

Predictive Factors of Poor Academic Performance among Form Three Students in Selected Public Secondary Schools in Langata Sub-County, Nairobi, Kenya

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Abstract

Public secondary schools have concerns about academic performance of students. The study sought to establish the predictive factors of poor academic performance among form three students in public secondary schools in Langata Sub-County, Nairobi. Specific objectives included assessing the influence of teacher-student interaction, and parental socioeconomic status on students' academic performance. A mixed research design and a population of three schools having 387 students with a sample size of 197 students and 15 teachers was utilized. Both purposive and simple random sampling were used. The research used descriptive and inferential statistics processed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 28. The study found that teacher-student interaction and socio-economic status had a positive relationship with academic performance. The study concludes that cordial interaction with teachers contributed to academic performance, and poor socio-economic status negatively affected students' performance. The study recommends that teachers should show respect, empathy, and comprehension to establish solid, trustworthy connections with their students. The study also recommends that students from low-income households should be eligible for financial aid, bursaries, and scholarships from school, local, and national governments.

Keywords: *Predictive Factors, teacher-student interaction, parental socioeconomic status, Poor Academic Performance*

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1. Introduction

For people to undergo positive development, education is crucial. How well the children are raised and educated in schools impacts the quality of life and society in the nation. These young children are seen as the nation's most important assets for socio-economic and human resource development (Gurung et al., 2021). School is crucial in helping adolescents develop their cognitive, social, and skills related to emotions. School settings allow students to confront several persistent normative stresses, which are considered typical day-to-day frustrations in such ongoing academic pressures. According to Aafreen et al. (2018), academic pressure from

a variety of sources is constant for students, which ultimately leads to stress. This means that using unnecessary pressure on learners may hamper their ability to perform.

Rabgay (2015) argued that the general student population is unwilling to pursue their academic interests due to a lack of support, guidance, and counseling on both academic and parental levels. In such a situation, it is necessary for both parents and academic instructors to recognize the various potentials of young minds and to make use of them as the students advance through their education. They also need to nourish and polish these potentials through appropriate channels. Consequently, adolescents in secondary school settings often self-report continual tension associated with their education, known as academic-related stress. The pressure to get good scores and concerns about getting bad grades are two examples of this stress (UNESCO, 2012). Therefore, parents/guardians ought to reduce exerting too much pressure on learners to eliminate scenarios whereby they study under duress pressure.

A mental health condition that is prevalent in adolescents is known as psychological distress. It alludes to general signs of depression, anxiety, and tension (Keles, 2020). Teenagers' ability to fully participate in society, their academic achievement, and their relationships with family and friends are all adversely affected. Psychological pain is linked to burnout as well as behavioral and cognitive issues (Arbabisarjou et al., 2015). According to de la Fuente et al. (2020), burnout is characterized by depersonalization (a distancing or pejorative attitude toward other people, also known as cynicism or disbelief), emotional exhaustion (the feeling of not being able to give your all, both physically and psychologically), and a low sense of personal accomplishment (the tendency to feel incompetent). In addition to risk factors that are unique to each person, such as emotional expressiveness or a lack of good stress management techniques, burnout is linked to both internal and external influences, including the educational system. School-related stress can hinder academic performance and reduce motivation, which increases the dropout (Pascoe et al., 2020) rate. This means that in as much as teachers want learners to perform well, too much pressure should be avoided because it leads to stress that can have a negative effect on the overall academic performance.

World Health Organization (WHO, 2017) claims that one in ten (10%) of young people who enroll in high school are likely to experience at least one psychological distress. There is a high possibility that these psychological difficulties may seriously jeopardize academic performance. Psychological distress, such as stress-related conditions such as depression, anxiety, panic, and adjustment disorders, which can start at age 14 and reach 75% by age 24, are common in half-life persons. Therefore, if psychological distresses are not addressed, the vice will spiral into learners' class work rate thus hampering their ability to obtain good grades.

According to WHO (2020), 16% of all injuries and illnesses worldwide are caused by mental health issues which is a burden among individuals aged 10 to 19. One of the primary illnesses and impairments that contribute to suicide, the third leading cause of death for adolescents worldwide, is depression. Additionally, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2017) studied 540,000 pupils across 72 nations. 59% of the survey participants, who were between the ages of 15 and 16, said they frequently worry about how hard an exam will be, and 66% said they are concerned about getting bad scores. Even though they were well-prepared, 55% of students reported feeling extremely anxious before exams. Therefore, failure to reduce exerting unnecessary pressure on learners may hamper their academic performance thus impacting their life after school. It is, therefore, the role of both parents and teachers to ensure that learners are not subjected to undue academic pressure. Secondary school students who self-report higher levels of stress related to their schoolwork

also report lower levels of well-being, according to the study (OECD, 2017). This research raises the possibility that adolescents' mental health issues are linked to the academic challenges they encounter today. By creating a secure and supportive atmosphere, parents and school administrators may help teenagers negotiate the challenges posed by the pressure to perform academically while also promoting their social and emotional well-being.

