

# Students' Welfare Needs and Academic Performance in Secondary Schools in Rwanda: A Case of Selected Ordinary Level Schools in Kicukiro District, Rwanda

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Students' welfare has raised the concerns of stakeholders in Education. Schools where students have welfare facilitations such as good health, enough school equipment, learning and teaching environment, counseling, good administration and other mental stimulating facilities perform well comparing to those that they haven't. <sup>1</sup>In Kicukiro District, it is known that the students prefer to leave or change the school, when is accused of bad health. The change of school also in Kicukiro is happen when at school there is not the welfare. This may be due to the fact that the students' welfare is not enough catered in those schools and performance is consistently poor. Therefore, the study is aiming to investigate whether the lack of those welfare facilitations is affecting their academic performance.

**Materials and Methods:** This study is descriptive and has 256 respondents as sample size. Head teachers, teachers and students from 10 government-aided and public schools selected randomly involved in this research. The questionnaires were used as research instruments. Reliability and validity of research instruments were checked by experts of research methods in Mount Kenya University and by the supervisor and then after pilot study was carried in two schools in Kicukiro District which were not in the sample. SPSS version 23.0 and Content analysis were used for quantitative and qualitative data respectively. Some statistics like measure of central tendencies were used to present and discuss the findings.

**Results:** The findings of the study revealed that meal provision at school indicated a high mean of 3.14 indicating that many respondents agreed that meal/food is provided at school and most of learners benefit from it. Regarding medical provision in schools, results indicated a moderate mean of 3.06 indicating that medical facilities are moderately provided at school. Concerning the recreational facilities in schools, findings indicated that schools suffer from insufficient of recreational facilities as justified by low mean of 2.49. The research also found that students in sampled schools were not performing well in teaching and learning and in school tests/exam and national examinations as indicated by the mean of 2.81 and 2.69. To the third objective, the students' welfare and students' academic performance were positively correlated due to the correlation of .876\*\* and that is statistically significant as the p-value of .000 is below the p-alpha or the significance level of 0.01.

**Conclusion:** Students' welfare greatly influences students' academic performance.

**Key Words:** Welfare; Students' welfare; Academic; Performance; Academic Performance

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Schools must be where students can study and grow with esteem. Learners' welfare is everything schools and parents do responding to students' needs, make a conducive environment for students, integrates social and health skills program, recognizes the diversity within the school community, link school with community, create the moment to enjoy for students, get recognition and contribute to the school life<sup>2</sup>. Good leadership and good infrastructure and others that stimulate cognitively are factors that determine students' well-being and affect their better performance<sup>3</sup>. The current study aims to examine the influence of students' welfare on the academic performance in secondary schools of Kicukiro district, Rwanda.

Depending on the list of schools that have many students who are classified in first and second division in ordinary level, there are some schools which have remained on the first places for three years; from 2012 up to 2014. Other schools change their places rising up on high rate of percentage while others go down.<sup>4</sup>In sum, a combination of all welfare facilities may stimulate students' achievement and its absence may lessen it.<sup>5</sup>

## II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

This descriptive and correlation study was carried out on head teachers, teachers and students from Kicukiro District from January 2019 to December 2019 and a total of 256 (4 head teachers, 96 teachers, and 156 students) involved in this study.

**Study Design:** Descriptive and correlation study

**Study Location:** This study based in schools in Kicukiro District, South-East of Kigali city. The sample took place in schools that are into two of ten sectors of Kicukiro District due to their good representation of both state funded and private schools.

**Study Duration:** January 2019 to December 2019.

**Sample size:** 256 (4 head teachers, 96 teachers, and 156 students)

**Sample size calculation:** The sample size for all population (students, teachers, and head teachers) was calculated based on Taro Yamane simplified formula with an error of 0.05 and confidence coefficient of 1.96 which is 95%.<sup>6</sup> The target population was 436 senior three candidates in national examination from ten schools selected purposively, ten(10) head teachers, and 267 teachers of those schools which leads to the total target population of 713. The sample size of 256 populations was taken conveniently.

**Subjects & selection method:** The respondents(4 head teachers, 96 teachers, and 156 students) were picked conveniently respectively in their schools from the target population due to the fact that they are available and mature enough to respond to the questionnaire. The researcher validated the questionnaire items. After modifying the research instrument, the researcher himself delivered and collected the questionnaire from the respondents.

