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TEACHERS', PARENTS' AND PUPILS' PERCEPTIONS ON PARENTS' ROLE IN THE LEARNING PROCESS OF THEIR CHILDREN IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN BUKOBA DISTRICT COUNCIL, TANZANIA

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Abstract: **Parents' involvement in the learning process of their children is a very crucial ingredient; it is associated with perceptions of not only the teachers, but also of parents and the pupils. These three categories' perceptions are not empirically well known. The general objective of this paper was to determine relationships between socio-demographic factors of teachers', parents' and pupils' and their perceptions on the roles of parents in the learning process of their children in public primary schools. The specific objectives were to analyse respondents' socio-demographic factors; compare the perceptions among the respondents, and determine association between the perceptions and the respondents' socio-demographic factors. The study data were collected in Bukoba District Council in 2021 through a structured questionnaire which included an index summated scale to measure perceptions and which was administered to 400 respondents who included 130 parents, 50 teachers, and 220 primary school pupils. The respondents were selected through purposive sampling and stratified random sampling. The overall mean and median points scored by all the 400 respondents on the perception scale were 59.9 and 60, respectively, which are high compared to the maximum possible score that was 80. Moreover, using Kruskal-Wallis test, the median scores on the perception scale differed significantly among parents (Med = 58), pupils (Med = 62), and teachers (Med 58) [H(2) = 8.926, p = 0.012)]. Also, the perceptions differed significantly between parents and pupils (p = 0.010) and between pupils and teachers (0.030), but not between parents and teachers (p = 0.946). Using Chi-square tests, home to school distance (Chi-square = 7.598, p = 0.006), parents' employment status (Chi-square = 5.256, p = 0.022), and school urbanization level (Chi-square = 28.650, p = 0.000) were significantly associated with the respondents' perceptions. If those factors are conducive, perceptions about the roles parents play for their children's learning process can improve. Primary education stakeholders; including parents, pupils, and teachers; are urged to**

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keep up their perceptions about parents' roles in their children's learning process. Education planners and local government authorities are urged to scale-up interventions to reduce distances from home to school by building more primary schools, as shorter distance from home to school was more associated with high perceptions.

Key words: **Perception, parents' involvement, learning process, parents, teachers, pupils.**

I. INTRODUCTION

Proper and comprehensive parents' involvement in the learning process of their children is one of the crucial variables in provision of quality education as advocated by different education stakeholders (Kimu, 2012; Yetunde, 2014). Such involvement can improve knowledge, attitude and behaviour of the society if rooted well in national education policies (UNESCO, 2003). Several studies, Mugumya et al. (2022) as well as Karibayeva & Bogar (2014), have revealed that parents' involvement in the learning process allows parents, one of the important education stakeholders, to influence the learning process at home or school by supporting their children's at home, discussing school activities with their children, checking homework, parenting style or contacting the school of their children on educational matters which in turn contributes to pupils' effective learning (Miksic, 2015) as Evans and Radina (2014) maintain that students' academic progress is a result of meaningful partnerships between family, school, and community. Parents, therefore, in playing their role, interact with pupils and teachers, thus connecting the school and community. According to Michael et al. (2007), family, school, and the community partnerships increase resources for student learning, strengthen families, and sustain healthier communities. It is due to the engagement of stakeholders from family, school and the community that Epstein (2001) explains that children learn from their families, teachers, peers, relatives, part-time employers, and other adults in the community. Epstein (2005) suggested that educators, parents, and community partners might work collaboratively to design and conduct activities, and create a positive climate of partnership. It is for this reason that, for parents' involvement, each of these three stakeholders-parents, pupils, and teachers-should clearly have a clear understanding of the roles parents play in their children's learning process.

However, parents' involvement is perceived differently by different stakeholders. Some researchers define parents' involvement as the parents' dedication of a good deal of resources to the children's education (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994). It is also regarded as parents' activities performed at home or school regarding the children's education (Hoover-Dampsey & Sandler, 1997). Ryan et al., 2010) highlight that parental involvement reflects parents' communication with the school staff regarding the students' education in addition to their involvement in academic events. Therefore, parents' involvement is a complex concept which is mainly built upon interaction between parents and teachers and students (Morgan, 1992).

