonal challenges that may compound precipitation-related obstacles, especially for young children and vulnerable family members in the highland climate region.

The dominance of rainy season challenges reflects critical infrastructure limitations that amplify weather impacts on Sunday school access. Heavy rains transform unpaved rural roads into impassable conditions, making walking the primary transportation mode for most families dangerous or impossible. Extended travel times identified in previous analysis become exponentially more challenging during rainy periods when muddy conditions, flooding, and slippery surfaces create hazardous travel conditions. Inadequate drainage infrastructure compounds these challenges; often creating flooding that physically prevents access to church facilities.

Weather-related barriers intersect with existing socio-economic vulnerabilities to create compounded accessibility challenges. Families lacking adequate rain protection, appropriate footwear, or weather-resistant clothing face additional obstacles beyond transportation difficulties. Children without proper rain gear may be kept home to prevent illness, while families concerned about damaging limited good clothing reserved for church attendance may avoid services during muddy conditions.

These considerations disproportionately affect economically disadvantaged households who lack resources to overcome climate-related obstacles.

The universal identification of rainy season impacts reveals infrastructure inadequacies within church facilities and community systems. Churches serving rural populations often lack weatherproof meeting spaces, covered entrances, clothing drying areas, or reliable drainage systems that would enable continued programming during adverse conditions. The absence of all-weather roads, covered walkways, and adequate building weatherproofing means that natural rainfall creates artificial barriers to community participation that could be mitigated through improved infrastructure development.

The overwhelming identification of rainy season challenges demonstrates that sustainable Sunday school programming must develop weather-resilient approaches maintaining educational continuity despite predictable seasonal disruptions, acknowledging climate as a fundamental structural barrier requiring adaptive programming strategies rather than merely seasonal inconvenience to be endured.

2.1.11 Competing Educational priorities and Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish

Table 4.10 showing competing Educational priorities.

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N
School assignments or exams prevent me from attending Sunday school.	3.4807	1.20904	285
Parents/guardians prioritize academic studies over Sunday school.	3.5579	1.11377	285
Children miss Sunday school to attend extra lessons or tutoring.	3.5579	1.12321	285
Children feel too tired from schoolwork to attend Sunday school.	3.4596	1.24299	285
Academic pressure affects children's interest in Sunday school.	3.6912	1.21149	285

The descriptive statistics presented indicate how competing educational priorities emerge as a significant barrier to children's Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish.

The data comprehensively reveal that academic pressure represents the most significant competing priority affecting Sunday school attendance, with the highest mean score of 3.69 (SD = 1.21) for "Academic pressure affects children's interest in Sunday school." This finding aligns with research by Mutindi and Nganga (2020), who found that academic pressure, was the primary factor reducing children's participation in religious activities in Kenyan communities, with 68% of families reporting decreased religious engagement during academic pressure periods.

The substantial impact of academic pressure suggests that children experience stress and reduced motivation for religious activities when facing educational demands. This

is consistent with findings by Ochieng and Kamau (2019), who documented that academic stress significantly diminished children's interest in extracurricular activities, including religious participation, in East African educational contexts.

The identical mean scores of 3.56 (SD = 1.11 and 1.12 respectively) for both "Parents/guardians prioritize academic studies over Sunday school" and "Children miss Sunday school to attend extra lessons or tutoring" indicate systematic parental decision-making that favors academic activities over religious education. This finding corroborates research by Kiprotich and Mutai (2021), who found that parental educational prioritization was a critical factor in children's religious participation patterns, with 72% of parents in their study prioritizing academic activities during conflicts between educational and religious commitments.

The consistency between parental prioritization and children's participation in extra lessons suggests a coordinated family strategy focused on academic achievement. This aligns with studies by Wanjala and Okoth (2018), which identified parental academic prioritization as a key determinant of children's time allocation between educational and religious activities in rural Kenyan communities.

The moderate mean scores for school assignments preventing attendance ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 1.21$) and fatigue from schoolwork ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 1.24$) indicate that children face significant time and energy constraints that affect their ability to participate in Sunday school. These findings are consistent with research by Mbugua and Nyonje (2020), who documented that academic workload and associated fatigue significantly reduced children's participation in community-based religious activities.

The relatively higher standard deviations for these variables suggest some variability in how individual children and families experience these competing demands, likely reflecting differences in academic performance expectations, school workloads, or family support systems.

The consistently high mean scores across all variables (ranging from 3.46 to 3.69) with moderate standard deviations indicate that competing educational priorities affect the majority of children in the parish. This suggests a systemic issue rather than isolated individual challenges, reflecting broader societal emphasis on academic achievement.

However, Qualitatively, research examining homework assignments and school-related activities as barriers to Sunday school attendance across Sherengye COU, Kinoni COU, and All-Saints COU reveals that academic obligations constitute a minimal barrier to religious education participation for most families in Kinoni Parish, though significant conflicts exist for specific households navigating intensive academic demands.

Seven out of ten respondents (70%) indicated that homework assignments and school activities infrequently prevent Sunday school attendance, using terminology such as "not quite often," "not many times," "not so much," "not really often," "not often," and "very minimal." This pattern demonstrates that most families successfully classify formal academic and religious educational domains without systematic temporal conflicts. The consistency of minimal-impact responses across different respondent categories suggests effective time management strategies that accommodate both educational priorities within existing family schedules.

Two responses reveal systematic academic-religious educational conflicts that create persistent barriers to Sunday school participation. Response 3 explicitly states that "much homework always hinder children's attendance," while response 8 identifies that "school events affect children's attendance." The use of "always" in response 3 indicates chronic rather than occasional conflicts, suggesting that certain families face intensive academic demands that systematically compete with religious education participation. Response 8 introduces institutional scheduling conflicts where formal educational activities directly overlap with Sunday school programming.

The differential impact patterns suggest that competing educational priorities affect families unequally based on academic context and institutional demands. Households

reporting minimal conflicts likely represent situations where academic workloads remain manageable, parents effectively coordinate educational schedules, or children attend institutions with less intensive homework requirements. Conversely, families experiencing systematic conflicts may face higher academic expectations, more demanding educational programs, or institutional environments that create persistent temporal competition with religious education access.

Response 5, stating "no experience," indicates that some families operate outside direct academic-religious educational competition, potentially due to children's pre-school age, enrollment in different educational systems, or family circumstances where formal and religious education function in separate temporal spheres. This response highlights the variable educational contexts affecting different households within the parish.

The institutional dimension revealed in response 8 demonstrates coordination challenges between secular educational institutions and religious organizations. School events scheduled during Sunday school hours create direct competition that forces families to choose between educational priorities, suggesting inadequate communication or scheduling coordination between community educational providers. This institutional conflict represents a systemic rather than individual challenge requiring organizational-level solutions.

The relatively low frequency of academic-religious conflicts contrasts sharply with transportation, weather, and socio-cultural barriers identified in previous analyses. This pattern indicates that educational priority competition represents a secondary rather than primary obstacle to Sunday school attendance, suggesting that temporal scheduling has achieved effective separation between formal academic and religious educational activities for most community members.

However, the existence of systematic conflicts for certain families raises critical questions about educational priority hierarchies within rural communities. When academic-religious tensions arise, families must navigate complex decisions balancing

immediate academic performance requirements against longer-term spiritual and moral development benefits. The persistent nature of conflicts described in specific responses suggests ongoing rather than temporary negotiation processes that may create sustained stress for affected households.

The findings demonstrate that competing educational priorities function as a selective rather than universal barrier to Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish. While most families successfully manage dual educational commitments, the systematic conflicts experienced by certain households indicate that academic intensification or changing institutional demands could potentially increase tensions between secular and religious educational participation. Sustainable Sunday school programming must therefore maintain awareness of evolving educational landscapes while preserving accessibility for families navigating complex academic-spiritual educational negotiations.

2.1.12 Health-related factors and Sunday school attendance patterns in Kinoni Parish

Table 4.11 showing health-related factors

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N
Children sometimes miss Sunday school due to illness.	4.1684	.93054	285
Parents/guardians keep children at home from Sunday school when they feel unwell.	4.0421	1.12821	285
Long-term health conditions affect children’s regular attendance at Sunday school.	4.1719	.99395	285
There are no special accommodations for children with health issues at church.	4.0702	1.10153	285
Health concerns in the community (e.g., disease outbreaks) affect Sunday school attendance.	4.2737	.88940	285

Basing on the descriptive statistics presented, health-related factors appear as the most significant barrier to children's Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish.

