



Original Article

Entry Academic Scores as a Predictor of Terminal Academic Achievement among Students in Primary Teachers' Colleges in South-Western Uganda

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The purpose of the research was to establish the influence of entry scores on students' performance in final examinations in primary teachers' colleges in South Western Uganda. The research anchored on postpositivist philosophy adopted a cohort longitudinal survey research design incorporating correlational techniques. The research employed quantitative methods of data collection in nine government-aided PTCs in South Western Uganda. The sample size was 214 students obtained using simple random sampling from 1192 students in the nine primary teachers' colleges. Data were collected using closed-ended questionnaires and document analysis guides, and it was analysed using SPSS version 20. Research findings revealed that there was no statistically significant relationship between entry scores and academic performance ($r = -.012$, $p = .864$) of students in primary teachers' colleges in South Western Uganda. From the findings, it was concluded that failure in academics in PTCs can be minimised by strengthening the training (teaching and learning), not increasing entry cores. The study recommended that the policy on entry into PTCs should be revised to include other factors like the candidate's interest, attitude, talents etc. and lessen the emphasis on the scores one obtained at the previous academic level.

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INTRODUCTION

Entry scores required for candidates joining PTCs in Uganda have been revised from time to time since missionary times. From independence (1962) until 1982, PTCs would admit primary seven (P.7) leavers who had scored highly at Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) to train as Grade II teachers for four years. In 1983 admission policy into PTCs was revised to consider senior four leavers who had scored any six passes at the Uganda Certificate of Education examinations (UCE) to join and train as Grade III teachers for two years (K. Male, personal communication, July 4, 2018). Until 2016, one could qualify to join a PTC if they had scored at least six passes in UCE including English Language, Mathematics, two science subjects from the three categories; biological (Biology), chemical (Chemistry/Physics), and practical (Agriculture), plus any other two passes, obtained at the same sitting (PTE Curriculum, 2012). From 2017 to 2020, policy guidelines for PTC entry required a student to have sat UCE examinations and scored at least a credit in English Language and Mathematics plus four passes, including two science subjects from the three categories of sciences (Kato et al., 2017; PTE Curriculum, 2012). The National Teacher Policy (NTP) in Uganda, which was approved by the cabinet on April 1 2019, suspended admission of students after UCE into all PTCs effective 2021. It became mandatory for every primary school teacher to hold a bachelor's degree in education, hence all candidates for admission to a Bachelor of Education

degree had to possess a Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE) or its equivalent.

However, there were persistent failures at Grade III final examinations between 2013 and 2018 in Primary Teachers' Colleges (PTCs) in Uganda, with up to a 29.7 % failure rate in 2017. Mugenyi et al. (2017) observed that candidates that sought entry into the Grade III Primary Teacher Education program had obtained minimum entry qualifications at UCE and this could be perhaps, one of the factors behind the massive failures at Grade III final examinations. The purpose of this study was to find out the effect of entry scores on the academic performance of students in the final primary teacher education exams.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The academic performance of students has been a subject of intensive research over the past years (Ige & Ogunleye, 2016) and has globally become an issue of standards and quality in education. Many reviews of literature highlight the importance of students' entry scores in their academic performance (Mendezabal, 2013; Mutsotso & Abenga, 2010; Surapur, 2012; Ergene, 2011; Ayesha & Khurshid, 2013; Congos; 2010; Sandhu, 2014; Mlambo, 2011).

Kyoshaba (2009) contends that academic performance is affected by a number of factors including admission points. Similarly, Uyar and Gungormus (2011) argue that admission points that

are a reflection of the previous performance influence future academic performance.

Worldwide, admission to colleges, universities, or tertiary institutions for a specified academic programme is dependent on prior grades attained (Roşeanu & Drugaş, 2011; Mercer & Puddey, 2011; Lambe & Bristow, 2011; Kutty, Lee & Young, 2012; Sandow et al., 2002; Shehry & Youssif, 2017). As a practice, minimum entry requirements are outlined to guide potential applicants and also as a parameter for defining the required competencies for a given study programme. Similarly, Hitchcock, Onwuegbuzie, and Khoshaim (2014) note that most educational institutions the world over consider the quality of entry scores before admitting students, and standardised eligibility tests have always been a factor in both developed and developing parts of the world.