Given its complexity, parents' involvement may be perceived differently by parents, students, and teachers, and may also differ between schools and geographic locations (Lam & Ducreux, 2013) and consequently impact on their involvement either positively or negatively (Evans and Radina 2014). These differences are due to the fact that people's perceptions differ due to various reasons some of which are socio-demographic factors such asage, employment status, marital status, and distance from school, family size, education level and sex. For example Yamaoto et al. (2016) showed that parents may recognize the importance of supporting their children's academic progress, but if they feel incapable, they may choose not to be involved. Research by Epstein (2001) also stressed that most parents need more information from schools to be productively involved in their children's education. This implies that perceptions of parents, pupils and teachers on parents' roles in the learning of their children should be understood for such involvement to be effective as it may inform stakeholders on best practices on the matter.

This paper, therefore, analyses teachers', parents' and pupils' perceptions on the role parents play in the learning process of their children in public primary schools in relation to socio-demographic factors. The study's assumption was that perceptions; while related to stakeholders' demographic factors like age, household size, sex and marital status, experience with school, home to school distance, parents' education level, languages the parents speak, parents' employments status, and school urbanization level; may explain the roles parents play in the learning process of their children.

The general objective of this paper was to determine the associations between teachers', parents' and pupils' perceptions and the parents' roles in the learning process of their children in public primary schools. The specific objectives of the study were to analyse socio-demographic factors of teachers, parents, and pupils; compare perceptions on the roles of parents in the learning process of their children in public primary schools among teachers, parents, and pupils; and determine the association between perceptions on the roles of parents in the learning process of their children in public primary schools and the respondents' socio-demographic factors. A null hypothesis was tested namely parents', pupil', and teachers' socio-demographic factors are not significantly associated with their perceptions on the roles parents play in their children's learning process. The hypothesis was related to the third specific objective of this paper.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The paper is based on PhD study and adopted the school-family-community partnerships model by Epsteinin determining parents' involvement. This model by Epstein (1995) holds that stakeholders' goals and their internal and external situation overlap in the process of influencing learners' experience and performance, especially when school is harnessing untapped parents who know their children's educational aspirations and how to drive them to success. Epstein (2001) identified six best components in parents' involvement: parenting, communication, home learning, volunteering, and decision making and collaborating with the community.

In this study, the model formed the theoretical assumption that parents' involvement in their children's learning process is determined by socio-demographic factors, which in this study influence the perceptions of students, teachers and parents on their views regarding the role parents play in the learning process of their children. Moreover, by showing the importance of the roles parents play when involved in their children's learning process, the model was helpful as the researcher used those components to determine the way they are affected by socio-demographic factors as the determinants of parents, students and teachers perception on the involvement of parents in the learning process of their children. By stressing on the involvement of stakeholders, the model served as the standard by which the involvement of parents was determined as crucial since the success of the teaching process involves parents, pupils and teachers, particularly on the way the perceive parents' involvement.

Stakeholders' perceptions about parents' roles in children learning process may enhance or hinder parents' intention to engage actively in their children's learning process. In this paper, perception is defined as stakeholders' psychologically held subjective beliefs on ideal effective parents' involvement in the learning process of their children (Kwangsawad, 2017). As for the concept of ideal effective parents' involvement (in the learning process of their children), in this paper, is defined it from Walkers' (2005) standard whereby the ideal frequency of parents involvement is at least three times a week. On the other hand, parents' involvement refers to the ways through which parents support their children at home by discussing school activities with them, checking homework and parenting style (Miksic, 2015). Additionally, it includes contacting school personnel, attending parents-teachers organizations, and volunteering at school (Durisic and Bunijevac, 2017).