### **Inclusion criteria:**

1. Being a senior three students, teacher and head teacher,
2. Either sex,
3. Aged  $\geq 11$  years,
4. Population of at least three years and above of experience in education setting,
5. Both people with disability and without disability were involved.

### **Exclusion criteria:**

1. School bursar;
2. Discipline officers,
3. Students who are not in senior three,
4. Indiscipline students

### **Procedure methodology**

For validity of the research, content and construct validity were based on to make and test questionnaires. Expert judgment was used; Center for Education Network experts assessed the questionnaire.

A pilot study was made on 15 people who are not involved in the research to ensure reliability, then after Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient was computerized in SPSS version 23.0 to determine how items correlate to one another.

The researcher worked in consultation with the supervisor, who from time to time provides guidance towards the progress until the final presentation of the research project for approval.

After the approval of the research proposal, the researcher validated the questionnaire items. After modifying the research instrument, the researcher took an authorization letter from the university authorities to assist the researcher proceed with the study. The researcher introduced the aim of the work that it is strictly for education purpose only and tells the respondents to answer voluntary. The researcher himself delivered and collected the questionnaire from the respondents. After data collection, the researcher analyzed the data and draw conclusions from the data.

### **Statistical analysis**

The collected raw data were inspected to ensure it is complete and accurate. Qualitative data was classified and coded into themes and concepts in order to be analyzed by SPSS version 23.0 according to objectives; for the quantitative data to enable mathematical computations since analyzing of data manually would be tedious and would lead to errors. The analyzed data were presented using frequencies, percentages and some statistics like measure of central tendencies (mean and standard deviation) were used.

To establish the nature of how variables are related, the Pearson correlation coefficient was used and it is based on the following rules: when the Pearson correlation value is positive, it is to say that the relationship is positive, and when it is negative the relationship is said to be negative, and the Pearson correlation is 0, it is to say that there is no correlation. The relationship was tested basing on the significance level or p- alpha of 0.01.

When the p-value in table is less than or equal to 0.01 the relationship is statistically significant, and when the p-value or Sig. (2-tailed), is greater than 0.01 the relationship is said to be not statistically significant.

### III. RESULT

This part presents the findings according to objectives of the study. It shows the findings on the status of students' welfare in Kicukiro district, students' academic performance in Kicukiro District and relationship between these two objectives. It describes the perception of respondents from items related to study objectives. Information in this section was presented in form of tables and statistical techniques to discuss the findings for each objective.

For the first objective which is to find out the status of students' welfare in Kicukiro district examined in terms of meal provision at school, recreational facilities, and medical care provision at school.

**Table no 1:** Perception of respondents on meal provision at school

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
All Pupils take food at school	256	4.02	.74
The amount of food provided to pupils is sufficient	256	4.14	.89
The food provided at school is delicious	256	3.70	.64
The food provided is of good quality	256	2.23	1.06
The food provided at school caters for balanced diet	256	2.39	1.02
There is variety of food type	256	2.33	1.07
<b>Average</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>3.14</b>	<b>.87</b>

Source: Primary data, 2019

Legend: 5. Strongly agree 4.21-5.00 -very high, 4. Agree 3.41-4.20 high, 3. Not Sure 2.61-3.40 Moderate, 2. Disagree 1.81-2.60 low 1. Strongly Disagree 1.00-1.80 very low;  $SD \leq 1$ : Homogeneity SD,  $SD > 1$ : Heterogeneity SD

As depicted many respondents concurred that all pupils took food/ meal at school on the mean of 4.02 which is expressed as high mean and homogeneity in responses as the standard deviation of 0.74 is less than one ( $SD < 1$ ). This implies that most of students in sampled schools took food (mostly lunch) at their respective schools. This is very advantageous because meal provision among learners at school motivate them to learn and perform well in academics.

It is seen also that many respondents were in agreement that the amount of food provided to pupils is sufficient as shown by high mean of 4.14 and homogeneity in responses as the standard deviation of 0.89 is less than one ( $SD < 1$ ).

Findings in table number one also showed that many respondents concurred that the food provided at school is delicious as shown by high mean of 3.70 and homogeneity in responses as the standard deviation of 0.64 is less than one ( $SD < 1$ ).

