



Original Article

Determinants of Academic Performance of Primary Teachers' College Students in South-Western Uganda

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The purpose of the research was to establish the perceived determinants of academic performance of primary teachers' College (PTC) students in South Western Uganda. The researchers anchored on social constructivist philosophy adopted a cohort longitudinal survey research design incorporating description techniques. The researchers employed qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. Data was collected from the nine government-aided PTCs in South Western Uganda. The sample size was 298 comprised of 214 students randomly selected from the nine PTCs and 72 tutors, nine PTC principals, two officials from Kyambogo University, and one official from the Ministry of Education and Sports purposively selected. Data was collected using unstructured questionnaires, interview guides, focus group discussion guides, and documentary analysis guides. Research findings revealed that respondents perceived the academic performance of PTC students in South Western Uganda as determined by an interplay of various factors under nine themes namely; administration, learning environment, tutors, study materials, time, students' background, welfare, assessment, and study practices. This implies that if the college administration is effective, the learning environment is conducive, tutors demonstrate professionalism, study materials are available, adequate time is given to the program, students with the good background are admitted, there is improved students' welfare, proper assessment is conducted and students are always engaged in study practices which support learning, there would be improved academic performance of students in PTCs in South Western Uganda. The conclusion drawn from the findings and other researchers was that there are several factors that determine academic performance in PTCs but much depends on the personality and leadership competencies of the college principal. It was recommended that principals of PTCs should be helped to apply leadership styles that enable all other factors that determine academic performance to thrive.

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INTRODUCTION

The academic performance of students has been a prime aspect of the teaching-learning outcome since the inception of modern education (Kakumbi, Samuel, & Mulendema, 2016). The study of academic performance is traced as far back to the 19th century. In the United States of America, measuring academic performance dates as far back as 1830 through the use of standardized tests (Hargis, 2003). Yawmi (2018) examined student performance in terms of indicators of intelligence or accomplishment. In the mid-90s, further efforts were invested in the testing of knowledge, skills, and the performance of these skills (Gagne, 1977; Ebel 1975 (in Maatsch & Huang, 1986); Glaser 1984, 1987). Cerna (2015) argues that classroom observations show that under the same conditions some students perform well while others do not. The question arises as, to what are aspects peculiar to students that influence this difference in performance.

In Uganda, year after year, between 2013 and 2015, some students failed primary teacher education examinations (PTE) that required them to retake the failed courses for only two chances (Primary Teacher Education Curriculum, 2012).

Unfortunately, some students still failed and never became professional teachers. History shows that some primary teachers' colleges in South Western Uganda register good performance in PTE examinations, some register fair performance, and others register poor performance. This study, therefore, investigated the perceived determinants of academic performance of students in primary teachers' colleges in South Western Uganda. To note is that from a theoretical perspective, the Input-Transition-Output Model significantly facilitates the understanding of how factors that determine the academic performance of PTC students in South Western Uganda interplay.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a cohort longitudinal survey research design. South Western Uganda has a total of nine government-aided primary teachers' colleges. All nine colleges were selected and 298 respondents participated in the study. The selected nine colleges were considered as a unit of analysis while the respondents who included second-year students, tutors, principals, Kyambogo University-PTE department officials, and Ministry of Education and Sports officials in the Department of Teacher/Instructor Education and Training (TIET)

formed the unit of enquiry. These were selected purposively based on the knowledge they had on the subject matter.

In this research, the primary data collection instruments were unstructured questionnaires that were open-ended in design, structured interview guides, focus group discussion guides, and documentary analysis guides. Secondary data were collected from journals, government reports, published and unpublished theses, and the internet. The researcher employed purely qualitative research paradigms in data collection and analysis.

Data analysis was done through thematic (content) analysis as was recorded during face-to-face interviews, focus group discussions, and open-ended questionnaires. The researcher used a quick impressionist summary in analysing qualitative data; he summarized key findings by noting down the frequent responses of the respondents on various themes concerning administration, learning environment, tutors, study materials, time, students' background, welfare, assessment, study practices and academic performance of students in primary teachers' colleges in South Western Uganda in form of notes.