From Caballero et al. (2007) perspective, academic performance is expressed through grades that are a function of assessment. For example, in the 1920s, grades informed ability grouping (Hargis, 2003); in 1916, grades guided predictions (Savage, 1953); and in 1934, a scholarship assessment test (SAT) by Henry Chauncey was developed and extensively used at Harvard University, E. F. liquid of Iowa University created the first American College Test (ACT) in 1959 (PBS, "Americans Instrumental in Establishing Standardised Tests," accessed February 27, 2020; Jump up ACT, "Our Story," accessed February 26, 2020). These were largely pre-entry qualifications to ensure that admissions to a college or university programme were based on agreeable grades. Sulphey, Al-Kahtani, and Syed (2018) observe that, in Saudi Arabia, till the recent past, the grades of the high school examinations were the sole basis on which college admission decisions were taken. The differences between individual schools are used to yield inconsistent criteria for admissions to universities and colleges (Sulphey, Al-Kahtani & Syed, 2018). Uyar and Gungormus (2011) conclude that it is this heterogeneity that prompted educational

administrators to design a standardised admission test that had the advantages of standardisation, efficiency, and opportunity.

Aidoo and Ayagre (2013) report that a study that looked at the determinants of students' performance in an undergraduate accountancy degree programme in Singapore revealed that students with better prior academic achievement and high marks in admission interviews performed better over the entire undergraduate programme. However, some scholars are of the view that entry points should not be over-emphasised in determining future academic performance. For example, Bushaw and Lopez (2012) argue that the system of eligibility tests has been criticised for a long by academicians and researchers, teacher unions, and other civil rights organisations in the United States, and the public's attitude is split about this matter. Due to this, many academic experts argue that such over-emphasis on tests is compromising and distorting the overall educational purpose (William, 2013; Bushaw & Lopez, 2012).

According to Opoka, Alagbe, Aderonmu, Ezema, and Oluwataya (2014), there is no statistically significant relationship between the university entry scores in Mathematics and Physics and academic performance in the architecture of a set of students. Findings revealed that there was no significant correlation between the variables investigated. According to Fields and Parsad (2012), colleges typically use standardised exams singly to place students in developmental education. For example, a study conducted in seven states of USA community colleges found that 33 percent of students were placed in developmental English, and 59 percent were placed in developmental Math (Bailey, Jeong, & Cho, 2010). Another study found that from 2008 to 2012, about a third of first-time entrants at the University of Alaska were placed in developmental English, and half were placed in developmental Math (Hodara & Cox, 2016).

Recent research suggests that reliance on standardised exam scores alone may result in the placement of students into inappropriate courses (Scott-Clayton, Crosta, & Belfield, 2014). To address the misplacement of students in developmental education, community colleges resorted to redesigning assessment criteria for college readiness of incoming students by using multiple measures to assign students to the highest level of coursework in which they are likely to succeed (Bracco et al., 2014; Dadgar, Collins, & Schaefer, 2015; Scott-Clayton et al., 2014).

Recent studies have also found that high school grade point averages were accurate and stronger predictors of college performance than standardised exam scores (Hodara & Cox, 2016; Hiss & Franks, 2014). However, several scholars have questioned the reliability of high school grade point average because it does not account for comparability across schools, which can differ in course rigour and grading standards, availability of highly qualified teachers, and economic inequities, among other characteristics (Sackett, Borneman, & Connelly, 2008). Markle and Robbins (2013) similarly argue that high school grade point average does not cater to the age difference. The above literature reviewed and authors are all foreign to Uganda; hence the researcher intends to study entry scores in the Ugandan context. According to Opoko et al. (2014), meeting the prescribed cut-off point's unified admissions to any programme and, therefore, lessened the burden of shifting and justifying unstable entry qualifications. All the above researchers, save Kyoshaba (2009), have works foreign to this country. The researcher opined that investigating how entry scores influenced students' academic performance in primary teachers' colleges in South Western Uganda was worth undertaking. This study, therefore, intended to investigate how academic performance is affected by entry scores in primary teachers' colleges in South Western Uganda.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed a cohort longitudinal survey research design incorporating correlational techniques. The research employed quantitative methods to collect data in nine government-aided primary teachers' colleges in South Western Uganda. South Western Uganda had a total of nine government-aided primary teachers' colleges. All nine colleges were purposively selected and 297 respondents (students) participated in the study. The respondents were randomly selected from a study population of 1192 using Morgan and Krejcie's (1970) table of sample selection. The selected nine colleges were considered as a unit of analysis, while the respondents, who included second-year students of nine government-aided primary teachers' colleges in South Western Uganda, formed the unit of inquiry. In this research, the primary data collection instruments were structured questionnaires and documentary analysis guides. Secondary data were collected from journals, government reports, published and unpublished theses, and internet sources. The researcher employed quantitative research paradigms in data analysis.