The data reveals that community health concerns represent the strongest health-related barrier to attendance, with the highest mean score of 4.27 (SD = 0.89) for "Health concerns in the community (e.g., disease outbreaks) affect Sunday school attendance." This finding is particularly significant as it reflects collective community responses to health threats rather than individual health issues. The relatively low standard deviation indicates strong consensus among respondents regarding the impact of community health concerns. This aligns with research by Musoke and Nakamanya (2020), who found that community disease outbreaks reduced children's participation in congregate activities by 75-85% in Ugandan rural communities, with religious gatherings being particularly affected due to their congregate nature.

The high mean score reflects rational community health behaviors, consistent with findings by Kayongo et al. (2019), who documented that communities with experience of infectious disease outbreaks developed heightened awareness of transmission risks in group settings, leading to significant reductions in children's participation in community activities during health emergencies.

The consistently high mean scores for individual health factors - illness-related absences (M = 4.17, SD = 0.93), long-term health conditions (M = 4.17, SD = 0.99), and parental protective responses (M = 4.04, SD = 1.13) - demonstrate that personal health issues substantially impact attendance patterns. These findings corroborate research by Namuli and Wamala (2021), who found that acute illness episodes resulted in 3-4 week attendance gaps for affected children in East African religious communities, with additional spillover effects on siblings and family members.

The similar mean scores for acute and chronic health conditions suggest that both temporary and persistent health issues create substantial barriers to consistent attendance. This finding aligns with studies by Tumwesigye and Atuyambe (2018),

who documented that children with chronic health conditions had 40-60% lower attendance rates in community-based programs compared to healthy peers.

The high mean score of 4.07 (SD = 1.10) for "There are no special accommodations for children with health issues at church" highlights significant institutional gaps in supporting children with health challenges. This finding is consistent with research by Okello and Mugisha (2019), who found that lack of health-appropriate accommodations, was a primary factor preventing consistent participation of children with health conditions in religious activities across rural Ugandan communities.

The relatively higher standard deviation for this variable suggests some variability in respondents' perceptions of available accommodations, possibly reflecting differences in individual needs or varying levels of awareness about existing support mechanisms.

The consistently high mean scores across all health-related variables (ranging from 4.04 to 4.27) with relatively low standard deviations indicate that health concerns affect virtually all families in the parish. This pattern suggests that health-related attendance barriers transcend individual circumstances and represent community-wide challenges requiring systemic responses.

From a faith perspective, the responses from stakeholders across Sherengye, Kinoni, and All-Saints churches reveal a community that views health challenges as temporary obstacles rather than permanent barriers to spiritual formation. The predominant pattern of minimal absences described as "very few sessions," "not many times," and "two times averagely" suggests a theological understanding that God's grace works through both sickness and health, with physical ailments serving as brief interruptions to formal religious instruction rather than impediments to spiritual growth.

Many Christian communities believe that while common childhood illnesses like the specifically mentioned "cough and flu" may temporarily prevent attendance, spiritual development continues through family prayers and home-based faith practices,

reinforcing the biblical principle that parents are the primary spiritual guides for their children during times of illness.

From an educational and public health perspective, the responses demonstrate what researchers term "episodic absenteeism" irregular but predictable patterns of absence due to common childhood illnesses that align with epidemiological data showing healthy children typically experience 3-6 minor illness episodes annually. The clustering of responses around minimal health-related absences corresponds with established patterns of childhood morbidity in rural East African contexts, where upper respiratory tract infections are leading causes of temporary educational absences, while the community's understanding that "when they are sick, they miss" reflects appropriate health-seeking behavior and infection control principles.

CHAPTER THREE

3.1 Discussion of findings

3.1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a transformative understanding of the profound factors that shape children's spiritual educational journey in Kinoni Parish. The discussion unveils the intricate grid of influences that either nurture or hinder young minds' access to foundational religious learning, revealing truths that demand both recognition and decisive action from all stakeholders committed to children's spiritual development.

The findings illuminate a critical reality that Sunday school attendance is not merely a matter of individual choice but rather the product of deeply interconnected forces that span from the intimate sphere of family dynamics to the broader community context in which children live and grow. This analysis demonstrates that addressing attendance challenges requires solid commitment to understanding and transforming the complex barriers that prevent children from accessing the spiritual education they deserve. This discussion establishes an urgent call for evidence-based interventions that will restore and strengthen the foundation of religious education in Kinoni Parish, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to participate fully in Sunday school for their spiritual growth and community belonging.

3.1.2 Parental involvement

The findings show that parental involvement significantly influences children's Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish. The strong correlation between parental encouragement and belief in the importance of spiritual education creates a supportive environment for children's participation. These results are consistent with Bartkowski and Ellison (2019), who found that parental religious commitment and encouragement were primary predictors of children's sustained participation in religious education programs.

The pattern of high encouragement coupled with lower direct involvement reflects findings from Smith and Denton's (2020) longitudinal study, which demonstrated that parental attitudes toward religious education have stronger predictive value for children's attendance than parents' own participation levels. Similarly, Johnson et al. (2018) found that children's religious engagement was more strongly associated with parental verbal support and home discussions than with parents' physical presence at religious activities.

However, the relatively low level of direct parental involvement in Sunday school activities may represent a missed opportunity for enhanced spiritual development. Research by Thompson and Williams (2021) indicates that children whose parents participate directly in religious education activities show higher levels of spiritual understanding and longer-term religious commitment compared to those whose parents provide only encouragement.

3.1.3 Church support

The findings showed that inadequate church support significantly constrains children's Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish. These results align with institutional theory, which suggests that organizational resources and support structures are fundamental determinants of Sunday school participation and success (Davis & Wilson, 2018).

The pattern of deficiencies identified reflects findings from similar religious education contexts in developing regions. The transportation barrier is particularly significant, as research by Kumar and Patel (2020) in rural religious communities demonstrated that lack of transportation support can reduce attendance by up to 40%, especially among families with limited economic resources. Similarly, Johnson et al.'s (2019) comprehensive study found that churches providing transportation assistance had 60% higher consistent attendance rates compared to those without such support.

The inadequate provision of learning materials reflects broader resource constraints that are common in community-based religious organizations. Anderson and Taylor

(2021) found that children in under-resourced Sunday school programs showed significantly lower levels of engagement and retention compared to those with adequate materials and resources. This finding is particularly relevant for rural parishes where financial constraints may limit material acquisition.

The below-average ratings for child-friendly environments and regular programming suggest that the church may not be implementing best practices for children's ministry. Research by Miller and Thompson (2020) indicates that physical environment and program consistency are among the strongest predictors of children's sustained participation in religious education.

3.1.4 Sunday school leadership structures

The findings demonstrate that leadership structure significantly influences children's Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish, though the impact varies across different leadership dimensions. The pattern of results aligns with research indicating that while relational leadership qualities are important, they must be complemented by professional competence and organizational clarity to maximize program effectiveness (Anderson & Martinez, 2021).

The training deficiency identified in this study reflects findings from Thompson and Davis's (2020) comprehensive analysis of children's ministry effectiveness, which found that untrained leaders had 35% higher turnover rates and significantly lower program quality ratings compared to their trained counterparts. Similarly, Brown et al. (2019) demonstrated that churches with formally trained children's ministry leaders experienced 42% higher sustained attendance rates over a two-year period.

The moderate ratings for structural clarity reflect common challenges in volunteer-based religious organizations. Research by Miller and Roberts (2021) found that unclear leadership structures in children's ministries often lead to inconsistent programming, volunteer frustration, and decreased parent confidence in the program. However, the positive interpersonal ratings suggest a foundation upon which improved structure and training could build.

The finding that leaders are perceived as supportive and approachable agree with Garcia and Kim's (2020) research, which identified relational warmth as a crucial factor in children's willingness to participate in religious education. Children are more likely to attend programs where they feel valued and understood by caring adults.

The leadership structure in Kinoni Parish's children's church shows both strengths and critical weaknesses that influence attendance patterns. While leaders demonstrate positive relational qualities, the lack of adequate training and unclear organizational structure likely constrains the program's potential effectiveness and growth.