1.1 Problem Statement

Learners who exhibit subpar academic performance in their classroom records are considered low achievers (Okolocha, 2018). According to examination results, the Langata sub-county's public secondary schools have not been doing well. From 2013 to 2017, students' mean grades in Kiswahili ranged from 51.02 to 44.879, indicating inadequate academic achievement (Atandi et al., 2019). Participants did poorly in the KCSE 2017–2019, with an average score of D+, according to Cakir et al. (2019). Thus, the purpose of this study was to examine a subset of public high schools in Kenya's Langata Sub-County academic performance.

Beharu (2018) asserts that societal differences in social, psychological, economic, environmental, and personal aspects can significantly affect learners' success in academics in either a positive or bad direction. Features of learners, their gender, the school environment, and the backgrounds of their teachers were among the variables examined by Aming'a (2015) in relation to their academic success. This study did not, however, adequately address how teacher-student interaction and economic status impact secondary schools' academic achievement. The current study was motivated by empirical research on predictive factors and how they affect learners' academic performance, particularly in Langata Sub-County. By researching on form three students, in public secondary schools in Langata Sub-County, the researcher hopes to close this gap.

1.2 Research Objectives

- i. To examine the influence of teacher-student interaction on students' academic performance in selected public secondary schools in Langata Sub-County
- ii. To investigate the influence of parental socioeconomic status on the academic performance of students in selected public secondary schools in Langata Sub-County.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Relational Theory

According to the idea, which was proposed by Alan Fiske in 1991, self-identity, behavior, and attitudes may only be comprehended within the relationship's context (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). According to Gill and Gergen (2020), the classroom can be viewed as a site of connection where students receive instruction in subject matter as well as preparation for interaction with the teacher and even the outside world. According to Gill and Gergen (2020), educational success depends on relational or interaction activities. According to this theory, people should understand others because they are comparatively dependent from birth.

The teacher-student connection might be considered the pivot if learning is understood as a process integrated under an interaction matrix (Moskowitz, Dewaele, & Resnik, 2022). According to this theory, learning should be understood more relationship-wise, with the student-teacher relationship connection playing a major role in the relational matrix in which learning occurs. The bond between teachers and their students motivates them to study and

perform in this work, which is why strong interaction is necessary. In order to enable a more thorough quantitative investigation into the connection between teacher-student contact and their impression on overall performance, the study then applied this theory to analyze the qualitative data collected.

2.1.2 Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)

Albert Bandura promoted the SCT in 1986. SCT is a behavioral psychology theory that highlights the significance of social context for learning and the function that perception plays in knowledge acquisition (Bandura, 2001). According to the idea, people can intentionally and purposefully influence their unique behavior and character in a goal-coordinated manner. It also asserts that by organizing and engaging in self-reflection and self-administrative activities, individuals may significantly impact their results as well as the state of the world overall.

SCT is linked to various concepts: goal setting, self-efficacy, result expectations, self-regulation, and observational learning. The process of gaining knowledge by watching models is integral to observational learning. In this part of SCT, outcome expectancies play a major role (Bandura, 1986). These results are greatly influenced by the setting in which the observer or student grows. Parents are important learning role models for their children in this situation. More educated (socially positioned) parents are more likely to care about their children's education and, as a result, give them quality learning resources, which will raise the children's academic achievement. Similarly, financially stable parents will be able to send their kids to school, and vice versa.

Like this, a person's upbringing may affect their future behavior, and a parent's perspective impacts the atmosphere in which their children grow up. It posits that children from high-socioeconomic homes, where the parents hold prominent, well-educated, and prosperous positions, would be motivated to strive for even greater success than their parents. They will both consistently show up for class. Economically privileged learners do better academically, resulting in exceptional achievement at all levels.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Influence of Teacher-Student Interaction on Academic Performance

Longobardi et al. (2021) examined prosocial behavior and the quality of interactions between teachers and students in the UK. They examined how academic success and a positive attitude toward learning can act as mediators. 459 secondary school students and teachers in Italy completed all the surveys and scales. Multiple regression and bootstrapping techniques were used to examine the direct and mediated effects of students' prosocial conduct on the relationship between teachers and students. The findings indicated a positive association between prosocial behavior and the teacher-student relationship, suggesting that students' attitudes toward school may operate as a powerful mediating element in the relationship between prosocial behavior and the teacher-perceived relationship. Thus, the interaction between students and professors was the only psychological predictor in the study. Thus, the interaction between students and professors was the only psychological predictor in the study. However, the current study focused on student-teacher relationships, and parental socioeconomic status as opposed to prosocial behavior.