Table 1: Students' Demographic Results

Students Age group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 18	4	1.9
18 to 19	153	71.5
20 to 21	42	19.6
22 to 23	10	4.7
Above 23	5	2.3
Total	214	100

Source: Field Data 2022

Findings reveal that there were more females 127(59.3%) than males 87(40.7%) drawn from the samples. This was due to the fact that female students in PTCs in South Western Uganda outnumbered male students. This imbalance in gender could be explained that female students were more attracted to primary teachers' colleges than

RESULTS

Demographic Characteristics

Results in *Table 1* indicate that majority of the participants were in the age group of 18– 19 years 153 (71.5%), followed by the 20-21 age group 42 (19.6%), then 22-23 years 10(4.7%), then above 23 years 5(2.3%) and the last category of the age group was that of below 18 years 4(1.9%). This shows that it is mostly young adults who joined PTCs. This was brought about by Uganda's education system which renders it that a child joins primary one after acquiring six or seven years of age and studies primary level for seven years and ordinary level for four years, then joins an institution like a PTC or higher secondary. Nevertheless, some pupils study through nursery schools when they are between ages three and six and then join primary schools. The little number of students below 18 years old accounts for the very few students who started primary one at six years old, yet those above 23 years old account for those who probably first dropped out of school or studied higher secondary certificate (HSC) for two years but could not go on, hence turned back to PTCs.

male students. The popular reason given for this gender imbalance among PTC students is that primary school teaching is generally overlooked by men in South Western Uganda. This is because primary school teachers are comparatively low salaried than their fellow professionals of the same academic standard e.g., the enrolled nurses. This

opinion is shared by Mujuni, Mwesigye and Kazooba (2022) who, referring to teachers in government-aided primary schools in Isingiro

district-Uganda, observed that the teaching profession is not a highly rewarding job in Uganda.

Table 2: Gender of the Students Participants

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Female	127	59.3
Male	87	40.7
Total	214	100

Source: Field Data 2022

DISCUSSION

This section focuses on the discussion of the research findings in relation to the research question that was asked. In this study, determinants of academic performance of primary teachers’ college students in South-Western Uganda were guided by the question as stated below.

Determinants of Academic Performance in Primary Teachers’ College Examinations

The study sought to examine what respondents perceived to be important determinant factors of academic performance in PTE examinations. Participants were required to explain based on their experience and opinion, the determinant factors of academic performance in PTE examinations and themes were deduced from the responses by the researcher.

Results indicate that college administration i.e., the principal’s leadership style, personality, education level, area of specialization, and age, was the most popular among the perceived determinant factor of academic performance in PTCs. This means that if the administrator was of active age, applied motivating leadership styles (e.g., involving others), expressed a pleasant personality, was highly qualified, specialized in relevant administration programs, etc. there would be good academic performance in PTE examinations in South Western Uganda, and the reverse would be true. This was

expounded on by responses from interviewees and FGDs.

Interviewee A/9/19 with a wondering facial expression had this to say;

...It is not easy to explain what happens in primary teachers’ colleges! One principal is given a college and they do wonders; the college is very well organized, everyone is motivated, and students pass well. You put there another principal everything goes astray.... everyone is complaining, college debts skyrocket, and students fail.

Respondent D9i/9/19 in an FGD had this to add on;

....in some colleges, administrators, staff, and students are always fighting a cold war! They are pointing arrows, pointing fingers at each other, playing blame games.... and why are they fighting? because of outdated laws like refusing ladies to keep long hair, not allowing students to own mobile phones while at college...some students spend nights in dreams of running battles with the staff confiscating their phones which they keep in colleges illegally...By morning such students feel tired and sick because of the bad night they had.... this negatively affects their studies.