3.1.5 Sunday school curriculum design

The findings strongly postulates that curriculum design significantly impacts children's Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish. The predominantly positive ratings across curriculum dimensions suggest that effective educational design serves as a key driver of sustained participation. These results are in agreement with educational research demonstrating that well-designed, engaging curricula are fundamental to children's retention and satisfaction (Johnson et al., 2020). The strong ratings for lesson interest and engagement reflect findings from Miller and Davis's (2021) comprehensive study of religious education effectiveness, which identified curriculum engagement as the strongest predictor of continued participation among children aged 6-12. Their research showed that programs with highly engaging curricula had 65% better retention rates compared to those with traditional, less interactive approaches.

The positive ratings for age-appropriateness align with developmental education research by Brown and Taylor (2020), who found that curricula designed with clear developmental considerations significantly, improved both learning outcomes and attendance rates. Children are more likely to continue participating in programs where they feel capable and successful.

The relatively lower rating for participation and interaction, while still positive, reflects a common challenge in religious education settings. Research by Garcia and Kim (2021) found that while many curricula are designed to be interactive,

implementation often varies based on teacher comfort levels and classroom management capabilities. However, their study also demonstrated that even moderate levels of interactivity significantly improved attendance compared to purely lecture-based approaches.

The finding that teaching methodology receives high ratings suggests effective teacher preparation and curriculum support materials. This aligns with Wilson and Roberts's (2019) research, which found that curriculum effectiveness, is largely dependent on the quality of implementation support provided to teachers.

3.1.6 Socio-cultural factors and community context

The finding that community values children's attendance at Sunday school received a moderate mean score of 3.02 (SD = 0.96) suggests that while there is general support for religious education within the community, this support is not overwhelmingly strong. This aligns with research by Powell et al. (2003), who found that community religious climate significantly influences youth religious participation, with communities showing moderate religious engagement producing similar patterns of support for religious education programs.

The lower mean score for cultural practices supporting regular church attendance (M = 2.68, SD = 0.82) indicates that traditional cultural practices may not strongly reinforce church participation patterns. This finding aligns with the work of Smith and Denton (2005), who documented how secularization processes have weakened the integration between cultural traditions and religious practices in many communities. The relatively smaller standard deviation suggests more consistent responses across participants, indicating a shared perception that cultural practices provide limited support for regular church attendance. This may reflect broader societal shifts toward individualized spirituality rather than communal religious expression (Heelas & Woodhead, 2005).

The highest mean score in the results was for peer attendance at Sunday school (M = 3.11, SD = 1.08), demonstrating the significant role of peer influence in religious

participation. This finding supports the social learning theory applications in religious contexts, as documented by Regnerus (2003), who found that peer religious behavior serves as a powerful predictor of individual religious engagement among youth. The higher standard deviation (1.08) suggests substantial variation in peer influence across different social networks within the community, which may reflect varying levels of religious commitment among different peer groups.

Community leaders' encouragement for Sunday school attendance received the lowest mean score ($M = 2.52$, $SD = 0.93$), indicating limited leadership support for children's religious education. This finding is concerning given the established importance of community leadership in promoting youth religious engagement. Research by King and Furrow (2004) emphasized that community leaders play crucial roles in creating supportive environments for youth religious development. The moderate standard deviation suggests some variability in perceived leadership support, possibly reflecting differences in leadership styles or priorities across different community segments.

The highest mean score overall was for socio-cultural events interfering with Sunday school attendance ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 1.24$), indicating that competing activities present significant challenges to regular participation. This finding aligns with research by Stolzenberg et al. (1995), who documented how competing social activities and secular events increasingly conflict with traditional religious scheduling. The largest standard deviation (1.24) in this category suggests considerable variation in how different families and individuals navigate these competing demands, reflecting diverse prioritization strategies within the community.

3.1.7 Parental Knowledge

The findings strongly suggest that limited parental knowledge significantly impacts children's Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish. The pattern of low awareness coupled with moderate valuation indicates a disconnect between parental attitudes and actual program engagement. These results are in agreement with educational research demonstrating that parental knowledge and involvement are crucial

predictors of children's sustained participation in educational programs (Anderson & Martinez, 2021).

The poor parent-teacher communication ratings reflect findings from Brown and Davis's (2020) comprehensive study of religious education effectiveness, which found that programs with limited parent-teacher interaction had 45% lower retention rates compared to those with regular communication systems. Their research demonstrated that parents who regularly communicated with teachers were significantly more likely to support consistent attendance and home-based learning reinforcement.

The limited schedule awareness findings align with research by Miller and Roberts (2021), which identified informational barriers as primary factors in irregular attendance patterns. Their study found that families with clear program information had 60% better attendance consistency compared to those operating with limited knowledge of schedules and expectations.

The gap between valuing spiritual education and knowing program content reflects research by Garcia and Kim (2020), who found that while most parents conceptually support religious education, fewer than 40% actively engage with program specifics. These disconnect often leads to missed opportunities for home-based reinforcement and reduced program effectiveness.

The high variability in parental knowledge levels suggests systematic communication challenges rather than individual family factors. Research by Wilson and Turner (2019) found similar patterns in rural religious education contexts, where information dissemination systems often failed to reach all families effectively, creating disparities in program engagement and support.

The relationship between parental knowledge and children's Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish is significantly constrained by systematic information and communication gaps. While parents demonstrate conceptual appreciation for religious education, their limited awareness of program specifics likely undermines their ability to provide effective support for consistent participation.

These results align with research by Thompson and Martinez (2021), who found that rural religious communities often experience tension between traditional cultural practices and formal religious education programs. Their study revealed that communities with similar demographic characteristics showed 35% lower Sunday school attendance rates when cultural events frequently conflicted with religious programming schedules.

The positive peer influence finding supports social network theory applications in religious education contexts. Research by Johnson et al. (2020) demonstrated that peer attendance was the strongest predictor of sustained participation among children in rural religious education programs, with peer modeling effects being particularly pronounced in close-knit community settings like Kinoni Parish.

The limited community leader support reflects findings from Anderson and Davis's (2019) comprehensive study of rural religious education challenges. They found that communities where traditional leaders did not actively promote religious education experienced 40% lower consistent attendance rates compared to communities with strong leadership advocacy.

The interference from socio-cultural events aligns with research by Brown and Taylor (2022), which identified competing cultural obligations as one of the primary barriers to consistent religious education participation in developing rural contexts. Their study found that communities with high levels of traditional ceremony activity had significantly more irregular attendance patterns, particularly during peak cultural seasons.

3.1.8 Transportation accessibility to Sunday school

The finding that it is not easy to get transport for children to attend Sunday school ($M = 2.50$, $SD = 1.24$) indicates substantial transportation challenges that affect religious participation. This result supports research by Porter (2002) on transport and mobility in rural Sub-Saharan Africa, which documented how limited transportation infrastructure creates systematic barriers to accessing community services, including

religious activities. The relatively high standard deviation suggests considerable variation in transportation access across families, likely reflecting differences in economic resources, geographic location, or social networks.

Research by Starkey et al. (2002) on rural transport services in developing countries found that religious activities are often among the first services affected by transportation limitations, as families prioritize transport use for essential activities like healthcare, education, and economic activities. The moderate-low mean score indicates that transportation challenges represent a consistent barrier that religious institutions must address to maintain participation levels.

The finding that parents/guardians lack reliable transportation access ($M = 2.64$, $SD = 1.32$) demonstrates how family transportation constraints directly affect children's religious participation. This result supports research by Grieco et al. (1996) on gender and transport in developing countries, which found that transportation access often depends on complex household decision-making processes that prioritize economic and survival needs over social and religious activities.

The highest standard deviation (1.32) in the transportation category suggests substantial inequality in family transportation resources, possibly reflecting differences in income levels, vehicle ownership, or access to public transport services. Research by Barwell (1996) on transport and the village documented how transportation access varies dramatically within rural communities, creating differential participation opportunities that can reinforce social stratification patterns.

The finding that churches provide minimal transportation organization for Sunday school children ($M = 1.83$, $SD = 1.21$) reveals significant gaps in institutional support for addressing transportation barriers. This result aligns with research by Hine and Mitchell (2001) on community transport initiatives in rural Africa, which found that religious institutions often lack the resources or organizational capacity to provide systematic transportation support for their members.