Chen et al. (2020) investigated how early school-aged children assess their peer social experiences in relation to classroom social management and teacher-student relationships. It was a long-term study. The study looks at two levels of teacher impact: how teachers manage

interpersonal interactions in the classroom and the closeness and conflict relationships at the kid level between educators and students. A multilevel regression model's findings indicate that the rise in child-perceived peer social support from fall to spring was associated with teacher-child closeness, but teacher-child conflict and teachers' behavior management techniques were associated with the shift in child-perceived peer victimization across the academic year. The study has a methodological issue because it was longitudinal while the current one was a cross-sectional investigation.

Odoy (2018) investigated high school students' learning habits and teacher-peer support. Universal sampling and the descriptive-correlational technique were used in this study's non-experimental quantitative research design. The results demonstrated that the participants' learning behavior was both high and teacher-peer support and that there was a substantial correlation between the two. The findings suggested that high school scholars' learning behavior improved with more support. The domain that had the greatest impact on learning behavior, according to the results, was peer academic support. There is a methodological gap because the study employed a mixed-method research design while only a descriptive research design was used in this investigation.

In Iran, Asadzadeh, Zoghi, and Asadi (2022) studied teacher-student interactions and EFL learners' academic achievement. A coefficient of correlation study method was applied to achieve this. There were 218 Iranian university students studying EFL among those taking part. The results of the hypothesis-testing techniques for structural equation modeling showed satisfactory compatibility between the data and the model. It has been shown that EFL students' success academically is importantly pressed and firmly together by how well they communicate with their teachers. Additionally, improving students' academic self-concept has been strongly associated with improving their achievement. The findings also showed that learners' academic self-concept served as a mediator in increasing academic success by promoting student-teacher engagement. However, because the study was carried out in Iran, a country with unique educational beliefs, the current investigation was required in Kenya.

2.2.2 Influence of Parental Socioeconomic Status on Academic Performance

A meta-analysis examining the relationship between academic performance and socioeconomic status achievement in China's rising countries was carried out by Kim, Cho, and Kim (2019). Research revealed that educational disparities were more pronounced in wealthier nations, posing a significant obstacle for developing nations as they increase access to education. Thus, the study concluded that academic results were significantly impacted by socioeconomic level. Since the study was a meta-analysis, there was a methodological flaw. The nature of this study was descriptive and was used to seal the identified methodology research gaps.

Rodríguez-Hernández, Cascallar, and Kyndt (2020) examined academic performance and socioeconomic level (SES) in Belgium. Forty-two studies were the subject of the connection between higher education academic performance and comprehensive literature evaluation employing a range of methodologies. In the first stage, cumulative content analysis examines the connection between academic achievement and SES. A meta-analysis in the second section determines the degree of the link between academic success in higher education and socioeconomic status. The findings indicate that whereas SES is influenced by factors including educational background, occupation, income, household resources, and community resources, academic achievement is influenced by accomplishment, competence, and

perseverance. Additionally, it has been demonstrated by Cascallar, and Kyndt (2020) that there is a small but positive correlation between SES and academic success in higher education. Academic achievement and the parents' employment level were more strongly correlated than SES. The prior study only employed carefully analyzed literature, whereas the current study used both qualitative and qualitative data obtained through a questionnaire and interview guide.

In Ghana's Sefwi Wiawso Municipality, Oduro-Ofori, Mansoh, Attom, Ocloo, and Amaka-Otchere (2023) looked into the relationship between parental socioeconomic position and high school children's academic achievement. The research employed a descriptive survey study methodology. The target group consisted of 960 second-year students from four senior high schools. 203 students were found to be the sample size. They combined a descriptive survey design with a quantitative research methodology. The study found a correlation between children's academic success and their parents' income. The findings also showed a high correlation between children's performance and parents' educational attainment. Once more, there was a significant relationship between the parents' employment and the academic success of their children. The study found that students' familial environment and academic achievement were positively correlated. According to the study, people's self-motivation for learning is significantly impacted by their parents' socioeconomic status. It also demonstrated how parents' socioeconomic status has a big impact on their kids' academic performance. The study only used questionnaire whereas the current work used questionnaire alongside interview guide (mixed research design).