In examining whether the food provided is of good quality, results in Table number one indicated a low mean of 2.23 (majority of respondents were in disagreement) and heterogeneity in responses as the standard deviation is 1.06 which is greater than one ( $SD > 1$ ). Majority of respondents said that the food given to the students is of poor quality because; they always eat the same category/ kind of food. Concerning the items, the food provided at school caters for balanced diet and there is variety of food type, results showed many respondents in disagreement about these items as shown by low mean of 2.39 and 2.33 respectively and heterogeneity in responses as the standard deviation was 1.02 and 1.707 respectively.

**Table no 2:** Perception of respondents on recreational activities in sampled schools

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Our school has playgrounds for various games/sport activities	256	2.41	.79
Our school has enough recreational facilities	256	1.99	.83
Our school has music instruments for recreational activities	256	2.01	.88
In our school all students participate in sport activity organized by the school	256	3.91	.63
Our school has library facilities that enhance recreation among students	256	2.52	.78
Our school has enough sport equipment that help students to practice sport activities	256	2.10	.99

<b>Average</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>2.49</b>	<b>.81</b>
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Source: primary data, 2019

Legend: 5. Strongly agree, 4.21-5.00-very high, 4. Agree 3.41-4.20 high, 3. Not Sure 2.61-3.40 Moderate, 2. Disagree 1.81-2.60 low 1. Strongly Disagree 1.00-1.80 very low;  $SD \leq 1$ : Homogeneity SD,  $SD > 1$ : Heterogeneity SD

It clear that a great number of participants were in disagreement that sampled schools have playgrounds for various games/sport activities as shown by low mean of 2.41 and homogeneous perception as the standard deviation was 0.79. These findings indicated that students did not usually practice sport activities and this had negative impact on students learning and performance in academics; also many of respondents were in disagreement about the items that sampled school have enough recreational facilities as shown by low mean of 1.99 and homogeneity in responses as indicated by standard deviation of 0.83. This also indicates that students hardly practice sport activities in sampled schools and this in turn negatively affecting their learning and academic performance.

Furthermore, many of respondents disagreed about the item that sampled schools have music instruments for recreational activities, showed by low mean of 2.01 and standard deviation 0.88. This implies that talents related to music among students were not exploited and this also hinders effective learning among students. In examining whether in sampled schools all students participate in sport activity organized by the school, findings in Table number two indicated a mean of 3.91 which is high mean, indicating that a great number of respondents were in agreement about the item and homogeneity in responses as shown by standard deviation of 0.63.

When the researchers asked if the schools have library facilities that enhance recreation among students and if they have enough sport equipment that can help students to practice sport activities, statistics in Table number two indicated a low mean of 2.52 and 2.10 respectively and standard deviation of 0.78 and 0.99 respectively. These findings suggested that the absence or shortage of these facilities and equipment hinder effective learning among students and performance in academics.

**Table no 3: Medical care provision**

<b>Items</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Our school collaborate with nearest dispensary in order to help sick students	256	3.83	.83
Our school has first aid in order to assist sick students	256	2.68	.72
Our school encourage students to come at school with their medical insurance	2562	4.32	.81
Our school helps sick students to get first aid and get to the nearest dispensary	2562	3.89	.99
Our school has a nurse who looks after sick students	256	1.96	.44
Our School has a clinic for students' treatment.	256	1.71	.53
<b>Average</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>3.06</b>	<b>.61</b>

Source: Primary data, 2019

Legend: 5. Strongly agree, 4.21-5.00-very high, 4. Agree 3.41-4.20 high, 3. Not Sure 2.61-3.40 Moderate, 2. Disagree 1.81-2.60 low 1. Strongly Disagree 1.00-1.80 very low;  $SD \leq 1$ : Homogeneity SD,  $SD > 1$ : Heterogeneity SD

As far as medical care provision in sampled schools is concerned, the findings in table number three revealed that schools collaborate with nearest dispensary in order to help sick students as shown by high mean of 3.83 and homogeneous perception as the standard deviation was 0.83. Again many respondents were in disagreement about the item 'Our school has first aid in order to assist sick students as indicated by low mean of 2.68 and homogeneity in responses as the standard deviation was 0.72.