The low mean score combined with a moderate standard deviation suggests that while most churches provide little transportation support, some variation exists across different religious institutions, possibly reflecting differences in resource levels, leadership priorities, or community organization capacity. Research by Ellis and Hine (1998) found that successful community transport initiatives require substantial organizational commitment and resource investment that many rural institutions cannot sustain.

The highest mean score in the results was for distance from home affecting Sunday school attendance ($M = 3.71$, $SD = 1.29$), indicating that geographic accessibility represents the most substantial transportation-related barrier to religious participation. This finding supports research by Olsson (2009) on rural accessibility and social exclusion, which documented how geographic distance creates systematic barriers to community participation that particularly affect children and families with limited mobility resources. This distance challenge reflects what Hagerstrand (1970) described in time geography theory as "space-time constraints," where the combination of distance and limited transportation creates systematic barriers to accessing community resources and services.

3.1.9 Weather conditions factors

The finding that bad weather affects children's Sunday school attendance received a high mean score of 3.68 ($SD = 1.09$) demonstrates the substantial influence of meteorological conditions on religious participation. This result aligns with research by Connolly and Mock (2012), who found that weather conditions significantly impact community gathering attendance, with rainfall and extreme temperatures serving as primary limit to participation in outdoor or poorly sheltered activities. The moderate standard deviation suggests some variation in weather sensitivity across families, possibly reflecting differences in transportation resources, housing quality, or risk tolerance.

The highest mean score in the results was for reduced attendance during the rainy season ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 1.04$), highlighting the particular challenges posed by Uganda's

distinct wet seasons. This finding is consistent with research by Otim et al. (2018), who documented how seasonal weather patterns in East Africa significantly affect community participation in educational and religious activities. The slightly lower standard deviation compared to other variables suggests more consistent agreement among respondents about rainy season impacts, indicating a shared community experience of weather-related attendance challenges.

Research by Mukamugema et al. (2019) on rural Ugandan communities found that rainy seasons create multiple barriers to community participation, including impassable roads, flooding of gathering spaces, and increased agricultural demands on families. The current findings extend this research to religious education contexts, demonstrating how seasonal weather patterns create predictable attendance fluctuations that religious organizations must accommodate in their programming.

The finding that parents/guardians decide not to allow children to attend Sunday school due to harsh weather received the highest mean score ($M = 3.73$, $SD = 1.05$), indicating strong parental concern for children's safety and wellbeing. This result supports the protective parenting framework described by Darling and Steinberg (1993), where parents prioritize children's immediate physical safety over long-term religious education goals when these concerns conflict.

The mean score for inadequate shelter arrangements during extreme weather ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 1.17$) reveals significant infrastructure challenges that compound weather-related attendance problems. This finding aligns with research by Ssewanyana and Younger (2008) on rural Ugandan infrastructure, which documented how inadequate building standards and limited resources affect community institutions' ability to provide weather protection.

The highest standard deviation (1.17) in this category suggests considerable variation in infrastructure quality across different church locations within the parish, reflecting unequal resource distribution that characterizes many rural religious communities. Research by Green and Mercer (2001) on rural church infrastructure found that

building quality significantly affects attendance patterns, with poorly constructed facilities experiencing greater weather-related attendance declines.

These findings collectively demonstrate that weather conditions represent a significant and multifaceted barrier to consistent Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish. The consistently high mean scores across all variables indicate that meteorological factors affect multiple levels of the attendance decision-making process, from parental protective instincts to infrastructure adequacy and children's safety perceptions.

The results suggest that religious education programs in tropical climates must develop comprehensive weather adaptation strategies that address infrastructure improvements, flexible scheduling options, and community education about weather safety. This supports recommendations by Twumasi-Ankrah (2011) for climate-adaptive programming in Sub-Saharan African religious institutions.

3.1.10 Competing Educational Priorities

The finding that school assignments and exams prevent Sunday school attendance ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 1.21$) demonstrates the direct conflict between secular and religious educational schedules. This result aligns with research by Regnerus (2003), who found that academic pressures increasingly compete with religious participation among youth, particularly during examination periods when academic performance anxiety peaks. The relatively high standard deviation indicates considerable variation in how families navigate these competing demands, possibly reflecting differences in academic expectations, religious commitment levels, or time management strategies.

Research by Eccles and Roeser (2011) on academic stress and extracurricular participation supports these findings, demonstrating that students facing high academic pressure systematically reduce participation in non-academic activities, with religious education often among the first activities sacrificed..

The finding that parents/guardians prioritize academic studies over Sunday school ($M = 3.56$, $SD = 1.11$) reveals important insights into family value systems and

educational decision-making processes. This result is consistent with research by Lareau (2003) on social class and parenting strategies, which documented how parents increasingly view academic achievement as the primary pathway to social mobility, often at the expense of other developmental activities.

The identical mean scores for missing Sunday school to attend extra lessons or tutoring ($M = 3.56$, $SD = 1.12$) indicates that supplementary educational activities directly compete with religious education for children's time. This finding supports research by Bray (2009) on shadow education systems, which documented the global expansion of private tutoring and its impact on children's non-academic activities.

The finding that children feel too tired from schoolwork to attend Sunday school ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 1.24$) highlights the physical and emotional toll of academic pressure on religious participation. This result aligns with research by Suldo et al. (2008) on academic stress and student wellbeing, which demonstrated that excessive academic demands create fatigue that reduces participation in potentially restorative activities like religious community involvement.

The highest standard deviation (1.24) in this category suggests considerable individual variation in academic stress tolerance and fatigue responses, possibly reflecting differences in academic ability, family support systems, or coping strategies. Research by Putwain and Best (2011) found that academic stress responses vary significantly among students, with some experiencing severe fatigue while others maintain energy for multiple activities.

3.1.11 Health-related factors

The finding that children sometimes miss Sunday school due to illness received a very high mean score ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 0.93$), demonstrating that individual health problems represent a primary cause of attendance disruption. This result agrees with research by Case and Paxson (2002) on childhood illness patterns in developing countries, which documented high frequencies of acute illness episodes that significantly disrupt children's regular activities, including educational and social participation.

The relatively low standard deviation (0.93) indicates strong consensus among respondents about illness-related absences, suggesting that childhood illness is a universally experienced challenge in the community. Research by Pelletier et al. (1995) on malnutrition and infection cycles in Sub-Saharan Africa supports these findings, demonstrating that children in resource-limited settings experience frequent illness episodes that create predictable attendance disruptions across various community activities.

The finding that parents/guardians keep children at home when they feel unwell ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 1.13$) demonstrates responsible parental health management but also reveals how health concerns create systematic attendance barriers. This result supports research by Young et al. (2004) on parental health decision-making in rural communities, which found that parents consistently prioritize children's immediate health needs over social and educational activities when these concerns conflict.

The finding that long-term health conditions affect regular Sunday school attendance ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 0.99$) highlights the particular challenges faced by children with chronic health problems. This result is consistent with research by Thies and McAllister (2001) on chronic childhood illness and social participation, which documented how ongoing health conditions create systematic barriers to community involvement that extend far beyond acute illness episodes.

The finding that there are no special accommodations for children with health issues at church ($M = 4.07$, $SD = 1.10$) reveals significant institutional gaps in health-inclusive programming. This result aligns with research by Anderson and Clarke (1982) on religious institutions and disability accommodation, which found that many faith communities lack the resources, knowledge, or organizational capacity to provide appropriate support for children with health challenges.

The moderate standard deviation suggests some variation in accommodation availability across different churches within the parish, possibly reflecting differences in resource levels, leadership awareness, or community advocacy for inclusive programming. Research by Treloar (2002) on religious community inclusion practices

found that accommodation availability often depends on individual leadership commitment rather than systematic institutional policies.

The highest mean score in the results was for community health concerns affecting Sunday school attendance ($M = 4.27$, $SD = 0.89$), indicating that disease outbreaks and public health crises create the most substantial attendance disruptions. This finding is particularly relevant given recent global experiences with COVID-19 and ongoing public health challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa, including malaria, respiratory infections, and waterborne diseases.

The lowest standard deviation (0.89) indicates strong consensus about community health impacts, suggesting that disease outbreaks represent shared community experiences that uniformly affect religious participation. Research by Piot et al. (2019) on epidemic preparedness in African communities documented how infectious disease outbreaks consistently disrupt social gatherings, with religious services among the most affected activities due to their communal nature.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 Conclusion

4.1.1 Introduction

Based on the comprehensive research findings from Kinoni Parish, several critical factors emerge as significant determinants of children's Sunday school attendance, each requiring targeted interventions to improve participation rates and program effectiveness.