3. Methodology

A mixed research design was utilized. The study was conducted in Nairobi County, Kenya's Langata sub-county. A total of 387 Form Three learners from Karen C girls, Langata High School, and Langata Barracks Mixed High School were the target population. The study sample size was 197 Form 3 students plus 15 teachers. The respondents were selected using simple random sampling since the target population was homogeneous (Form three students). The study used questionnaires with both closed-ended and open-ended questions as well as an interview guide. The research used descriptive and inferential statistics processed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 28.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

On the first objective, responses on items regarding the influence of teacher-student interaction on students' academic performance in selected public secondary schools in Langata Sub-County were analyzed and presented. Table 1 shows the results.

Table 1: Influence of Teacher-Student Interaction on Students' Academic Performance in Selected Public Secondary Schools in Langata Sub-County

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Not Sure		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. Dev
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Students with experienced teachers perform well in KCSE	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	2.4	42	25.1	121	72.5	4.70	0.509
I relate well with my teachers	3	1.8	5	3.0	6	3.6	88	52.7	65	38.9	4.24	0.808
My teachers are concerned with my well-being	4	2.4	8	4.8	6	3.6	76	45.5	73	43.7	4.23	0.911
I feel free to ask any questions to my teacher	5	3.0	17	10.2	4	2.4	64	38.3	77	46.1	4.14	1.071
My teachers create extra time for remedial teaching	12	7.2	16	9.6	0	0.0	86	51.5	53	31.7	3.91	1.161
I perform better in subjects taught by more experienced teachers than newly employed	10	6.0	48	28.7	11	6.6	53	31.7	45	26.9	3.45	1.316

In Table 1, the study found that students with experienced teachers perform well in KCSE as supported by 72.5% (121) (strong agreement) of the students while 25.1% (42) agreed with the statement (mean, 4.70). This means that teaching is positively linked to academic achievement among students. In support, research by Paschal and Mkulu (2020) revealed that teacher experience had a direct association with student performance. Asked whether they (students) relate well to their teachers, 52.7% (88) agreed while 38.9% (65) strongly agreed with a mean of 4.24. Such cordial relationships could psychologically free up students to seek more help from teachers. The results are in line with a study by Chen et al. (2020) that found that teacher-child closeness was associated with the academic growth of children. Again, the students were asked to state whether their teachers were concerned with their well-being, as shown by the results, 45.5% (76) agreed while another 43.7% (73) strongly agreed (mean, 4.23). Through such efforts, teachers could easily understand the academic needs of their students thus proving solutions to help them improve. In support, Asadzadeh et al. (2022) established that the quality of interactions between students and their teachers has a significant and direct impact on their academic performance.

Further, when asked whether they feel free to ask any questions to their teachers, 46.1% (77) of the students strongly agreed while 38.3% (64) agreed with the statement with a mean of 4.14. This implies that most students attempted as much as possible to interact with their teachers as they sought academic help. In agreement, Baafi (2020) found that positive learning outcomes were attained by students who had positive relationships with their teachers. This is an indication that student behavioral and instructional engagement levels increased for teachers who have cultivated a tight professional relationship with their pupils. The study also found that most students reported that teachers create extra time for remedial teaching as represented by 51.5% (86) (agreed) and 31.7% (53) (strongly agreed) with a mean of 3.91. Lastly, it was

revealed that most students perform better in subjects taught by more experienced teachers than newly employed and this result was supported by 31.7% (53) (agreed) and 26.9% (45) (strong agreement) with a mean 3.45. %. The results imply that teachers went the extra mile to academically help their students. In agreement, Odoy (2018) revealed that a high level of teacher support was associated with high level of learning behavior and consequently, academic achievements. It was also revealed that most students perform better in subjects taught by more experienced teachers than newly employed and this result was supported by 31.7% who agreed while 26.9% strongly agreed. Therefore, teacher experience appears to have a bearing on students' academic performance. The results corroborate the works of Paschal and Mkulu (2020) who found that teacher experience promotes students' academic performance.

Further, the students were also asked how else the teacher-student interaction affected their academic performance. According to most students, positive interactions between teachers and students—like support, recognition, and individualized attention—increase their drive and self-esteem. They are more willing to take chances in their education, ask questions, and participate proactively in class when they feel that their teacher is supporting them. Additionally, it was discovered that students who feel more confident are more likely to be engaged in class, make an effort in their studies, and tackle obstacles with a positive attitude, all of which contribute to improved academic achievement.