2.1 Teachers', Parents' and Pupils' Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Parents' socio-demographic characteristics (e.g., parents' education level, socioeconomic status, and marital status) have been found to be significantly related to parents' involvement in education (Baroody & Dobbs-Oates, 2009). Parents' socioeconomic status is associated with their participation in their children's education. Age, education level, marital status, and the number of children have been demonstrated to be strong predictors of parental involvement in their children's education. Parents' involvement in their children's education has also been connected to success. Specifically, findings by Eccles and Harold (1993) linked family indicators including family income, academic qualification, and marital status to involvement of parents in their children's education. Other factors advanced include parent's age and gender, number of children as well as their occupation. In particular, the researchers observed that well educated parents are more involved as compared to those who have little or no education. Toldson and Lemmons (2013) illustrated that parents' level of education had a significant relationship with their involvement. Parents without a high school diploma had a three-fold lower chance of having a college diploma than parents with a high school diploma to attend their children's school. They came to the conclusion that a low-income African-American parent's level of education was a significant predictor of school-based participation. This observation is similar to findings by Hayes (2011), Terriquez (2007) Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) and Lareau (2011). In explaining this observation, Lareau (1996) found that parents with less years of schooling were more likely to have negative interactions with schools and thus were ill-equipped to challenge the teacher or school. Less-educated parents may have lower levels of self-efficacy (Lareau, 2011). Additionally, Eccles and Harold (1993) revealed that parents with a higher education were more interested in their children's education.

However, Smock and McCormick (1995) found that parental school participation did not differ significantly depending on the parent's educational level. Studies on family size link household composition to parental involvement. For instance, it is shown that parents with fewer children are more interested than those with many children (Bernie &Lall, 2008). Additionally, Toldson and Lemmons (2013) found out that parents with more children were considerably less likely than parents with fewer children to participate in their children's learning process.

A study by Alston & Williams (2002) done in the US demonstrated that lower-income parents are less likely to believe it is their responsibility to oversee their children's education, and they are less engaged in educational activities at home and at school. These reported parents were less educated, lacked adequate skills and experience; thus they could not support the school and their children.

Some studies have shown that parents' job and language influence their involvement in the learning process of their children. For instance, a study by Terriquez (2007) found out that working full-time and becoming a monolingual Spanish speaker were connected to low levels of parental participation in their children's schools among Latino

parents in the US. However, Smock and McCormick (1995) found that parental school participation did not differ significantly depending on the parent's employment status.
According to Alston & Williams (2002), parents of lower socioeconomic class in the United States were reported to be less likely to believe that it was their responsibility to supervise their children's education and were less interested in educational activities at home and in school. Moreover, Dempsey et al. (2005) argue that lower income parents are more likely to be uneducated which will restrict the skills and information they can offer to their school children. Additionally, parents from low-income families are more likely to have jobs that require them to work long and irregular hours, limiting their ability to be engaged at home and at school (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

2.2 Perceptions on Parents' Roles in the Learning Process of Children

Epstein et al. (2009) stresses that parenting activities should demonstrate how schools increase the understanding of families about student needs and interests, and schools should assist families to meet their parenting responsibilities at each grade level to influence child growth and development. Since language determines the parents' perceptions which in turn influence their involvement in the learning process, it is important for school personnel to establish clear communication with families who speak languages other than English at home (Epstein et al., 2009). Parents and teachers should plan and engage in decision making activities which inform parents about school policies and provides opportunities for them to support their school and students (Epstein et al., 2009). For education stakeholders to effectively participate in educational matters, particularly in the teaching and learning process, measures should be taken so that they perceive their role in concordant with the given education objectives. That is why Sanders (1998) stresses on students being given equal opportunities to make families aware of children's development and the schooling process.
For teachers and families to focus on helping students learn positive character traits; such as honesty, listening, respecting others, and being a friend; there should be home-school and community partnership programmes designed for that purpose (Sanders, 1998). Parents tend to feel welcome to school and become willing to contact the school if the school environment is friendly. As Erdener (2014) indicates, one of the important factors for increasing parents involvement is teachers' willingness and positive attitude during meetings with parents (Erdener, 2014).
Pakter& Chen (2013) show that teachers who are aware regarding the importance of parents' involvement tend to employ effective strategies for improving their involvement learning activities through calling and e-mailing them at home, sending them newsletters, and setting up websites for parents to follow their children's progress, among others. According to George and Mensah (2010), parents' involvement can be enhanced by schools' deliberate steps to improve it in an organized and planned manner. George and Mensah (2010) also stressed on the need for parents to follow teachers' advice for reinforcing their children's academic success, something which highlights on teachers' practices. Calzadaet al. (2015) show that once parents feel that they are valued and considered important players by teachers in matters of education their involvement increases too. Hakyemez (2015) examined early childhood teachers' beliefs in parents' involvement. She found out that teachers took parents' involvement seriously if they found out that they had provided children support with their academic achievement at home. However, she also noted that some parents' involvement was not effective because parents were not willing to participate as they thought it was not their duty to help students with homework and that it was the duty for teachers.