These study findings are backed by other studies e.g., Oyugi and Gogo (2019) point out that studies

conducted in the USA, Dubai, South Africa, Nigeria, Uganda, Central region of Kenya, and some parts of Nyanza region (Kenya) have revealed that Principals' leadership styles influence general and academic performance in schools, and for poor academic performance, the Head of the school is mostly held responsible. Leadership is a key factor to improve the condition of any organisation and is also the same in school aspects. Functional schools and outstanding performance come forth with effective leadership styles (Abaya, 2011; Ololube, Aiya, Uriah, & Ololube, 2013) Chaudhry & Javed, 2012).

The administrator's education level and area of specialisation as ingredients of college administration were further expounded by Gyasi, Bao, and Ampomah (2016) who posit that heads of institutions ought to be knowledgeable and skilled in leadership in order to exert a positive influence on their schools and academic work.

The above findings and discussion are however negated by the study conducted in Nigeria by Bello, Ibi, and Bukar (2016) who found that there were no significant relationships between the principals' administrative styles and students' academic performance in English language and Mathematics. The findings further revealed no significant relationships between the participatory administrative styles of Principals and students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in English language for the years under study. It further revealed that not one leadership style was the best predictor of students' academic performance. The researcher fully concurs with the study findings, and the former scholars but partly disagrees with later scholars. The researcher opines that college administration as a factor of academic performance is the pivot upon which all other factors that determine academic performance hinge and rotate. The administrator is very significant in determining students' academic performance because all other contributory factors are possible if he/she allows enabling conditions.

Results also indicate learning environment as another important determinant factor of academic performance. This means that many respondents perceive factors alluding to the learning environment as very important in determining academic performance in primary teachers' college examinations in South Western Uganda. Participants mentioned points like the availability of sufficient utilities like water and electricity, good classroom, and dormitory environment, administering lenient punishments, doing no manual work during class time, abolishing harsh rules and regulations, and friendly staff, as key ingredients of the learning environment.

On the college environment, one interviewee A/9/19 had this to say;

... the environment at the college must be an enabling environment for students to read or to study and pass. There must be seats in the classrooms, well-lit at night, and clean.... Some colleges' environment is not conducive to produce a teacher and that is very unfortunate.... Nevertheless, there are some Principals who are doing very well, their staff and students are happy and students pass very well....

Still, on the point of staff as an ingredient in the school environment, respondent D8v/9/19 in an FGD emphasised that it is very important that staff relate well with students as follows;

...Good relationships between staff and students give students the courage to consult tutors for support on academic and social challenges and this leads to better performance..... If a poor relationship exists, students will tend to fear tutors. If a student hates a tutor, that student also tends to hate the subject taught by that tutor and this may negatively affect the performance of the student in that subject.

The above findings are in agreement with Kweon, Ellis, Lee, and Jacobs (2017) and Mudassir, Norsuhaily and Ado (2015) who noted that the school environment is of paramount importance in shaping and reshaping intellectual ability. The scholars go on to argue that a supportive and favourable school climate makes students more comfortable, and more concentrated on their academic work which results into higher academic performance. The researcher fully concurs with the study findings and the authors' views quoted above.

Another important determinant of academic performance deduced from the findings of the study was tutors. Respondents mentioned competence, support, professionalism, availability, and motivation of tutors as critical elements of the tutor factor in determining academic performance in PTCs in South Western Uganda. This means that a PTC with well-trained and qualified tutors that provide adequate psycho-social support to the learners is likely to achieve better students' academic performance. It also means that the availability of sufficient numbers of tutors who are motivated intrinsically and extrinsically and conduct themselves professionally enhances better students' academic performance.

This was further affirmed from the interviews where interviewee B1/9/19 commented;

.... tutors who are poorly trained, I mean inadequately taught cannot be competent enough to teach students and pass. So, there is a need to have well-trained tutors in colleges if we are to have a good academic performance of students.... Knowledgeable, talented, intrinsically motivated tutors can deliver students with good academic performance.