The study also used a semi-structured interview guide to seek teachers' responses on their interaction with students. They were asked to rate their level of interaction with their students. The results are presented in Figure 1.

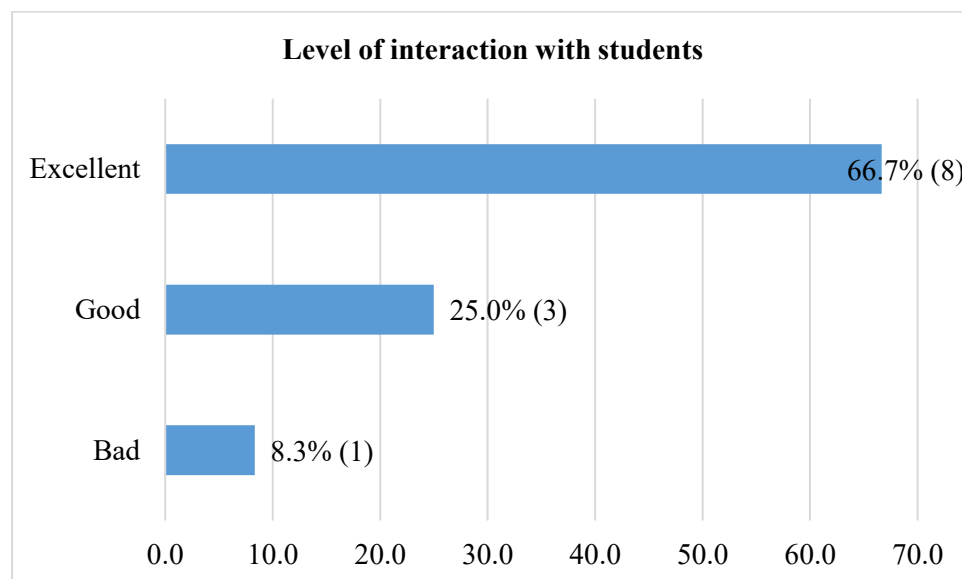


Figure 1: Level of Interaction with Students

In Figure 1, 66.7% (8) of the teachers reported that their level of interaction with the students was excellent while 25.0% (3) indicated that it was good. Only 8.3% (1) said it was bad. Teacher-student relationship was commendable. In yet another study, Mwangi (2021) showed that interactions between teachers and students had a positive impact on the student's academic performance.

The teachers were then asked whether they offered guidance to their students. From the study, one of the teachers reported that.....

“Teachers give students’ academic advice by assisting them in comprehending challenging ideas, providing more materials, or suggesting study techniques”.

To address learning obstacles, teachers reported they frequently work with students one-on-one or in small groups. Specifically, one teacher said that.....

“This kind of interaction helps students concentrate on assignments, enhance their comprehension of the materials, and perform better on tests.....in fact, I feel that academic counseling is especially beneficial for students who might require more time to understand difficult subjects”.

Again, teachers were asked to state the extent they allowed students to express themselves. One of the teachers stated that.....

“We give students a moderate amount of freedom to express themselves, usually through organized exercises like debates, group projects, and class discussions. Within the confines of the classroom's rules and regulations, we additionally urged students to express their thoughts on subjects that were relevant to the course material. Moderate expressiveness helps pupils to participate in the learning process and fosters critical thinking”.

According to their findings, one teacher expressly noted that.....

“Students' performance may suffer from an excessive amount of structure that restricts their freedom to express their ideas outside of the assigned topics hence as teachers we try as much as possible to interact with students”.

The teachers were again asked to state whether students feel free to share their personal lives with them. The results are shown in Figure 2.

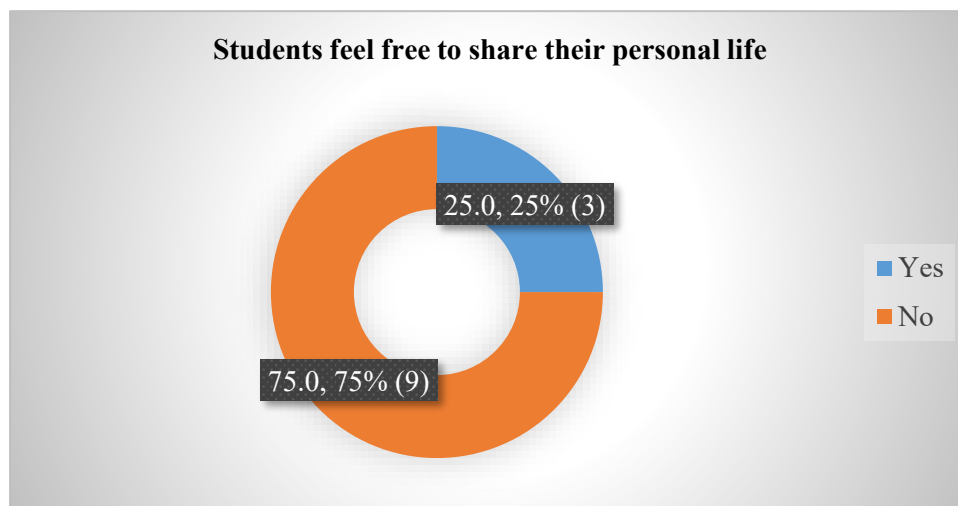


Figure 2:

As reported in Figure 2, the majority of the teachers 75.0% (9) indicated that most students failed to freely share their personal life with them. Meanwhile, 25.0% (3) of the teachers felt their students freely shared their personal life with them. These results contradict the findings

by Akinyi et al. (2024) that revealed that student-teacher relationships are linked with improved academic performance.

Influence of Parental Socioeconomic Status on Academic Performance of Students in Selected Public Secondary Schools in Langata Sub-County.

Concerning the second objective results on the influence of parental socioeconomic status on students’ academic performance in selected public secondary schools in Langata Sub-County are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Influence of Parental Socioeconomic Status on Academic Performance of Students in Selected Public Secondary Schools in Langata Sub-County.

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. Dev
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
My parents can afford my basic needs	59	35.3	48	28.7	1	0.6	35	21.0	24	14.4	1.34	1.544
My school fees are paid on time	28	16.8	75	44.9	0	0.0	32	19.2	32	19.2	2.79	1.430
My parents can afford all my learning materials	45	26.9	78	46.7	3	1.8	25	15.0	16	9.6	2.34	1.283
My parent has a good occupation	53	31.7	69	41.3	4	2.4	26	15.6	15	9.0	2.29	1.304
My parent is educated	11	6.6	18	10.8	2	1.2	66	39.5	70	41.9	3.99	1.210

According to the results presented in Table 2, the students were asked to indicate whether their parents could afford their basic needs. As revealed by the study, 35.3% (59) strongly disagreed and 28.7% (48) disagreed that their parents can afford their basic needs with a mean of 1.34. From the results, it can be said that most parents in Langata Sub-County experienced economic constraints and this affected their children’s access to education. In agreement, a study by Kim et al. (2019) found that socioeconomic status had a significant effect on the academic outcomes of learners. Further, when asked whether the school fees are paid on time, 44.9% (75) and 16.8% (28) disagreed and strongly disagreed, respectively that their parents afford to pay fees on time (mean, 2.79). This is an indication that most parents struggled to pay school fees and this could have a bearing on the regular school attendance of their children thus affecting their academic performance. When asked whether their parents can afford all their learning materials, 46.7% (78) disagreed while 26.9% (45) strongly disagreed with a mean score of 2.34. From the findings, majority of the parents in this Sub-County seem to face financial constraints and this had negative impact on their children’s smooth learning. In support, the works of Oduro-Ofori et al. (2023) discovered that parents' income and pupils' performance were interconnected. Therefore, unstable income status would deprive children of learning materials and timely school payment. The study also found that 41.3% (69) disagreed that their parents had good occupations while 31.7% (53) strongly disagreed (mean, 2.29). This means that most

parents in this constituency struggled to make a living and this likely spiraled on their children's academic performance. The results are interestingly contradicted by Nadenge et al. (2016) who revealed that there was no link between parents' occupation and the ability to finance education. Finally, it was revealed that most of the parents were educated as reported by 41.9% (70) (strong agreement) and 39.5% (66) (agreement) with a mean of 3.99. The results are in tandem with a study by Gobena (2018) who found that family education level contributed to students' academic achievement.

Furthermore, the students were also asked how else their parents' socioeconomic status affects their academic performance. According to the learners, restricted possession of the same chances may have an impact on the academic achievement of individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Such economically disadvantage students might talk about how they struggle with the absence of resources that more affluent students have, including books, the Internet, or tutoring. They also reported that students from poorer socioeconomic backgrounds might be at a disadvantage if they have limited access to educational opportunities and resources. Therefore, these students' overall academic performance may suffer if they find it difficult to finish homework or do well on tests.

Nonetheless, students stated that parents with more socioeconomic standing can give their children better access to educational tools including computers, textbooks, the internet, and instructional materials. These resources can improve their education by making it simpler for them to comprehend difficult subjects and finish tasks. Since they have the means to supplement their education at home, students who are privy to these resources are more likely to achieve superior academic results. Students may also effectively finish projects, conduct research, and keep on top of their coursework thanks to this access.