2.3 Relationships between Socio-Demographic Characteristics and Perceptions on Parents' Roles in the Learning Process of Children

Effective learning is a product of the interplay of factors that play out in the context of involving teachers, parents and pupils particularly how these stakeholders perceive one's role and that of the others in the learning process. For this to happen, it may depend on socio-demographic factors. For instance, Lam et al. (2012) show that parents' as well as teachers' involvement is the main variable responsible for student motivation and homework engagement. A family with parents and other members of the household who value education tend to help their children with homework, and this, according to Lam et al. (2012), can influence student motivation and school engagement. Parents who provide assistance with homework play a critical role not only in fostering learning, but in creating strategies for time management and problem-solving (Moèet al., 2018). Furthermore, parents who are interested in helping their children with homework are able to predict their children's self-perceptions of competence (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001). This, in turn, motivates children to learn and consequently perform better at school (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001).
According to Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994), parents' involvement in their children's homework helps them develop academic skills for doing good homework. Moreover, parents' involvement in homework promotes children's motivation to engage with their homework and school tasks and do them well. Thus, when parents value homework, children themselves come to value homework and develop a sense of competence which enables them to make efforts in learning activities. Thus, according to Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994), parents' involvement in homework facilitates the motivational resources that enhance children's homework engagement.

It is reported that learners who perceive their teachers as good at preparing learning tasks and assignments tend to take them seriously. For instance, Trautwein and Lüdtke (2007) found that middle and high school students who perceived their homework assignments as well-selected or well-prepared by their teachers reported higher motivation and effort at student and at class level. As noted by Trautwein and Lüdtke (2007), the perceptions of homework quality influence homework expectations and the value ascribed to it, which predicts homework effort.

A study by Rosárioet al. (2019) concluded that the perception by students' perception of the quality of homework seemed to explain achievement since students perceived assignments as well-chosen by the teacher, were interesting, related to the material taught in the class room, and were regarded as useful for understanding the material covered in the class room.

Cunha et al. (2018) studied teachers' conceptions of homework feedback. They were from elementary and middle schools. Teachers conceptualized homework feedback in three directions (i.e., teacher feedback to students, student feedback to teachers, and homework self-feedback). The most common purpose reported by most teachers was teacher monitoring of students' learning, with checking homework completion and checking homework on the board being the most commonly used types of homework feedback in the class room. Their views on feedback varied as they were influenced by their context (experience).

Teachers believe that cooperation between school and parents has a fundamental influence on students' academic achievement (Göktürk & Dinçkal, 2017). Hakyemez (2015) argues that teachers are aware of the importance of parental involvement. Participants in Hakyemez's study indicated that parents' were the first role models of the students, and harmony in attitudes between home and school was important in order to construct an appropriate environment for the students. Michael et al. (2007) noted that family, school, and community partnerships increase resources for student learning, strengthen families and sustain healthier communities.