D2i/9/19 in an FGD expressed her disappointment on lack of staff motivation with much annoyance thus;

.... imagine a tutor spending three months without receiving anything! No salary from the

college and he has a family to fend for.... how do you expect him to perform in class? There is no morale to teach students at all.

Respondent D9iii/9/19 had this to say about the lack of tutors:

".... some colleges are understaffed.... They lack tutors so they outsource secondary school teachers who are not teacher trainers. They lack on the part of methodology".

A similar position is held by Casazza and Silverman (2013); Reinheimer and Mckenzie (2011); Nam (2013) and the Centre for Community College Student Engagement (2012) who argue that the impact of tutors' activities on students' academic achievement is enormous. The more support students receive from tutors, the more likely they are to pass their examinations.

Instructional materials as a determinant factor of students' academic performance in final PTC examinations was construed from indicators like a stocked library as well as the availability of / provision of / adequate study reference materials. This means that if learners are allowed to access study materials in the library like specific subject modules, textbooks, journals, etc. they are likely to perform well in academics, while the reverse is true.

FGDs and Interviews further reinforced the findings as noted in an interview with C4/9/19 who proudly said;

...what has helped us here to excel in academics is having a well-stocked library.... Students are guided by tutors on how to research and supplement the class notes. We also organize subject days whereby students are given questions to which they research for answers in the library and present findings to the whole school in form of a competition and the best presenters are given prizes.... This is possible because of the well-stocked library and an effective librarian.

Respondent D6i/9/19 in an FGD equally noted that;

...I cannot underrate the contribution of enough study materials and a well-stocked library with relevant books.... You see in college the time for classes is not enough due to having an overloaded curriculum...what we do, is we give students assignments to go and research answers on their own. Various reading materials in the library help them a lot in syllabus coverage and passing.... this enhances academic performance.

Furthermore, in a FGD respondent D4ii/9/19 remarked that;

....in the college where I was teaching last year, students were urged to borrow at least two books about key subjects per week. The student was supposed to read them and summarize and tutors would look at the summary and award marks for Continuous Assessment.this was a big college which had a big library so all students got the books they wanted easily.... some students who knew how to use the internet would also read materials from the internet because the college had installed wireless internet

The above narrations imply that the use of appropriate instructional or reference materials in and outside classrooms may augment effective teaching and learning and consequently, higher success rates by students on final PTC examinations. Many scholars concur with the study findings arguing that instructional materials in teaching and learning are sinequanon, and there can never be any sensible debate about it, especially in teaching Sciences, and a lot has been written about it e.g., Danmole & Lameed (2014); Awolaju (2016); Adebule & Ayoola (2015); Fakomogbon (2012); Isola, Olosunde, Ojebisi, & Oladejo (2011); Meremikwu, Igiri, Opie, & Erukoha (2012), etc. The Researcher also supports the findings and the scholars above. Like Confucius (551-479 BC) a

famous Greek Philosopher said “*...I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand*”. This affirms that practical teaching with the use of instructional materials is very crucial in effective teaching/ learning that enhances academic achievement.

Time as an important contributory factor to academic performance was inferred from response statements like time management, limited time for personal administration, giving learners ample time, duration of the study program and adequate time for personal revision, and use of a personal study timetable. These responses allude to a situation like if learners were given more time for personal study by the college routine, if both learners and staff kept time all in college activities, if the college years of study were increased from two to three years, there would be reduced failure in PTE in South Western Uganda. Interviews made contextual narrations as below.

Interviewee C5vii/9/19 commented;

.... the time students spend at college of two years is too short, they cannot adequately cover the syllabus.... we teach 13 subjects in year one and 9 in year two. The curriculum is overloaded.... classes begin at 8:00 am and end at 5:30 pm.... I think this limited time contributes to the failures registered in final Grade III exams.... If my opinion was to be sought, I would suggest that the program duration becomes three years.

Another one in an interview, C8/9/19 noted;

...the PTE curriculum is overloaded....students hardly find time for personal study or visiting the library leave alone doing practical lessons....learning 13 subjects is too much.....subjects are too many and some topics are repeated in two or three subjects....before the new curriculum there was a paper called Cultural which combined four subjects....in the new curriculum the four subjects are separated

and this makes the workload on students too much...the subjects were increased without corresponding increase in time of the study program.

