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**FACTORS AFFECTING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF PUPILS IN UNIVERSAL
PRIMARY EDUCATION (UPE) SCHOOLS IN UGANDA**

Joseph Okello¹, Daniel Angol² & David Mwesigwa³

¹MA Student, ²MA Student, ³PhD, Senior Lecturer

Faculty of Management Sciences

Lira University

P. O. Box 1035

Lira – Uganda

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on factors affecting the academic performance of pupils in UPE schools since pupils are central in the educational process. Four questions were answered, namely: what is the effect of institutional leadership on the performance of pupils in UPE schools? What effect do political factors have on the performance of pupils in UPE schools? What effect do socio-cultural factors have on the performance of pupils and how does parents' involvement affect the performance of pupils? Secondary data were analysed using a document review analysis and it is revealed that school leaders such as school management committees and the head teachers who are equipped with leadership skills have an effect on the academic excellence of pupils; political factors exhibited through fulfilment of responsibility from the state and the district authorities affect academic performance of pupils in UPE schools. However, lack of government commitment, in terms of limited allocation of resources to schools in rural areas affects the performance of learners. Finally, selected cultural factors such as gender preference, early marriages, unplanned pregnancies, child labour and female genital mutilation (FGM) have a negative impact on the performance of pupils in UPE schools. Therefore, the involvement of parents in facilitating education of their children is presented as a contributory factor in attaining better academic performance in UPE schools. It is recommended that parents should participate in key school activities such as meetings with teachers.



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