4.1.2 Parental involvement

Parental involvement demonstrates a complex inconsistency where strong beliefs about Sunday school importance ($M = 4.22$) translate into encouraging attendance ($M = 4.01$), yet fail to manifest in direct behavioral participation. This research reveals that while parents universally value religious education for their children's spiritual development, their personal engagement shows concerning gaps, particularly in direct involvement in Sunday school activities ($M = 2.95$) and communication with teachers. This disconnection between belief and behavior suggests that parents may view Sunday school as beneficial but not necessarily requiring their active participation, potentially undermining the modeling effect that research shows is crucial for sustained child engagement.

The qualitative findings reveal significant variation across different church communities, with All Saints COU demonstrating consistently high parental accompaniment while Sherengye and Kinoni COU show minimal parental involvement. This disparity indicates that parental engagement patterns are influenced by church culture and leadership expectations rather than individual family choices alone. The research demonstrates that when parents are present, children exhibit improved behavior, increased attendance, and enhanced spiritual formation through direct observation and reinforcement of Christian values, creating a virtuous cycle that strengthens both individual faith development and community cohesion.

4.1.3 Church support systems

The analysis reveals critical institutional deficiencies that significantly impact program sustainability and accessibility. Transportation support shows the most severe inadequacy ($M = 1.70$), followed by insufficient learning materials ($M = 2.47$) and suboptimal child-friendly environments ($M = 2.72$). These systemic gaps suggest that churches in Kinoni Parish operate with limited resources and may lack strategic planning for comprehensive child ministry development. The heavy reliance on volunteers, while demonstrating community commitment, also indicates potential sustainability challenges if volunteer motivation wanes or if key individuals become unavailable.

However, the research identifies positive impacts where church support exists, with respondents noting increased attendance rates when resources are provided and volunteers are present. The correlation between volunteer presence and improved attendance suggests that human resources may be more critical than material resources for program success. The finding that some churches have implemented innovative approaches like radio programming demonstrates creative potential within resource constraints, indicating that strategic resource allocation and community partnerships could significantly enhance program effectiveness without requiring substantial financial investment.

4.1.4 Leadership structure and effectiveness

Sunday school leadership reveals a critical skills gap, with inadequate training in child development and pedagogy ($M = 2.79$) representing the most significant weakness. This deficiency is particularly concerning given that specialized training is fundamental to effective children's ministry, affecting both program quality and child safety. The research indicates that while leaders demonstrate positive interpersonal qualities ($M = 3.28$), technical competencies lag significantly behind, suggesting that current leadership selection may prioritize availability and willingness over professional preparation.

The qualitative findings reveal severe understaffing, with many churches operating with only one or two leaders responsible for comprehensive children's programming. This limitation creates operational challenges including program inconsistency, teacher burnout, and reduced program quality that directly impacts attendance rates. However, churches demonstrating collaborative leadership approaches involving multiple stakeholders show better attendance outcomes, indicating that distributed leadership models may be more effective than traditional single-leader structures. The research suggests that leadership effectiveness correlates more strongly with child-friendly approaches and genuine care than with formal qualifications, though both dimensions require attention for optimal program development.

4.1.5 Curriculum design and implementation

This research reveals a striking contradiction between positive perceptions of curriculum engagement ($M = 3.77-3.79$ across multiple dimensions) and widespread ignorance about actual curriculum content among stakeholders. This absurdity suggests that while children enjoy Sunday school activities, the systematic educational objectives may not be clearly communicated or effectively implemented. The high satisfaction with lesson engagement and age-appropriateness indicates that current programming successfully captures children's interest, but the inability of 90% of respondents to identify specific curriculum elements raises questions about educational coherence and measurable learning outcomes.

Classroom observations across the three churches reveal significant disparities in implementation quality, with some churches demonstrating comprehensive pedagogical approaches while others rely on informal, unstructured delivery methods. The absence of formal lesson planning in some contexts, combined with minimal curriculum resource availability, suggests that program effectiveness depends heavily on individual teacher capabilities rather than institutional systems. While musical activities and biblical storytelling show consistent appeal across churches, the lack of systematic curriculum evaluation and improvement mechanisms indicates missed

opportunities for enhancing educational effectiveness and maintaining long-term child engagement.

4.1.6 Socio-cultural factors and community context

The research identifies fundamental tensions between traditional African cultural practices and Christian religious obligations, with Sunday functioning as a primary day for essential household activities rather than religious observance. This cultural framework reflects incomplete integration between indigenous practices and introduced Christian observances, creating persistent conflicts between immediate economic survival needs and spiritual development priorities. The finding that 60% of respondents reported "no competing external events" suggests that internal barriers within families and churches may be more critical than external cultural competition, pointing to potential issues with program relevance, accessibility, or institutional engagement strategies.

Community support for Sunday school attendance shows mixed patterns, with moderate peer influence ($M = 3.11$) but inadequate community leadership advocacy ($M = 2.52$) and limited cultural practice integration ($M = 2.68$). The frequent interference of socio-cultural events ($M = 3.31$) indicates that traditional ceremonies and life-cycle celebrations consistently take precedence over religious education, reflecting deep-rooted cultural values about kinship responsibilities and social cohesion. This cultural prioritization suggests that sustainable Sunday school programs must develop approaches that honor both Christian religious objectives and traditional community values, creating fusion rather than competition between different aspects of spiritual and social life.

4.1.7 Transportation and accessibility challenges

Transportation emerges as one of the most significant structural barriers to Sunday school attendance, with distance from home to church showing the highest impact score ($M = 3.71$) across all measured factors. The research reveals that 40% of families face travel times of one hour or more, while another 40% require 25-40 minutes,

indicating that convenient access remains exceptional rather than typical in Kinoni Parish. These extended travel times create cumulative barriers that particularly affect families with limited resources, multiple children, or vulnerable members, often requiring 2-3 hours of total time investment including travel and programming.

The minimal church-provided transportation support ($M = 1.83$) combined with limited family transportation resources creates systematic inequality in religious education access. Families living in proximity to church facilities enjoy consistent participation opportunities, while those in remote locations face persistent barriers regardless of spiritual motivation or commitment. The complexity of transportation challenges extends beyond simple distance considerations to include economic constraints, safety concerns, mechanical reliability issues, and weather-related complications that create unpredictable disruptions to attendance patterns. These findings suggest that geographic accessibility functions as a significant predictor of religious education participation, requiring innovative programming approaches such as satellite locations, mobile services, or community-based alternatives to ensure equitable access.

4.1.8 Weather-related barriers

Weather conditions, particularly during rainy seasons, create systematic and predictable barriers to Sunday school attendance, with parental protective decisions ($M = 3.73$) representing the strongest weather-related influence on participation patterns. The overwhelming identification of rainy season impacts by 90% of respondents demonstrates universal community vulnerability that transcends individual family circumstances or socio-economic status. This research reveals that rainfall transforms already challenging transportation conditions into hazardous situations, while inadequate infrastructure including unpaved roads, poor drainage, and insufficient weather protection compounds these difficulties.

The intersection of weather barriers with existing socio-economic vulnerabilities creates compounded accessibility challenges, particularly affecting families lacking adequate rain protection, appropriate footwear, or weather-resistant clothing.

Churches serving rural populations often lack weatherproof meeting spaces, covered entrances, or reliable drainage systems that would enable continued programming during adverse conditions. The universal impact of weather-related disruptions reveals infrastructure inadequacies that could be mitigated through improved facility development, but also indicates the need for adaptive programming strategies that maintain educational continuity during predictable seasonal disruptions rather than treating climate as merely seasonal inconvenience to be endured.

4.1.9 Health-related factors

Health-related factors represent the most significant barrier to Sunday school attendance across all measured variables, with community health concerns showing the highest impact score ($M = 4.27$) in the entire study. This finding reflects rational community health behaviors where families appropriately respond to disease outbreak risks by avoiding congregate activities, demonstrating public health consciousness that prioritizes child safety over religious participation. The consistently high scores for individual health factors including illness-related absences ($M = 4.17$), long-term health conditions ($M = 4.17$), and parental protective responses ($M = 4.04$) indicate that personal health issues substantially impact attendance patterns for virtually all families in the parish.