Measurement of Study Variables

The independent variable; entry scores (aggregate in six subjects including mathematics, English language, and two science subjects) of the participants were categorised into three groups (see *Table 1*): 6 – 14 interpreted as *Good* (with an average aggregate of 1.00 – 2.40), 15 – 38 interpreted as *Average* (with an average aggregate of 2.50-6.40); and 39 – 44 interpreted as *Weak* (with an average aggregate of 6.50 – 7.40). The highest entry qualification of Aggregate 6 implies that the student joined with a score of six D1s in six subjects considered by Kyambogo University and the Ministry of Education and Sports as a minimum number of subjects passed, including Mathematics, English, two sciences, and any other two subjects required to join the PTC. Aggregate 44 is regarded

as the lowest entry qualification, implying that the student joined with four P 8s in any subjects, including two sciences, and credits in mathematics

and English. The scores are interpreted as in *Table 1*.

Table 1: Interpretation of the entry scores of students joining primary Teachers’ colleges

Score Interval	Interpretation
39 – 44	Weak
15 – 38	Average
6 – 14	Good

The dependent variable, the academic performance of the students at the exit of PTE was measured by obtaining their exit scores (aggregate in nine subjects) in the PTE examinations. The individual scores in the subjects ranged from *distinction* (1—2), *credit* (3—6), *pass* (7—8), to *fail* (9). These individual scores were summed to obtain the

aggregates, which were then categorised and interpreted by KYU as 9—19 (*Distinction*), 20—54 (*Credit*), 55—72 (*Pass*), and 73 and above (*Fail*), as shown in *Table 2*. However, a score of 9 in any of the nine subjects sat accrued an automatic *Fail*. Any missing mark in any subject resulted in an *Ungraded* category.

Table 2: Interpretation of the Exit Scores of PTE Students

Score Interval	Interpretation
9—19	Distinction
20—54	Credit
55—72	Pass
73 and above (or 9 in any subject)	Fail
Missing mark	Ungraded

Source: PTE Grade III Primary school teachers pass slip.

Results in *Table 3* indicate the age and sex distributions of the respondents (students). The respondents were categorised into four age groups, that is, 18 – 19 years, 20 – 21 years, 22 – 23 years, and 24 years and above, and two sexes, male and female.

RESULTS

Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Table 3: Demographic Characteristics of the PTE Student Participants (N=214)

Demographic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age group	18 to 19	72	33.5
	20 to 21	113	52.6
	22 to 23	22	10.2
	24 +	7	3.3
Sex	Female	136	63.6
	Male	78	36.4
Total		214	100.0

Results in *Table 3* indicate that majority of the participants were in the age group of 20 – 21 years (n = 113, 52.6%), followed by the 18 – 19 age group (n = 72, 33.5%) and the last category of the age group was 24 years and above (n = 7, 3.3%). There were more females (n = 136, 63.3%) compared to males (n = 78, 36.3%) drawn from the samples.

Entry Scores and Academic Performance of Students in Primary Teacher’s Colleges

The study examined the quality of the entry and exit scores of the PTC students. A comparison of the two scores was undertaken in order to critically analyse the extant policies governing the admission and

education of primary teacher trainees. First, the entry scores are presented followed by the exit scores, and later a t-test of the two scores to establish the difference in performance at entry and exit. Given the special place accorded to English and Mathematics at entry, the exit scores in the two subjects are also presented.

Entry Scores of PTE Students

The entry scores were categorised into three groups and these included: 6 to 14 aggregates in 6 subjects including mathematics and English, 15 to 38, and 39 to 44 (See *Table 4*). The student’s entry scores in these score ranges were as indicated in *Table 4*.