Respondent D7i /9/19 in an FGD had this to say;

....the time for studying especially in year two is too little and this could be the cause of many failures in PTE final exams.....serious teaching and learning is for only one term i.e. Term II....Terms I and III are preoccupied with School Practice....students do little learning in class.....they return from School Practice when they are about to sit examinations.....little time is made worse by students' lack of self-drive to do the right thing at the right time.....in spite of lack enough time for study, most students do not mind about good time management....they are deeply engaged in time wasters like long phone calls, chatting on social media(Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, IMO, Twitter).

Different scholars hitherto expressed their views on how time is a significant factor in academic performance. Al-Zoubi (2016) posits that managing time involves the distribution of priorities and exerting efforts upon that distribution. It is a key factor in any success at all levels of life but it is never easy to manage individually hence needs specific qualifications and many personal skills. Since the PTC (official and hidden) curriculum is packed with several programs run in a short period of two years, the learners ought to set priorities and direct more efforts towards those programs that will make them achieve academically. Al-Zoubi (2016) concludes that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between time management and academic achievement. Palm Beach study time learning theory advanced in 1864 by Professor Palm Beach explains that study time is a useful tool for predicting, and controlling learning outcomes. The theorist stated that achievement is a function of the time spent on a task to complete the task.

Findings also show that students' background was mentioned as an important determinant of academic performance in PTCs. By background of students, respondents explained that some PTC students had a poor academic and socio-economic background. They were born of poor parents or came from poor families which could provide neither adequate home learning resources nor adequate scholastic materials and other essential educational amenities like college dues and money for study trips or pocket money and this disadvantaged students. They also noted that due to their humble background, most of the students who joined PTCs studies from simple or poor secondary schools, so they had a weak academic foundation. This implies that several respondents thought that the socio-economic and academic background of students in PTCs in South Western Uganda significantly determined their academic performance.

In support of this perception, respondent D3iii/9/19 in an FGD said thus;

... most PTC students come from financially humble backgrounds; I mean they are poor. They cannot pay all college dues on the first day.... when the principals want money they send them home. In the process they miss classes and this at the end affects their academic performance.... related to their poverty is that they had no choice but to study from schools which were very poor in standard...USE schools...students hardly understand English.

Similarly, respondent B2/9/19 in an interview spoke thus;

....students from secondary schools are used to learning by heart and reproduction of answers...they are good at cramming...they cram stories of the chwezi migration, (laughs) Mirambo, Nyungu ya mawe, etc... they are challenged by college exams which demand for comprehension and expression of oneself.... the

biggest challenge is met in questions of methodology, especially in Mathematics and English...these questions demand answers for “how” instead of “what.”

The findings are in line with several scholars who argue that students from low socio-economic status had lower academic achievement as compared to students from higher socio-economic status (Suleman, Hussain, Khan, & Nisa (2012); Farooq, Chaundhry, Shafiq & Berhanu (2011); Ghaemi & Yazdanpanah (2014); Kampinga (2014); and Bond (2010). In other words, students whose parents' income was high showed better academic performance than those whose parents' income was low. They concluded that poverty is a crucial and destructive factor that affects students' academic achievement negatively.

However, the above position is contested by some scholars. For example, Agholor (2016) in his study about the socio-economic background as a correlate of students' academic performance in one of the universities of South Africa noted that despite being nurtured by single parents of low socio-economic background, results revealed that respondents were still above average academic performance. He further observes that students from wealthy homes are also prone to failure irrespective of their parents' affluence. The researcher concurs with the findings and contradicting arguments of the scholars above. However, he notes that whereas the learner from a wealthy background is better facilitated for his/ her studies than the one from a poor background, both ought to put in their personal effort to achieve academically. It is common to see some students from wealthy homes failing and others from humble homes excelling academically.