In assessing whether schools encourage students to come at school with their medical insurance and help sick students to get first aid and get to the nearest dispensary, findings in table number three showed many respondents were in agreement about these items as shown by high mean of 4.32 and 3.89 respectively and homogeneity in responses as the standard deviation was 0.81 and 0.99. The results in Table number three further indicated that school did not have a nurse who looks after sick students and a clinic for students' treatment as shown by low mean of 1.96 and 1.71 respectively and homogeneity in responses as the standard deviation was 0.44 and 0.53 respectively.

Evaluation of students' performance was examined in terms of school and national examination and in teaching and learning.

**Table no4:** Perception of respondents on performance in school and national examinations

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Students' performance in mid-term test is good	256	3.69	.96
The average scores of students in national exams in all subjects is high	256	2.32	.81
Many students in our school get good grades in all subjects in national examination	256	2.05	.87
The performance of students in school examination is good.	256	3.74	.91
In our school students perform well during mock examination	256	2.25	.91
most of our students are found in division I and II in national examination	256	2.09	.75
<b>Average</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>2.69</b>	<b>.60</b>

Source: Primary data, 2019

Legend: 5. Strongly agree 4.21-5.00-very high, 4. Agree 3.41-4.20 high, 3. Not Sure 2.61-3.40 Moderate, 2. Disagree 1.81-2.60 low 1. Strongly Disagree 1.00-1.80 very low;  $SD \leq 1$ : Homogeneity SD,  $SD > 1$ : Heterogeneity SD

As indicated in table number four students perform well in mid-term test as showed by many respondents on high mean of 3.69 and homogeneous perception as the standard deviation is 0.96. A great number of respondents were in disagreement that the average scores of students in national exams in all subjects is high and that many students in sampled schools get good grades in all subjects in national examination as indicated by low mean of 2.32 and 2.05 respectively and homogeneous perception as the standard deviation are 0.81 and 0.87 respectively.

Moreover, achievement of students in school examination is good as confirmed by a great number of respondents on the mean of 3.74 which is interpreted as high mean and homogeneous perception as the standard deviation is 0.91. In examining whether students sampled schools' students perform well during mock examination, findings in table 4.89 indicated a low mean of 2.25 and homogeneous perception as the standard deviations was 0.91. Findings also indicated that very few students are found in division I and II in national examination as shown by low mean of 2.09 and homogeneous perception as the standard deviation was 0.75.

**Table no 5:** Perception of respondents on performance in teaching and learning

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Students actively participate in teaching and learning session	256	3.44	.79
Students ask questions during teaching and learning session	256	2.29	.87
Students give contribution during teaching and learning session	256	2.20	.93
Students participate actively in group assignment	256	2.29	.62
Students return individual assignment on time	256	3.83	.81
<b>Average</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>2.81</b>	<b>.59</b>

Source: Primary data, 2019

Legend: 5. Strongly agree 4.21-5.00-very high, 4. agree 3.41-4.20 high, 3. Not Sure 2.61-3.40 Moderate, 2. Disagree 1.81-2.60 low 1. Strongly Disagree 1.00-1.80 very low;  $SD \leq 1$ : Homogeneity SD,  $SD > 1$ : Heterogeneity SD

Statistics in Table number five illustrate the perceptions of respondents on performance in teaching and learning.

Table number five shows a great portion of respondents were in agreement that Students actively participate in teaching and learning session as shown by high mean of 3.44 and homogeneous perception as the standard deviations was 0.79. Findings in table number five show that students were passive during teaching and learning as they do not ask questions and give contribution on the mean of 2.29 and 2.20 respectively which are expressed as low means and homogeneous perception as the standard deviation was 0.87 and 0.93 respectively.

Findings in table number five indicated that students in sampled schools do not actively participate in group assignment as shown by low mean of 2.29 and homogeneous perception as the standard deviation was 0.62. Moreover, findings in table number five show that many respondents were in agreement that students return individual assignment on time as expressed by high mean of 3.83 and homogeneous perception as the standard deviation was 0.81.

To assess the relationship between students' welfare and students' academic performance in sampled schools in Kicukiro district, Rwanda. To establish the nature of how variables are related, the Pearson correlation coefficient was used.