Through an interview guide for the teachers, the study sought to establish whether most of the students were able to afford the school fees. The results are shown in Figure 3.

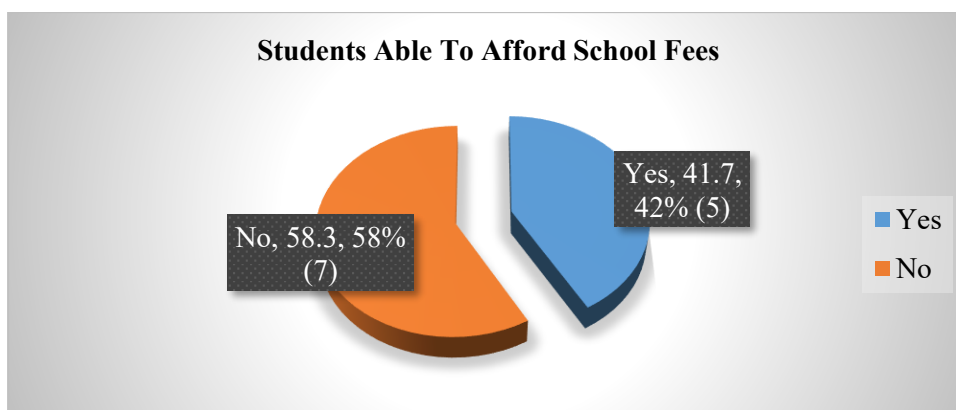


Figure 3: Students Able to Afford School Fees

In Figure 3, 58.3% (7) of the teachers reported that most of the students were not able to afford the school fees and they were the majority. From the results, only 41.7% (5) of the students were able to afford school fees. The results concur with the position of Oduro-Ofori et al. (2023) who discovered that parents' income and pupils' performance are interrelated.

Via interview guide, the study also sought to examine the students' stress levels. According to the teachers, one of them specifically reported that.....

“Many learners reported significant levels of stress, because of the academic pressure of tests and assignments as well as the need to live up to expectations established by parents, teachers, or themselves.....peak times, like deadlines or tests, frequently cause this pressure to rise”.

Further, teachers claim that stress brought on by academic pressure might have a detrimental effect on pupils' performance. In support, one teacher reported that....

“Excessive stress can also contribute to impairments in cognitive functioning, poor concentration, and trouble remembering information, all of which can result in poorer exam scores and grades”.

Additionally, one of the teachers mentioned that....

“Students who suffer from chronic stress—such as ongoing anxiety about grades or future opportunities—have a harder time focusing in class or finishing homework....as a teacher it can be mentally taxing to worry about schooling all the time”.

According to one of the teachers....

“Long-term stress can impair cognitive abilities that are critical for academic performance, such as memory, judgment, and problem-solving. Stress also impairs the brain's capacity to process information efficiently, which makes it harder to learn and remember things”.

Students' Academic Performance

In this subsection, the study presented results on the dependent variable (students' academic performance). The findings are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Students' Academic Performance

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. Dev
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
I am good at daily classwork	14	8.4	15	9.0	7	4.2	65	38.9	66	39.5	3.92	1.247
I am good at writing skills	8	4.8	18	10.8	4	2.4	81	48.5	56	33.5	3.95	1.108
My grades have been improving	12	7.2	40	24.0	0	0.0	80	47.9	35	21.0	3.51	1.260
I have hope of making it to university	0	0.0	0	0.0	30	18.0	20	12.0	117	70.1	4.52	0.783
I am active in class	7	4.2	6	3.6	13	7.8	54	32.3	87	52.1	4.25	1.032
I am good at practical skills	14	8.4	20	12.0	12	7.2	62	37.1	59	35.3	3.79	1.275