Study findings further revealed that welfare was a very important determinant of academic performance in PTCs. This was deduced from participants' responses such as good feeding and health, poor feeding, hunger, improved feeding, balanced diet, feeding on time, etc. Participants

explained that all PTCs in South Western Uganda were full-time boarding institutions and feeding students at least three meals a day i.e., breakfast, lunch, and supper was necessary for the college program. However, they pinpointed the quality of feeding provided to students as not good. There was hardly any college that provided a variety of foods to students regularly hence some could survive on eating sauce/beans only (if allergic to posho) or got food elsewhere (if allergic to posho and beans). This hustle by some students about what to eat negatively affected students in their academic work. This implied that an improvement in the college feeding program was likely to bring about higher success rates on the final primary teacher examinations, while a poor feeding college program was likely to bring about the lower academic performance of students. It could further imply that these respondents believed that if students were fed well by the college administration there would be happiness, contentment, and concentration on academic work by students and staff, leading to improved academic performance.

In support of this view a respondent D8i9/19 in an FGD explained as follows:

...we have all been students before...you know how issues of food used to cause unrest in schools...in fact, most strikes would be connected with bad feeding...and you know one cannot sit in class and concentrate when the stomach is demanding...and this affects both teachers and students... so it is very important that administration ensures good feeding at school.

Interviewee C1/9/19 had this more to say;

...the welfare of both staff and students is paramount for effective teaching and learning in PTCs. When tutors are given good houses to stay in, good meals are provided at the college, they are motivated to stay at the college most of the time and they concentrate and teach

students. But if the welfare is poor, they tend to be absent most of the time and this negatively affects teaching and learning.... one thing that disturbs students' peace at school is their welfare; the way they feed, the way they sleep, the source of water, and so on. When students feed well and on time, they feel happy, love their college, they feel healthy, and concentrate on their studies and vice versa.

Still on welfare D1viii/9/19 in an FGD added thus;

...In some colleges, the administration ensures that hot/boiled water for students is always provided to drink, proper meals are served on time, and medical services are given, generally there is concern by administrators for the welfare of students. But in some other colleges, it is survival of the fittest. Uniform is not given in time etc. Students are not happy and this cannot allow them to concentrate on their studies". "...unfortunately, poor feeding is a characteristic of many colleges due to little funding by the government.... students feed on posho and beans day in and day out throughout the year... Poor welfare caused a strike in one of the PTCs in this region in 2015.... this is on record.

The argument that good feeding is important for academic performance is supported by scholars e.g., Adroque and Orlicki (2013); Yunusa, Gumel, & Adegbusi (2012); and Maijo (2018). The researcher, informed by personal experience as a worker in PTCs for a long time concurs with the study findings and authors above.

Results further show that assessment (formative and summative) was key in determining academic performance in PTCs. Respondents expressed that there was always formative/ continuous assessment (FA) in PTCs which was conducted after every unit of study and summative assessment (SA) conducted at the end of the academic year. Respondents explained that formative assessment aims at

developing students' competences in the subjects learnt before they sit SA. That it allows interaction between tutors and students, and students to students. It makes learning "fun"/interesting. This means that this mode of assessment prepares students and gives them a better stand of passing examinations. However, respondents expressed lack of sufficient knowledge about how summative assessment is set and this could be contributing to the failure rate in final PTE exams.

Interviewee C9/9/19 emphasized the role of formative assessment in the narration below:

...in the colleges, with the current revised curriculum, Continuous Assessment (CA) was introduced to enhance the acquisition of competences by students in subjects they learn. This is done during lessons and at the end of every course unit so that the learner and the tutor can assess whether learning has taken place...if it is discovered that the learner has not yet acquired the desired competences on that unit, remedial teaching is given to the student, assessed again until both the learner and the tutor are satisfied with the competences attained as reflected by the mark scored". Further still respondent D4iii/9/19 during an FGD emphasized and clarified that;

"...Since assessment is continuous, there is little room for students to dodge classes.... they fear to miss the mark.... this gives learners chance to practice question interpretation, mastery of content and answering questions.... CA contributes 30% to the final mark so it helps students to pass because they usually do it well..... If CA is adequately done, the learners master the content because of continuous practice hence it becomes easy to perform well in summative assessment".