In Tanzania, owing to the importance of parents' involvement in the learning process and education provision in general, Tanzania, like many countries, recognises this importance, particularly the fact that parents' effective participation is realised if parents are made aware of the role they should play. That is why Tanzania, through its Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 2014, particularly Circular No.3 of 2015 and Circular No.6 of 2016, stipulates, among other things, the roles parents are supposed to play in the context of fee-free education in the country. This means that parents are not to pay for school fees; instead they are to provide school and sports uniforms, provide learning material (e.g. books and pens), provide food for their children attending day schools, pay for their medical and travel expenses to both day and boarding schools, provide mattresses, bedding, personal hygiene materials for those studying in boarding schools and for those staying in hostels (HakiElimu, 2017). Thus, by stipulating how parents can participate by bearing some costs for their children, this policy also recognizes their position in the education of their children.

As noted earlier, if parents' roles are well defined and the parents are aware of them, their involvement becomes effective. This has contributed to improvement in education. For instance, findings by HakiElimu (2017) on the impact of the implementation of the fee-free education Policy in Tanzania, based on primary and secondary schools in Morogoro using qualitative methods specifically the documentary review methods, found that the fee-free education policy had had positive impacts. It had decreased students' dropout rates, helped girl students to keep on with schooling and removed misunderstanding between parents and teachers since students were no longer being dismissed due to lack of school fees.

However, majority of teachers perceive that this policy increases burden to the schools because capitation grants sent by the government to public schools do not meet all the needs of the schools. Additionally, a study by TWAWEZA (2018) further showed that most parents perceived that their roles in their children's learning process were limited to financial contributions. This is contrary to the tenets of parents' involvement which place the parent at the centre of children's learning as the first teacher and the child's first school. Therefore, as Yetunde (2014) maintains, monetary contribution by parents is just one among many roles they play when they are involved in the learning process of their children. This further underscores the point clearly made by scholars on parents' involvement that parents' effective participation for students' effective learning hinges on their perceptions regarding the roles they should play, among other factors. If parents are educated, therefore aware of their roles, they play them well, and vice versa. This paper, therefore, analyses socio-demographic factors particularly in relation to parents', students' and teachers' perceptions regarding the roles parents play in the learning process of their children.

Although the Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 2014, through Circular No. 3 of 2015 seem to recognise the position of parents as important education partners, the practice, especially in establishing various education programmes, seems not to consider the importance of stakeholders' perceptions in the learning process. For example, various policy programmes in education; such as Education for self-reliance (ESR), Universal Primary education (UPE), Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP), through PEDP/SEDP, Literacy and Numeracy Education Support programme (LANES), Education Quality Improvement Programme (EQUIP) and curriculum and education policy improvement; do not seem

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to recognise parents as important actors. The reason given for the omission; according to TIE (2013) and HakiElimu (2017); is that education authorities assume that parents do not participate. Therefore, education authorities' perception on parents' roles seems limited.

The reviewed studies indicate the relationship between perceptions by stakeholders on parents' roles in education provision. They show that perceptions are influenced by socio-demographic factors which, in turn, influence the way parents play their roles in their children's learning process. However, studies done outside Tanzania cannot be generalised to address the objectives of this study owing to the difference in context. Perception is reported to be highly influenced by context resulting into stakeholders having different views on different education matters, parents' involvement being one of them. It, thus, required a specific study in Tanzania to address the relationship between perceptions, socio-demographic factors and parents' involvement.

Additionally, studies conducted in Tanzania such as ones by Shija (2017) and Seni and Onyango (2021), though focused on stakeholders' involvement and or perception, mostly were oriented to students, mainly in secondary schools, rather than in primary schools. Furthermore, contrary to the current study, they did not focus on determining the interplay of socio-demographic factors; perceptions of parents, students, teachers, and parents' involvement. The study on which this paper is based, therefore, sought to analyse teachers', parents' and pupils' perceptions on the roles parents play in the learning process of their children in public primary schools in relation to socio-demographic factors, using Bukoba District.