Table 4: Entry Scores of PTE Students

Aggregate in six subjects	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Category
39 – 44	2	0.9	Weak
15 – 38	212	99.1	Average
6 – 14	0	0.0	Good

Results in *Table 4* indicate that none (0.0%) of the students joined PTE with a *good* average score (Aggregate 6 – 14). Conversely, two (0.9%) joined with *weak* average scores (Aggregate 39 – 44), while the majority of the students joined with *Average* entry scores (Aggregate 15 – 38). This implies that though the Ministry of Education and Sports Policy on admission to PTE requires a

student to have passed English and mathematics with minimum scores of Credit 6 (C6), the majority of the students had more credits in the six subjects required to enrol in primary teacher colleges, with very few students, if any, presenting distinctions at entry. An analysis of the entry scores by demographics is presented in *Table 5*.

Table 5: Demographics and Entry Scores of PTE Students

Demographic	Category	Entry scores		Total
		Weak N (%)	Average N (%)	N
Age	18 to 19	0(0.0)	73(100.0)	73
	20 to 21	1(0.9)	111(99.1)	112
	22 to 23	1(4.5)	21(95.5)	22
	24 +	0(0.0)	7(100.0)	7
Sex	Female	0(0.0)	136(100.0)	136
	Male	2(2.6)	76(97.4)	78
Total		2(0.9)	212(99.1)	214

The distribution of entry scores by age (Table 5) indicates that the *weak* students were in the age brackets of 20 – 21 and 22 – 23. This implies that at their age, these students most likely repeated Senior 4 or joined the Advanced (A) Level, which they failed before reverting to PTE. Moreover, the two *weak* students (0.9%) were male, showing that it could be easier for males to revert to studies at an advanced age than it is for females.

Academic Performance/Exit Scores of PTC students

Overall, the students obtained *fail*, *credit*, and *distinction* scores in PTE examinations. The distribution of the student numbers in these categories of scores by gender is shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Performance of PTE Students in 2019 Final PTE Examinations by Gender

Gender	Fail	Credit	Distinction	Ungraded	Total
	N (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	
Female	16(11.8)	118(86.8)	1(0.7)	1(0.7)	136
Male	9(11.5)	68(87.2)	1(1.3)	0(0.0)	78
Total	25(11.6)	186(86.9)	2(1.0)	1(0.5)	214

The results in Table 6 indicate that only two students (1.0%) passed with a *Distinction*, yet 25 (11.6%) obtained a *Fail* score. A majority, 186(86.9%), of the students passed with a *Credit* score. One of the students was *Ungraded* for missing an examination in one of the subjects. Nearly equal proportions of the female (11.8%) and male (11.5%) students scored a '*fail*'. Similarly, nearly equal proportions of females and males also obtained *credit* scores (86.8% and 87.2%, respectively) and *distinction* scores (0.7% and

1.3%, respectively). This implies that male and female PTE students have nearly equal abilities to handle PTE examinations.

Since passing English Language and Mathematics are given more emphasis at entry into PTCs, it was deemed necessary to analyse the performance in the two subjects at the final PTE examinations. The distribution of scores in English and Mathematics is presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Final PTE Examination Results in English Language and Mathematics

Scores	P202 English Language		P205 Mathematics	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
D1	0	0.0	3	1.4
D2	3	1.4	9	4.2
C3	5	2.3	38	17.8
C4	15	7.0	49	22.9
C5	3	1.4	7	3.3
C6	74	34.6	81	37.9
P7	54	25.2	18	8.4
P8	41	19.2	7	3.3
F9	19	8.9	2	0.9
Total	214	100.0	214	100.0

Results in *Table 7* show the relative performance of the PTE students in English Language and Mathematics. Generally, the results indicate that more students obtained better scores (D1—C6) in Mathematics than in the English Language. A critical observation of the distribution of scores in *Table 7* further reveals that 19 (76.0%) of the 25 students who scored *Fail* (*Table 7*) obtained F9 in the English Language. This implies that either the English Language examination was harder than the mathematics one, the scoring of Mathematics was laxer than in the English Language, or there was malpractice in the mathematics examination. It

could also imply that despite having “passed” English Language with at least a *credit* at pre-entry, the subject poses a threat to the overall performance of PTE students in the exit exams.

Comparison of PTE Students’ Entry and Exit Scores

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare the students’ general levels of entry and exit scores. The SPSS-generated outputs are presented in *Table 8*.