About summative assessment respondent D8ii/9/19 in an FGD raised the following concern:

"...for us, we teach and cover the syllabus...but sometimes we find questions set outside the

syllabus ...we don't even know exactly who sets these exams, maybe lecturers from Kyambogo University....imagine a college tutor teaches and exams are set by a university lecturer (everybody wonders)...I think some of these questions are not to the level of our learners...Kyambogo University should involve tutors in the setting of final exams as much as they are involved in the teaching and marking of these students.

Several studies conducted at different academic levels concluded that formative assessment significantly increased students' academic achievement (Kingston & Nash (2011); Andrade, Lui, Palma, & Hefferen (2015; Bulunuz, Bulunuz, & Peker, 2014; Ozan & Kincal, 2018).

However, some other authors claim that formative assessment does not statistically significantly affect student academic achievement in a positive way (Andrews, 2011; Collins, 2012). Contrary to the above claim, Ozan and Kincal (2018) posit that formative assessment increases the attitudes of students toward classes by individually monitoring their achievements in learning. In addition, Kingston, and Nash (2011) argue that a meta-analysis of many studies has shown that formative assessment raises standards and increases students' achievement. The researcher agrees that formative assessment gives students better grounds for passing since students are normally given remedial tests to raise their competences and marks but the failures can highly be attributed to the summative assessment set by the examining university.

Results lastly showed that students' study practices were also important perceived determinant factors of academic performance in PTCs. This meant that study practices deduced from responses like forming and utilizing discussion groups, taking notes, academic consultations, attending to continuous assessments, and regular class attendance was likewise identified as contributory factors in students' academic performance on final

PTC examinations. Responses from the semi-structured items were further supported by Interviews.

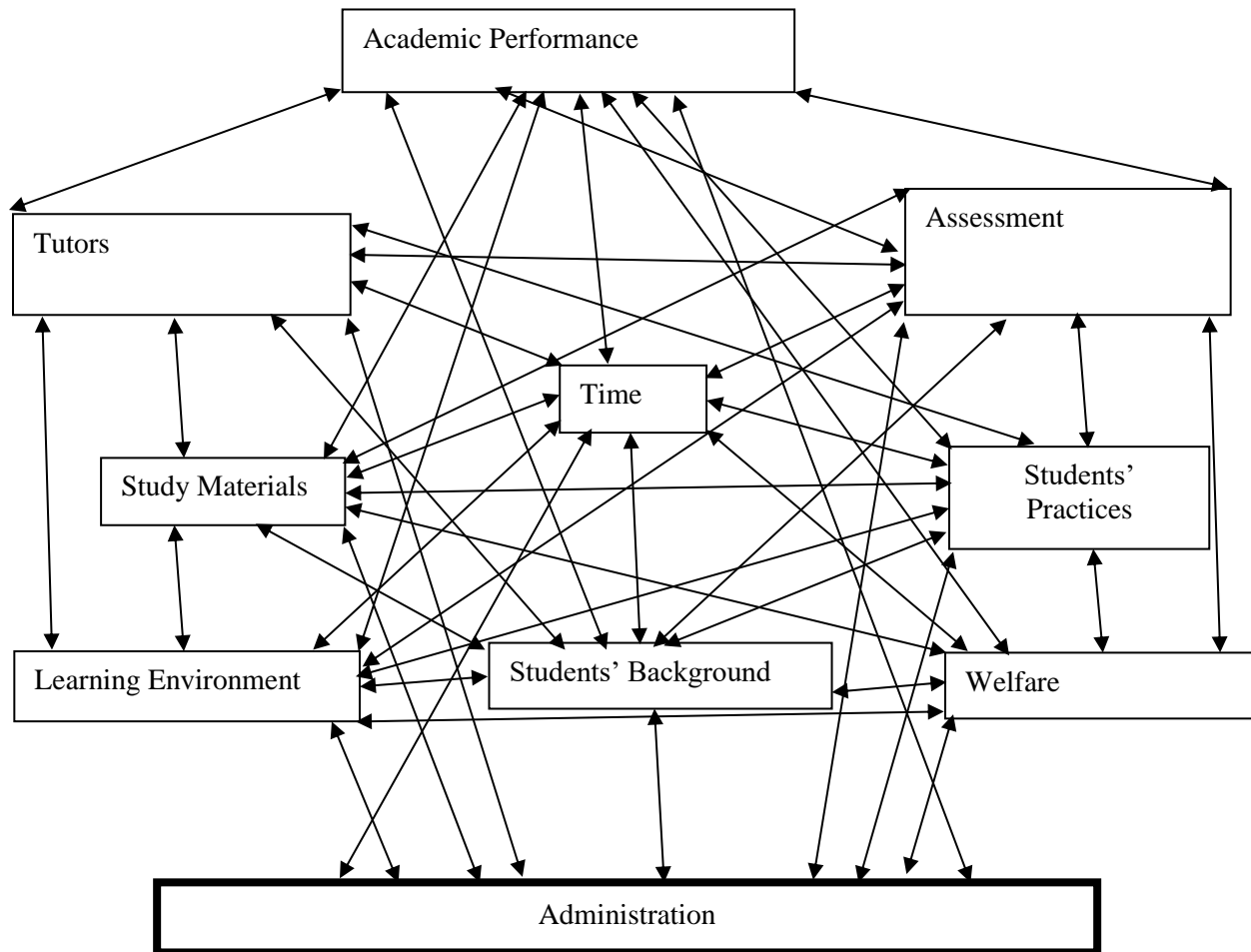
Interviewee C4/9/19 noted that:

.... students should be helped to acquire and apply study skills which can make them cover the syllabus, master the content and pass exams e.g., use of group discussions, studying during preps individually and so on.... some of our students lack these study skills because of their academic background.... they come from rural schools which are day schools.... they study anyhow.... they need to be assisted by tutors and friends to acquire study skills that can make them pass well in their exams. So, if students use recommended study skills they will most likely pass well and those without good study habits will only pass by chance.

Different scholars advance arguments in support of students' practices as determinant factors of academic performance. For example, Osa (2012); Baquiran (2011); Sakirudeen & Sanni, (2017); Hassanbeigi et al. (2011) opine that if students are to remember well what they were taught in class, taking notes in class is crucial. They affirm that note-taking and note-reviewing are important in any learning for future examinations. They concluded that there was a significant relationship between note-taking and academic performance. The researcher believes that the act of taking notes facilitates learners' attentiveness during lectures, and comprehension of the material being learned, hence the subsequent recall during examinations which could bring about better academic performance.

The researcher, based on the thematic analysis of primary data, developed a model showing determinants of academic performance in *Figure 1*.

Figure 1: Model Showing Determinants of Academic Performance in PTCs



Source: Thematic analysis of researcher’s primary data.

Figure 1 shows the perceived determinants of academic performance in primary teachers’ colleges in South Western Uganda. It shows that all the factors are interconnected, hence the bi-directional arrows forming a cob web like design, and that academic performance is determined by several interconnected factors with college administration forming the foundation of all other factors. The conclusion that administration forms the foundation of all other factors was made by the researcher based on the popular opinion 47(15.8%) of the responses that college administration underpins all college achievements including academic performance.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the study findings and views of various scholars the following conclusions were made:

- There are several interconnected factors that determine academic performance in primary teachers’ colleges.
- Academic performance in primary teachers’ colleges mainly depends on the personality and leadership styles of the college Principal.

Recommendations

From the conclusions above, the following was the recommendation:

- Principals of PTCs should be helped to apply leadership styles that enable all other factors that determine academic performance to thrive

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