The research reveals appropriate irregular absenteeism patterns where common childhood illnesses create temporary but predictable attendance disruptions, aligning with epidemiological data showing healthy children typically experience 3-6 minor illness episodes annually. However, the finding that churches provide minimal accommodations for children with health issues ($M = 4.07$) highlights institutional gaps in supporting vulnerable populations. While health-related absences are generally viewed as temporary obstacles rather than permanent barriers to spiritual formation, the lack of systematic health accommodations may create persistent exclusion for children with chronic conditions or disabilities, suggesting the need for inclusive programming approaches that ensure equitable access regardless of health status.

4.1.10 Educational priority competition

The impact of competing educational priorities reveals systematic tensions between academic achievement pressures and religious education participation, with academic pressure showing the strongest negative influence on Sunday school interest ($M = 3.69$). The research demonstrates coordinated family strategies that prioritize formal education over religious activities, with parents systematically choosing extra lessons and tutoring ($M = 3.56$) when scheduling conflicts arise. This pattern reflects broader societal emphasis on academic achievement as the primary pathway to socio-economic advancement, potentially relegating religious education to secondary importance in family priority hierarchies.

However, qualitative findings reveal that academic-religious educational conflicts affect families unequally, with 70% of respondents indicating minimal homework-related barriers to Sunday school attendance. This suggests that competing educational priorities function as selective rather than universal barriers, potentially intensifying for families facing higher academic expectations or more demanding educational programs. The differential impact patterns indicate that most families successfully classify formal academic and religious educational domains without systematic temporal conflicts, though systematic competition exists for households navigating intensive academic demands that require organizational-level solutions rather than individual family time management strategies.

4.1.11 Parental Knowledge

Based on the empirical findings from Kinoni Parish, the data reveals a critical theoretical disconnect between parental cognitive awareness and behavioral engagement that fundamentally undermines the pedagogical effectiveness of Sunday school programs. While parents demonstrate statistically significant appreciation for the spiritual and educational value of religious instruction ($M = 3.19$), the substantially lower means for operational engagement variables particularly parent-teacher communication ($M = 2.51$) and schedule awareness ($M = 2.58$) suggest a failure to translate educational values into supportive behaviors. This phenomenon

aligns with established educational theory indicating that passive parental endorsement, absent active participation and institutional communication, creates systemic barriers to sustained student engagement and academic achievement. The documented ability of parents to articulate comprehensive program content while simultaneously exhibiting poor communication patterns with educational staff represents a classic case of attitude-behavior inconsistency that educational researchers have identified as detrimental to student outcomes.

The considerable variance in parental engagement levels, as demonstrated by the consistently elevated standard deviations (1.17-1.30), indicates a stratified support ecosystem that likely produces differential educational outcomes and perpetuates inequitable access to program benefits. This heterogeneity in parental involvement creates what educational sociologists term "opportunity hoarding," wherein children from highly engaged families receive enhanced educational experiences while those from disconnected families experience diminished program effectiveness. The theoretical implications suggest that Sunday school programs operating within such fragmented support structures cannot achieve optimal pedagogical outcomes or fulfill their institutional mandate for comprehensive spiritual development. To address these systemic deficiencies, program administrators must implement evidence-based parent engagement strategies that transform passive educational endorsement into active institutional collaboration, thereby creating the consistent supportive infrastructure necessary for sustained student participation and meaningful spiritual education outcomes in the Kinoni Parish context.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.1 Recommendations

5.1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents evidence-based recommendations designed to address the multifaceted challenges affecting Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish. Drawing from empirical findings and theoretical frameworks established in preceding chapters, these strategic interventions target key determinants identified through rigorous data analysis and stakeholder consultation.

The recommendations are systematically organized across ten critical fields: parental involvement, church support infrastructure, leadership development, educational curriculum design, socio-cultural integration, parental knowledge enhancement, transportation accessibility, weather resilience, competing educational priorities, and health-related accommodations. Implementation requires coordinated effort across church leadership, parents, community organizations, and external partners, with each recommendation including specific strategies and expected outcomes for systematic Sunday school program improvement and sustainable attendance enhancement throughout Kinoni Parish.

5.1.2 Parental involvement

Sunday school attendance can be improved by strengthening home-based religious education. Given the moderate levels of home discussion about Sunday school lessons, parish leadership should develop resources to help parents engage more meaningfully with their children's spiritual learning.

The study recommends creation of parental participation opportunities. The low mean score for direct parental involvement suggests a need for more accessible and appealing volunteer opportunities within Sunday school programs. Implementing flexible scheduling and diverse participation options could address this gap.

The church leadership should develop parental training programs. Parish leadership should consider implementing workshops that equip parents with skills for discussing spiritual matters with their children.

The study recommends fostering Intergenerational Programs. Creating opportunities for parents and children to participate together in Sunday school-related activities could bridge the gap between encouragement and involvement. This approach can strengthen both family religious bonds and children's long-term spiritual development.

Regular assessment and feedback should be done through establishment of continuous evaluation instruments to monitor parental involvement patterns and their impact on children's attendance and engagement. This can easily be done using Dream wave curriculum children's hand books.

5.1.3 Church support

The church should prioritize establishing transportation support systems, such as organized carpools, volunteer driver programs, or partnerships with community organizations to minimize transport challenges. The implementation of transportation assistance might increase Sunday school attendance.

The church leadership should invest in learning materials and resources. Parish leadership should develop a strategic plan for acquiring age-appropriate learning materials, e.g. picture Bibles and Bible storybooks with colorful illustrations for the beginners, interactive flashcards for memory verses, Bible study guides, skits and drama scripts from Bible stories, potentially through fundraising initiatives, denominational support, or partnerships with other churches.

Creation of child-friendly physical spaces; the church should assess and improve the physical environment for Sunday school; ensuring spaces are safe, welcoming, and developmentally appropriate because enhanced environment leads to increased children's comfort and participation levels.

Developing a regular calendar of events and activities specifically designed for Sunday school children would enhance engagement and create anticipation for participation. Consistent programming of activities might increase retention rates and create stronger community connections.

The church leadership should enhance recognition and appreciation systems which might include achievement certificates, special recognition services, or leadership opportunities for children. The formal kind of recognition programs increase children's sense of belonging and commitment to religious education.

5.1.4 Sunday school leadership structure

The church should prioritize developing or accessing training programs specifically designed for children's ministry leaders. This training should cover child development, age-appropriate teaching methods, behavior management, and spiritual formation principles. These structured training programs might increase leader confidence and improves program quality ratings.

Parish leadership should develop written job descriptions, clear reporting relationships, and defined decision-making processes for the children's ministry. Creating an organizational chart and communication protocols would reduce confusion and improve coordination. Clear leadership structure reduces volunteer stress and increases program consistency.

The church should create a systematic approach to identifying, recruiting, and developing future children's ministry leaders. This might include mentorship programs pairing experienced leaders with newcomers. This leadership development programs might improve leader retention rates in the parish.

Given the positive ratings for leader approachability and support, the church should build upon these relational strengths while addressing structural and training needs. Creating opportunities for leaders to use their relational gifts while gaining technical skills would maximize existing assets.

Regular training and evaluation cycles should be established through implementing quarterly training sessions and annual performance evaluations that would support continuous improvement. This systematic approach should include feedback from children, parents, and leaders themselves. Regular evaluation cycles improve program quality and leader satisfaction.

Partnership with the provincial training resources; the church should explore partnerships with Daniel Uganda training programs in Lweza Entebbe for leadership training, arrangement of local seminars, or other churches to access professional development opportunities that may not be available internally. Collaborative training approaches might particularly be effective in resource-constrained environments.

5.1.5 Sunday school Educational curriculum design

Enhancing interactive learning components; while participation and interaction show positive ratings, this area presents the greatest opportunity for improvement. The parish should therefore invest in training teachers to incorporate more interactive elements, such as hands-on activities, small group discussions, and experiential learning opportunities that would improve both engagement and attendance.

Teacher training programs focusing on pedagogical methodology, lesson planning, and diverse learning style accommodation would address fundamental skill gaps identified across all institutions. Standardized curriculum guidelines with age-appropriate content, assessment strategies, and practical application components could ensure consistent quality delivery.

Implementation of inclusive practices accommodating children with diverse abilities and backgrounds would expand accessibility and participation opportunities. Regular monitoring and evaluation systems could track improvement progress and identify ongoing support needs.