As per the results in Table 3, it was reported that most students were good in daily class work as reported by 39.5% (66) and 38.9% (65) respondents who agreed and strongly agreed, respectively with a mean of 3.92. A study by Chen et al. (2020) found that students closely linked to teachers performed better in class assignments including writing and technical skills. Further, it was established that most students were good at writing skills as indicated by 48.5% (81) respondents who agreed while 33.5% (56) strongly agreed with a mean score of 3.95. Again, most students said that their grades have been improving as reported by 47.9% (80) (agree) and 21.0% (35) (strongly agree) of the students with a mean of 3.51. This means that most students are of the opinion that despite their parents' financial challenges, they strive to work hard. In agreement, Paschal and Mkulu (2020) suggested that the dynamic between teachers and students is a key factor that influences academic improvement. Moreover, when asked whether they have hopes of making it to the university, 70.1% (117) strongly agreed while 12.0% (20) agreed with the statement with a mean of 4.52 and this could be interpreted to mean that these students have high expectations of furthering their studies beyond secondary level. The students were also asked whether they were active in class. As per the results, 52.1% (87) strongly agreed and 32.3% (87) agreed that indeed they were active in class (mean, 4.25). In support, Odoy (2018) teacher support led to active students in class that consequently influenced learning behavior in academic performance. Lastly, it was found that most students reported that they were good in practical skills as supported by 37.1% (62) (agree) and 35.3% (59) (strongly agree) with a mean of 3.79. Asadzadeh et al (2022) established that enhancing pupils' achievement has been linked significantly to their academic self-concept in technical subjects that need practical skills.

Through an interview guide, the study sought to find out the perspective of teachers regarding the performance of their students. From the results, one of the teachers indicated that....

"Students who consistently put in the effort and are academically prepared typically do well on tests and assignments".

Another teacher reported that.....

"Students are more inclined to succeed if they are conscientious about doing their assignments, going to class on time, and studying for exams".

Furthermore, another teacher emphasized that....

"Two important factors influencing student performance were academic readiness and a strong dedication to learning. This means that learners who take charge of their education and demonstrate initiative frequently achieve academic success".

Additionally, teachers observed that children who have active parental support—such as encouragement, participation in school events, and help with homework—perform better academically. In fact, one of the teachers reported that....

"As teachers, we usually underlined how important parental support is in determining how students feel about school and how well they do academically.....we equally ask parents to encourage, motivate them to feel more accountable for their education, which improves academic achievement".

4.2 Regression Analysis

The study carried out a multiple regression to determine the relationship between independent and dependent variables.

Table 4: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	42.442	2.583		16.432	0.000
Teacher-student interaction	0.356	0.067	0.359	5.337	0.000
Parental socioeconomic status	0.623	0.087	0.525	7.167	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Academic Performance

Table 4 shows that teacher-student interaction had a positive significant relationship with academic performance ($\beta = 0.356$; $p\text{-value} = 0.000$). From the results, it can be said that a unit increase in the teacher-student interaction can lead to improvement in the academic performance among the students. A study by Longobardi et al. (2021) indicated that the teacher-student relationship was positively associated with students' prosocial behavior, and students' attitudes toward school and consequently academic excellence. Again, parents' socioeconomic status was indicated to have a positive significant relationship with academic performance ($\beta = 0.623$; $p\text{-value} = 0.000$). The results mean that by increasing parents' socioeconomic status by any unit, the academic performance of the students will equally increase. In a nutshell, parents' socioeconomic status was the greatest predictor of academic performance followed by teacher-student interaction while parents' pressure was the least. In support, a study by Everlyne (2019) established a positive and statistically significant relationship between parental education level, parental occupation, parental income levels, and student academic achievement in the national examination.

5. Conclusion

On the influence of teacher-student interaction on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Langata Sub-County, the study concludes that experienced teachers, cordial interaction with teachers, teachers' concern for students' well-being (personal life), and extra remedial teaching time contributed to academic performance. The results were backed up by both correlation and regression results that found that teacher-student interaction had a positive significant connection with academic performance.

Concerning the influence of parental socioeconomic status on the academic performance of students in selected public secondary schools in Langata Sub-County, the study concludes that the poor socio-economic status among parents negatively affected the performance of the students. Specifically, it was found that most parents could not afford basic needs, school fees were not paid on time, and students lacked learning materials and all these were attributed to poor occupation despite that their parents were educated. Both the correlation and regression concluded that socio-economic status had a positive significant link with academic performance.

6. Recommendations

On the influence of teacher-student interaction on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Langata Sub-County, the study recommends that teachers should show respect, empathy, and comprehension to establish solid, trustworthy connections with their students. Therefore, a supportive environment that promotes learning can be established through regular interactions that recognize each student's unique needs and concerns. Higher self-esteem, better academic results, and enhanced student motivation have all been associated with positive teacher-student interactions. Students are more inclined to participate in class and do better when they feel appreciated and cared for.

Concerning the influence of parental socioeconomic status on the academic performance of students in selected public secondary schools in Langata Sub-County, the study recommends that students from low-income households should be eligible for financial aid, bursaries, and scholarships from school, local, and national governments. Tuition, uniforms, and other educational costs associated with attending school can be covered by these financial aid programs. As a result, providing financial aid enables students to concentrate on their studies while lowering financial obstacles to improve performance.

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