

Academic interest, engagement and academic performance

Among secondary school students

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ABSTRACT

The study set out to establish the relationship between interest, engagement and academic performance among secondary school students. It was conducted in four secondary schools around Kampala, government and private, both mixed and single sex schools. The study was guided by specific objectives which included, finding out the relationship between interest and engagement among secondary school students, establishing the relationship between interest and academic achievement among secondary school students and determining the relationship between engagement and academic achievement among secondary school students.

A correlational research design was used to conduct the study. Using a convenient sample, a sample size of 285 respondents was used in the study. The respondents included senior three (S.3) students from the four secondary schools around Kampala.

Using Pearson correlation coefficient to test the hypotheses, it was discovered that interest and engagement was positively and significantly related ($r=.605$, $p<.01$), engagement was positively and significantly related with the academic performance of secondary school students ($r=.140$, $p<.05$), and interest was also found to be positively and significantly related to academic performance of students ($r=.138$, $p<.05$).

It was concluded students who are interested and cognitively engaged in personal study attain better grades in tests and examinations. It was recommended that students should be more cognitively engaged than institutionally or socially engaged and parents and teachers should render assistance to students to discover the value of personal study and to enhance interest and cognitive engagement in their personal study.