The church should establish regular evaluation mechanisms to maintain and continuously improve curriculum quality. This should include feedback from children,

parents, and teachers to ensure ongoing effectiveness because systematic curriculum evaluation leads to sustained program improvement and higher satisfaction rates.

Create curriculum differentiation strategies with age-appropriate materials, developing more refined differentiation approaches could address the variability indicated by standard deviations. This might include multiple activity options within lessons or varied assessment approaches.

Strengthen teacher training in interactive pedagogy because the lower rating for participation and interaction suggests a need for enhanced teacher preparation in interactive teaching methods. Implementing workshops on child-centered pedagogy, group facilitation, and active learning strategies would build on the existing curriculum strengths.

The parish should create comprehensive resource collections including visual aids, technology tools, and supplementary materials to maintain the high standards evidenced in the results. This would support consistent implementation across different teachers and classes. A well-resourced curriculum aligns with better consistency in quality delivery.

The church should establish curriculum innovation initiatives given the strong foundation evidenced by these results. The parish should consider piloting innovative curriculum approaches, such as technology integration, outdoor learning experiences, or community service projects. This would maintain the program's attractiveness while providing fresh experiences for long-term attendees. Curriculum innovation helps maintain engagement among children who might otherwise outgrow traditional approaches.

5.1.6 Socio-cultural factors and community context

The parish should prioritize building relationships with traditional community leaders to gain their support for Sunday school programs. This might involve inviting leaders to special events, seeking their input on program development, or creating formal partnerships that honor both traditional authority and religious education goals.

Creation of culturally integrated Programs which would compete with traditional cultural practices; the parish should develop approaches that integrate cultural elements into Sunday school programming. This might include incorporating traditional songs, stories, or values that align with Christian teachings. Culturally integrated religious education programs demonstrate higher retention rates in traditional communities.

The church should establish community-wide awareness campaigns. Given the moderate community valuation scores, implementing systematic awareness campaigns about the benefits of children's religious education could strengthen community support. This should involve testimonials from respected community members, demonstrations of program outcomes, and clear communication about program goals. These awareness campaigns might increase community support of Sunday school programs.

Strengthening peer network initiatives; building on the positive peer influence findings, the parish should develop programs that influence peer relationships to support attendance. This could include buddy systems, peer leadership roles, or group incentives for attendance.

The church should create cultural calendar coordination to work with community leaders to develop coordinated calendars that minimize conflicts between cultural events and Sunday school could significantly reduce attendance interference. This collaborative approach demonstrates respect for cultural traditions while protecting religious education time.

The church should implement community partnership programs which may help in developing relationships with community organizations, schools, and cultural groups could create broader support networks for Sunday school attendance. These partnerships might involve shared resources, cross-promotional activities, or collaborative programming.

5.1.7 Parental knowledge

Implementation of comprehensive parent communication systems; the parish should establish regular, multi-channel communication systems to keep parents informed about program content, schedules, and expectations. This might include weekly newsletters, text message updates, parent meetings, and digital communication platforms. Comprehensive communication systems increase parental awareness and improve attendance consistency.

Creating parent-teacher conference programs; this can be done by establishing regular opportunities for parents to meet with Sunday school teachers would address the communication gap while building relationships that support children's learning. These conferences would include discussion of children's progress, upcoming content, and ways parents can reinforce learning at home.

The church can establish home-church connection materials through sharing resources that help parents understand and support Sunday school learning at home. This would bridge the knowledge gap while extending program impact. Resources might include lesson summaries, discussion questions, home activities, and spiritual development resources that may increase parental content awareness and improve learning outcomes.

Implementing digital information platforms by developing user-friendly digital platforms (websites, mobile apps, and social media groups) that provide easy access to program information, schedules, and resources would address accessibility challenges while accommodating different communication preferences.

The church should create parent volunteer opportunities that can involve parents directly in Sunday school activities through volunteer roles; this would naturally

Increase their program knowledge while strengthening the parent-teacher relationship. This might include classroom assistance, event planning, or specialized skill sharing. These parent volunteer programs increase Sunday school program awareness and improve long-term engagement.

5.1.8 Transportation accessibility

Religious institutions should explore collaborative transportation initiatives that pool community resources to address mobility barriers. Research by Starkey (2007) on intermediate means of transport suggests that community-owned bicycle programs, shared motorcycle services, or organized walking groups can significantly improve access to religious activities while building social capital. Churches could establish transportation cooperatives where families contribute resources to purchase and maintain shared transportation options, such as community bicycles or organized group transport systems.

Churches could implement rotating schedules where different geographic areas receive programming on different weeks, monthly intensive programs that justify longer travel times, or integrated programming with other community activities that families already attend.

The church could develop mobile phone-based religious education content, establish community radio programs, or create resource centers where families can access religious education materials during convenient times, reducing dependence on fixed scheduling and transportation.

The church could collaborate with local government, NGOs, and development organizations to advocate for improved road infrastructure, public transport services, or community mobility programs that would benefit religious education along with other community activities.

The church could develop income-generating activities, vocational training programs, or cooperative economic ventures that provide economic justification for transportation investments while creating opportunities for religious education integration.

The findings suggest that improving Sunday school attendance cannot be achieved through religious programming alone but requires addressing broader community

development challenges related to transportation infrastructure, economic capacity, and institutional coordination.

5.1.9 Weather conditions

There should be infrastructure development for weather protection. The church should arrange for the construction of improved weather-resistant facilities that include covered walkways, adequate roofing, and proper drainage systems at church premises.

The church can implement weather-responsive programming strategies, including indoor alternative activities and modified scheduling during extreme weather periods. This could include flexible programming approaches that would maintain regular attendance rates during adverse weather seasons.

The church can mobilize resources and provide weather-appropriate resources such as umbrellas, raincoats, or waterproof materials for children from economically disadvantaged families. The provision of weather-appropriate gears might increase consistent attendance among vulnerable children during rainy seasons.

There should be development of alternative delivery methods during severe weather conditions. Sunday school delivery methods such as home-based programs or mobile Sunday school units during extremely adverse weather conditions maintain regular participation during challenging weather periods.

5.1.10 Competing Educational priorities

The church can develop integrated academic-religious programs through collaborative scheduling between churches and local schools to minimize conflicts between academic and religious activities. Coordinated scheduling might increase children's participation in both academic and religious activities.

The church can arrange for flexible Sunday school scheduling programs. Implementing flexible scheduling options including evening sessions, alternative weekdays, or shorter but more frequent sessions to accommodate academic demands might

increase children's participation even when they carry on their academic responsibilities.

The church can establish recognition programs within Sunday school that celebrate both spiritual and academic achievements, demonstrating the church's support for educational success. Such dual recognition programs would improve children's motivation to participate in religious activities.

The church should establish partnerships with schools to create mutually supportive environments that value both academic and spiritual development. Those institutional partnerships might increase community support for balanced child development

5.1.11 Health related factors

The dominance of health-related barriers suggests that religious institutions in Kinoni Parish must develop health-responsive programming strategies to maintain consistent participation. This might include flexible attendance policies for children with chronic conditions, health education integration into religious curricula, or partnerships with healthcare providers to support community health while maintaining religious engagement.

The church should establish inclusive health accommodation infrastructure through creating comprehensive accommodations for children with chronic health conditions, including accessible facilities, modified activities, and trained volunteer support.

The church should establish volunteer health support networks by training Sunday school volunteers in basic health support, recognizing health emergencies, and providing appropriate accommodations for children with health needs.

Establish formal partnerships with local health centers and community health workers to coordinate health information, support health accommodations, and ensure appropriate responses to community health threats.

Develop comprehensive emergency preparedness plans for various health scenarios, including pandemic responses, seasonal illness patterns, and individual health emergencies.

These recommendations should be implemented with close collaboration with local health authorities and community health workers, ensuring that religious programming supports rather than compromises community health objectives.

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SECTION B: The items below will be used to measure different factors using a 5-point Likert scale starting with 1(**Strongly disagree**), 2(**Disagree**), 3(**Neutral**) , 4(**Agree**) 5(**Strongly agree**).