**Table no 6:**Relationship between students' welfare and academic performance

Students welfare		Students' academic performance
Meal Provision	Pearson correlation	.850**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
Recreational facilities	Pearson Correlation	.700**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
Medical provision	Pearson Correlation	.808**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

**Source:** Primary data, 2019

As shown in table number six, a positive strong relationship between meal provision at school and achievement of students on the correlation coefficient of .850\*\* and that is positively correlated since the Sig. (2-tailed) p-value .000 is less than 0.01. Secondly, there is a positive relationship between recreational facilities and students' academic performance on the correlation coefficient of .700\*\* and it is statistically significant since the Sig. (2-tailed) p-value is .000 which is less than 0.01. Moreover, positive relationship between medical care provision and students' academic performance due to the correlation coefficient of .808\*\* and that is positive statistically since the Sig. (2-tailed) p-value of .000 is less than 0.01. The implication is that students' welfare in terms of meal provision at school, recreational facilities and medical care provision greatly influence students' academic performance.

**Table no 7:** Overall correlation between students' welfare and their performance

Students welfare		Students performance
	Pearson Correlation	.876**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

**Source:** Primary data, 2019

The Table number seven shows the overall correlation between students' welfare and students' academic performance. The results show a strong positive relationship between students' welfare and students' academic performance due to the correlation of .876\*\* and that is statistically positive since the p-value of .000 is less than 0.01. From the study findings, it is clear that students' welfare greatly influences students' academic performance. When students' welfare at school is cared of students perform well in their studies while poor students' welfare at school negatively affects the academic performance. These findings concur with that of Kigenyi and Kaburu(2016) who found the provision of school meal has a significant effect (0.00 to  $P < 0.05$ ) on pupils' performance in Bugisu Sub-region.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The status of students' welfare was evaluated under three main variables namely; meal provision at school, medical care provision and recreational facilities at school. Findings on meal provision indicated a high mean of 3.14 indicating that many respondents concurred that meal/food is provided at school and most of learners benefit from it. Regarding medical provision in schools, results indicated a moderate mean of 3.06 indicating that medical facilities are moderately provided at school.

Concerning the recreational facilities in schools, findings indicated that suffer from insufficient of recreational facilities as justified by low mean of 2.49. From the findings, it is clear that food provision at school have a great influence on students' academic achievement. Results concur with that of Mulkeen who found that food provision at school is a key factor in ensuring students' academic performance.<sup>8</sup> Also the results are in line with the findings of Nhunda who revealed that health and wealth facilities influence students' academic performance; he found that factors like poor wealth and health, school climate, school leadership and students' motivation were perceived as the major source of poor performance among learners in sampled schools<sup>9</sup>.

As far as students' academic performance is concerned, results of the study found that students in sampled schools were not performing well in teaching and learning and in school tests/exam and national

examinations as indicated by the mean of 2.81 and 2.69 shown in table number 4 and table number 5 respectively. However, New South Wales considers that students who get a proper nutrition, leisure facilitation, health insurance and whose problems are solved in conducive are more probable generate their better academic results while their absence cause poor performance in schools.<sup>10</sup>

The overall correlation between students' welfare and students' academic performance show a strong positive relationship due to the correlation of .876\*\* and that is statistically positive since the p- value of .000 is less than 0.01. From the study findings, it is clear that students' welfare greatly influences students' academic performance. When students' welfare at school is cared of students perform well in their studies while poor students' welfare at school negatively affects the academic performance. These findings concur with that of Kigenyi and Kaburu who found the provision of school meal has a significant effect (0.00 to  $P < 0.05$ ) on pupils' performance in Bugisu Sub-region.<sup>7</sup>

According to Ipaye, poverty among the parents, schools and community in general impact students' performance. Students are not capable of responding sufficiently to fundamental needs of children academically and socially; due to that, some students leave school and engage themselves in prostitution or children labor to make money and support themselves; as results they fail in their academic endeavor.<sup>11</sup>

## V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, therefore, the results of the study indicated that students' welfare was not at satisfactory level as indicated by the findings. There is a room for improvement in order to help students learn well. The findings in sampled schools also indicated that students were not performing well in teaching and learning and in school exams and national examinations. Lastly, the study findings concluded that students' welfare greatly influence students' academic performance as justified by strong correlation between the variables.

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