Table 8: Paired Samples Statistics (N = 214)

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Entry score (aggregates) of learners in 6 subjects)	28.2723	4.83804	.33150
	Exit score (aggregate in nine subjects)	36.3897	8.39324	.57510

Results in *Table 8* indicate that the mean entry score measured as aggregate in six subjects at O’ level (M = 28.27, SD = 4.83) was *average*. Similarly, the mean exit score measured as an aggregate in nine subjects at PTC (M = 36.39, SD = 8.39) was a *credit*. This means that the students generally entered and exited the PTC with average scores.

Comparison of PTE Students’ Entry and Exit Scores in English and Mathematics

A paired-sample t-test was conducted to compare levels of entry and exit scores in Mathematics and the English Language. The SPSS-generated outputs are presented in *Tables 9–11*.

Table 9: Paired Samples Statistics (N = 214)

		M	SD	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Entry score in Mathematics	4.79	1.09	.07420
	Exit score in Mathematics	4.92	1.65	.11246
Pair 2	Entry score in the English language	5.23	0.89	.06113
	Exit score in the English language	6.62	1.47	.10071

Table 10: Paired Samples Correlations (N = 214)

		Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Entry score in Math & Exit score in Math	-.054	.428
Pair 2	Entry score in the English language & Exit score in the English language	.039	.571

Table 11: Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					T	Df	P
		M	SD	Std. Err Mean	95% CI of the Diff.				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Entry score in Math – Exit score in Math	-0.12	2.02	.13806	-0.39364	0.15065	-0.88	213	.380
Pair 2	Entry score in English – Exit score in English	-1.39	1.69	.11576	-1.61603	1.15967	11.99	213	.000

Results in *Table 9* indicate that the mean scores in Mathematics at entry ($M = 4.79$, $SD = 1.09$) and exit ($M = 4.92$, $SD = 1.65$) were mainly at C5. The entry scores were relatively better (with a lower mean) than the exit scores (with a higher mean). The Pearson Product Moment Correlation (*Table 10*) between the entry and exit scores in Mathematics was not statistically significant ($r = -.054$, $p = .428$), implying that the two scores were not associated with each other. The t-test results for the entry and exit scores in Mathematics (*Table 11*) indicate that the difference between the two scores was not statistically significant ($t = -0.12$, $p = .38$). This means that despite having exhibited a slightly lower performance in Mathematics at the exit, the students maintained their relative ability in the subject as they had at ‘O’ level.

The mean scores in English at entry ($M = 5.23$, $SD = 0.89$) were mainly at C5 while at exit ($M = 6.62$, $SD = 1.47$) mainly tended towards P7 (*Table 8*). This indicates that the entry scores were definitely better (with a lower mean) than the exit scores (with a higher mean). The Pearson Product Moment Correlation (*Table 10*) between the entry and exit scores was also not statistically significant ($r = .039$, $p = .571$), implying that the two scores were not associated with each other. In other words, scores in the English Language at the two levels of education are not significantly associated with each other. The t-test results for English (*Table 11*) indicate that the difference between the two scores was statistically significant ($t = -1.39$, $p < .05$). This means that the students’ performance in the English Language dropped so much at the PTE level. This raises the question of whether the students’ performance at the

‘O’ level was genuine or they cheated in the examinations at that level, whether the strength of the subject at PTE was much higher, or whether the examination at PTE was better managed.

DISCUSSION

Quality of Scores at Entry and Exit of Primary Teachers’ College Students

The study intended to assess the quality of entry and exit scores of 2018-2019 PTC students in South Western Uganda. The study findings (*Table 3*) revealed a difference in participation by gender. This could be attributed to the fact that there were more female than male students in PTCs in Uganda. The smaller number of male students in PTCs could be explained by the popular opinion that in Uganda, fewer male students are attracted to the profession of primary school teaching due to the comparatively low salary paid to primary school teachers. Compared to other professions of equal qualifications for example, nurses, primary school teachers receive less pay. Boys argue that the little salary earned by primary school teachers would make it difficult for them to fulfil their future social obligations, which involve high expenditure. Female students on the other hand are attracted to the teaching profession because it is a noble profession, and they do not anticipate expensive social obligations like their male counterparts. This opinion is shared by Mujuni et al. (2022) who, referring to teachers in government-aided primary schools in the Isingiro district of Uganda, said that the teaching profession is not a highly rewarding job in Uganda.