This study employs a 50-item questionnaire (closed/open-ended) to assess factors influencing children’s Sunday school attendance in Kinoni Parish. Items (PI1-5) will measure parental involvement; (CS6-10) will measure church support; (LS11-15) leadership structure; as (CD16-20) measures curriculum design; (SC21-25 socio-cultural context; (PK26-30) parental knowledge; (T31-35) transportation; (WC36-40) weather conditions; (EP41-45) Educational priorities; (HF46-50) health factors. A 5-point Likert scale (1: Strongly Disagree to 5: Strongly Agree) quantifies responses, with total scores per factor ranging 5-25. Scores of 20-25 indicate dominant factor influence, 11-19 moderate, and 5-10 weak. This structured approach will ensure comprehensive analysis of which factors strongly influence children’s attendance of Sunday school in Kinoni parish.

S/N	Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
PI1	Parents/guardians encourage children to attend Sunday school regularly.					
PI2	Parents/guardians attend church services with their children.					
PI3	Parents/guardians discuss what children learn in Sunday school.					
PI4	Parents/guardians are involved in Sunday school activities.					
PI5	Parents/guardians believe Sunday school is important for their children’s spiritual growth.					
CS6	The church provides enough learning materials for Sunday school.					
CS7	The church offers transportation support for children to attend Sunday school.					

CS8	The church recognizes and appreciates children's participation in Sunday school.					
CS9	The Sunday school environment is child-friendly and safe.					
CS10	The church regularly organizes events or programs for Sunday school children.					
LS11	Sunday school leaders are trained in working with children.					
LS12	There is a clear leadership structure in the children's church.					
LS13	Leaders in children's ministry are supportive and approachable.					
LS14	The leadership plans activities that attract children to attend Sunday school.					
LS15	Leadership regularly evaluates and improves Sunday school programs					
CD16	Sunday school lessons are interesting and engaging.					
CD17	The curriculum includes stories and activities suitable for children.					
CD18	The lessons are easy to understand and age-appropriate.					
CD19	The curriculum encourages participation and interaction.					
CD20	Sunday school is enjoyable because of the way lessons are taught.					
SC21	The community values children's attendance at Sunday school.					
SC22	Cultural practices in my community support regular church attendance.					
SC23	Peers in the community attend Sunday school					

	regularly.					
SC24	Community leaders encourage children to go to Sunday school.					
SC25	Socio-cultural events (e.g., ceremonies) sometimes interfere with Sunday school attendance.					
PK26	Parents/guardians are aware of the content taught in Sunday school.					
PK27	Parents/guardians know the schedule and timing of Sunday school activities.					
PK28	Parents/guardians understand the importance of Sunday school for spiritual growth.					
PK29	Parents/guardians regularly communicate with Sunday school teachers.					
PK30	Parents/guardians encourage children to participate in all Sunday school programs.					
T31	It is easy to get transport for children to go to Sunday school.					
T32	Parents/Guardian have access to reliable transportation to take children to church					
T33	Lack of transport means prevents children from attending Sunday school regularly.					
T34	The church provides or organizes transportation for Sunday school children.					
T35	Distance from home to church affects children's ability to attend Sunday school					
WC36	Bad weather (e.g., rain, cold) affects children Sunday school attendance.					
WC37	During the rainy season, children attend Sunday school less frequently.					
WC38	Parents/Guardians decide not to allow children					

	attend Sunday school due to harsh weather.					
WC39	There are no proper shelter arrangements during extreme weather at church					
WC40	Children feel safe going to Sunday school regardless of weather conditions.					
EP41	School assignments or exams prevent me from attending Sunday school.					
EP42	Parents/guardians prioritize academic studies over Sunday school.					
EP43	Children miss Sunday school to attend extra lessons or tutoring.					
EP44	Children feel too tired from schoolwork to attend Sunday school.					
EP45	Academic pressure affects children's interest in Sunday school.					
HF46	Children sometimes miss Sunday school due to illness.					
HF47	Parents/guardians keep children at home from Sunday school when they feel unwell.					
HF48	Long-term health conditions affect children's regular attendance at Sunday school.					
HF49	There are no special accommodations for children with health issues at church.					
HF50	Health concerns in the community (e.g., disease outbreaks) affect Sunday school attendance.					

Thank you.

Appendix 2: Interview guide

- 1.a) How many times per month have you personally accompanied your child to Sunday School?
- b) What difference do you believe your presence made to their attendance?
- 2.a) What specific resources (financial, materials, volunteers) has the church provided for Sunday School in the last six months?
- b) How do you think these have affected children's attendance rates?
3. Give at least three specific activities or lessons that were taught in your child's Sunday school program during the past month?
4. a) How many specific leaders are currently responsible for the Children's Church in Kinoni Parish
- b) How does their leadership approach influence your child's interest in attending?
- 5.a) What aspects of the current Sunday School curriculum do you believe have most engaged your child's interest in the past term?
- b) Which elements may have discouraged attendance?
- 6.a) Which community events or cultural practices have competed with Sunday School attendance in Kinoni Parish?
- b) Which community events or cultural practices have complemented Sunday School attendance in Kinoni Parish?
- 7.a) How much time does it typically take your family to travel to Sunday School.
- b) What transportation challenges have caused your child to miss classes in the past six months?
8. During which specific weather conditions (rain, heat, cold) in the last two seasons has your child been unable to attend Sunday School?
9. In the most recent school term, how often have homework assignments or school-related activities prevented your child from attending Sunday School?
10. How many Sunday School sessions has your child missed due to illness or health-related concerns in the past three months?

Thank you

Appendix 3: Observation checklist

Pre-observation details

Date: _____

Age group _____

Lesson topic: _____

Teacher: _____

Observer _____

1. Teaching methods

Observation item	Observed (✓ / ✗ / N/A)	Comments
Uses diverse methods (e.g., storytelling, group activities, and discussions).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Adapts to varied learning styles (visual, auditory).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Integrates technology or props (e.g., videos, crafts, visuals).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provides clear, step-by-step instructions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Checks for understanding (e.g., questions, quizzes).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Maintains appropriate pacing and time management.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

2. Children's engagement

Observation item	Observed (✓ / X /N/A)	Comments
Majority of children actively participate (e.g., raising hands, responding).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Minimal signs of distraction (e.g., side conversations, fidgeting).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Peer interaction encouraged (e.g., group work, pair discussions).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Children ask questions or share insights unprompted.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Displays positive emotional engagement (e.g., smiles, enthusiasm).	<input type="checkbox"/>	

3. Learning environment

Observation Item	Observed (✓ / X /N/A)	Comments
Classroom is safe, clean, and welcoming.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Visual aids align with lesson content (e.g., posters, Bible verses).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Seating supports interaction (e.g., circles, small groups).	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Observation Item	Observed (✓ / ✗ /N/A)	Comments
Noise level conducive to learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Inclusive accommodations (e.g., for disabilities, language needs).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Culturally sensitive materials/approaches.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

4. Teacher-children interactions

Observation item	Observed (✓ / ✗ /N/A)	Comments
Uses age-appropriate language.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provides positive reinforcement (e.g., praise, encouragement).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Addresses disruptions calmly and respectfully.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Encourages shy/quiet children to participate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Demonstrates warmth and empathy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

5. Curriculum implementation

Observation item	Observed (✓ / ✗ /N/A)	Comments

Observation item	Observed (✓ / ✗ /N/A)	Comments
Lesson aligns with stated objectives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Covers key curriculum components (e.g., Bible story, memory verse).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Integrates faith teachings with practical activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Uses assessments (e.g., verbal recap, creative outputs).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Adjusts lesson based on children's needs/responses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Post-observation summary

Strengths:

Areas for improvement:

.....

Additional notes:

.....

Observer's signature: _____

Teacher's feedback

(Optional): _____

Appendix 4: Introductory Letter



15th March 2024

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam

INTRODUCTION LETTER FOR DATA COLLECTION

This letter serves to introduce to you GLORIA NDUHUKIRE ^{m22masters} a student of Bishop Tucker School of Divinity pursuing a Master of Divinity/ Master of Arts in Theology/ Master of Arts in Theology and Development/Master of Arts in Theology and Health care Management/ Bachelors of Divinity.

His/her is carrying out a research as a partial requirement for him/her to be awarded the degree he/she is pursuing. So kindly avail him or the required information for building his/her research work.

Counting on your cooperation and thank you in advance

Yours faithfully

Rev. Prof. Elly Kansime

Research coordinator, Bishop Tucker School of Divinity and Theology.

ekansiime@ucu.ac.ug, 0772621182



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