The results further indicate that majority of the students joined with *average* entry scores (see *Table 4*) and obtained a *credit* (*average grade*) in nearly equal proportions of females and males at exit (see *Table 6*). Alternatively stated, most students of the 2018 cohort who were admitted into PTCs in South Western Uganda were academically average and most of them exited in 2019 still academically average (*credit*). These research findings are close to the findings of Mugenyi et al. (2017) who conducted a study in Wakiso and Mukono Districts-Uganda and concluded that candidates that sought entry into the Grade III Primary Teacher Education programme were weak academically, they performed weakly in the Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) examinations and largely possessed weak entry scores. This is based on the proposition that “academically weak” and “academically average” could mean the same level of academic competence.

If most teacher education trainees at entry and exit are academically average/weak, it follows that most teachers handling primary school classes are also average/weak. Mugenyi et al. (2017) in their study found that the quality of entrants was related to teacher trainees’ competencies. This could be likened to the famous phrase in the systems approach model, “garbage in, garbage out”, coined by IBM computer programmer George Fuchsel (C. 1957), which means that poor quality input results in faulty output.

Education has been recognised as the key to the national development and modernisation of a country, and among the levels of education in the country, the primary level of education is the most important (Onyebueke, 2014). This is because primary education serves as the foundation stage in the structure of educational development in the country. Therefore, having academically average candidates training as teachers of the Nation shall also impact the country towards achieving the desired development. The popular educational statements like

“no nation can be greater or rise above the quality of its citizens; the quality of citizens depends on the quality of the education system; the quality of the education system depends on the quality of teachers, and the quality of teachers depends on the quality of teacher education” (Andreas Schliecher C.1964; The Uganda National Teacher Policy, 2019)

stress the importance of having in place systems that churn out teachers of high quality that can be agents of national development.

Adoniou (2013) and McConney et al. (2012) argue that a learner who starts education on a shaky foundation has a lifelong price to pay in their academic career. Having academically average teachers to teach especially young children, in primary schools is not healthy for the country because, unlike in secondary schools where learners are a bit mature, the teacher is entirely responsible for the quality of education at the primary level due to the young age of children. There is a need to have brilliant and quality teachers at the primary school level because that is the foundation of education.

Hodara and Cox (2016) and Hiss and Franks (2014) agitate for the presence of standards in terms of admission of students joining education institutions like primary teachers’ colleges because it is an avenue of ascertaining the quality of inputs to guarantee quality outputs. Whereas the researcher acknowledges that the standard measure for assessing the academic quality of candidates before joining PTCs is in place, it is clear from the study findings that not much influence is put on candidates who go through the training. The Input-Transition-output model was not at its best applied to assist most student teachers’ transit from academically average (at entry) to good teachers (at exit).

The researcher is nostalgic for the post-independence time, the “golden age” for primary teacher education in Uganda, when teaching was a

noble profession. The policy was that the most brilliant students would join Teacher Training Colleges (Nabukenya, 2010; Dejaeghere, Williams & Kyeyune, 2009) and come out very well-trained. Whereas the researcher shares the view with Singh, Hoyte, Heimans, and Exley (2021) that quality primary education is built by highly qualified teachers, he disagrees that highly qualified teachers are a result of admitting into teacher education institutions trainees with high entry qualifications. The researcher grounded on the study findings and other educational theories asserts that the kind of training given in the training institutions counts far more than what one scored at the previous level of education. Unfortunately, currently, all indications are that mediocre candidates enter and exit primary teachers' colleges with a deficiency of the expected knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and competencies. This is possibly due to inadequate training, which may be a multiplier effect of poor educational systems, administration, and management.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study findings and views of various scholars, we conclude that primary teachers' colleges in South Western Uganda do admit candidates who are academically average and churn out academically average teachers. This implies there is inadequate primary teachers' training in primary teachers' colleges in South Western Uganda in terms of the length of the training and competencies imparted to the trainees. We, therefore, recommend that the Government of Uganda and PTC administrators need to strengthen the training of primary school teachers by ensuring all possible interventions that can enhance teacher competence and academic excellence. In addition, the policy regulating admissions into primary teachers' colleges should be revised to consider other factors like students' college readiness (set of skills, behaviour, and knowledge), attitude, talents, and age in addition to entry scores.

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