III. METHODOLOGY

The research was done in Bukoba District, Kagera Region, Tanzania. The region has seven districts namely, Bukoba which has Bukoba Municipality and Bukoba District Councils, Karagwe, Muleba, Biharamulo, Ngara, Kyerwa, and Missenyi. Bukoba District was purposefully selected for the research because the area had the characteristics which matched with the intended study objectives about parents' involvement in their children's learning process in public primary schools in Bukoba District Council. The population for the study was 28,472 people, who included 13,536 parents, 1,164 teachers, 13,536 standard seven pupils in public primary schools, and 236 Village Chairpersons (VC) and Village Executive Officers (VEO) in Bukoba District in 2021. A total sample of 400 participants was drawn from the population (28,472) using Taro Yamane's formula (Yamane, 1967) which is $n = N/[1+N(e)^2]$, where n is the sample, N is a finite population, and e is the sampling error, i.e. 0.05. Accordingly, the sample size was $28,472/[1+28,472\ (0.05)^2] = 399.986 \approx 400$. Simple random sampling was used to select teachers and pupils, but purposive sampling was used to select parents. The sample included 220 pupils, 50 teachers and 130 parents who were actually included in quantitative analysis.

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire as per Walker's et al. (2005) advice. Among other items, the questionnaire had a 16-item index scale which was used to determine respondents' perceptions on the roles of parents in the pupils' learning process. Each of the items was relevant to the title of this paper; for example, the first item was "Parents' involvement in pupils' learning process helps pupils to improve performance and behaviour". There were five alternative answers to each of the 16 items—Strongly Disagree (1 point), Disagree (2 points), Undecided (3 points), Agree (4 points), and Strongly Agree (5 points). Accordingly, the minimum possible points would be 16 if one answered "Strongly Disagree" to each of the items (i.e., 1 x 16 = 16), and the maximum possible points would be 80 if one answered "Strongly Agree" to each of the items (i.e., 5 x 16 = 80).

The reliability of the questionnaire that was used to collect the data was established by running Cronbach's reliability test, whose results showed a Cronbach's Alpha (α) of 0.742, meaning that the items in the questionnaire were reliable as the Cronbach's Alpha (α) was higher than the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Field, 2018). The validity was ascertained if the total variance explained (TVE) was of at least 50% as required (Hair et al., 2010). The variables that were used were valid since the total variance explained was 58.41%, which is above the required minimum value of 50%, while the F-value was 13.43 at $p \leq 0.001$.

The unit of analysis was an individual respondent. Data were coded and analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics software to compute frequencies and per cents, means, standard deviations, and cross-tabulations. Moreover, Kruskal-Wallis test and Man-Whitney U tests were used to compare median points scored by parents, pupils and teachers on the perception scale because the variable was not normally distributed (Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic = 0.066, p = 0.000). Before using descriptively and inferentially the points scored on the perception scale, as explained above, Cronbach's reliability test was run to determine whether the 16 items in the scale were reliable as measures of the perception. The results showed a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.729, based on standardized items, which means that the items in the scale were reliable as the Alpha statistic was higher than the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Field, 2018).

Research ethics (Creswell, 2013) were observed by obtaining a permit from Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) which was presented to the Regional Administrative Secretary (RAS) of Kagera Region and District Administrative Secretary (DAS) of Bukoba District, who authorized the District Executive Director (DED) to issue a permission letter to collect data from the schools. Also,

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honest consent of respondents was observed by assuring them of their anonymity regarding their responses.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Socio-Demographic Variables of the Respondents

Ten (10) socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents were analysed, including three which were recorded at the scale level. Descriptive statistics of the socio-demographic variables that were recorded at the scale level are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of socio-demographic variables measured at the scale level (n = 400)

Variables described	Parents (130)			Pupils (220)			Teachers (50)			All (n = 400)		
	Min.	Max.	Mean	Min.	Max.	Mean	Min.	Max.	Mean	Min.	Max.	Mean
Age	20	89	38.4	11	14	13.7	25	58	39.4	11	89	24.7
Household size	1	14	6.2	1	14	6.5	1	12	5.9	1	14	6.3
Experience with school	1	72	13.8	1	8	6.6	1	27	9.5	1	72	9.4

Among the parents, the mean age was 38.4 years, while the minimum and maximum ages were 20 and 89 years, respectively. Among teachers, the mean age was 39.4, while the minimum and maximum ages were 25 years and 58 years, respectively. On average, the teachers were slightly older than the parents. This is logical since many parents (73.7%) were found to be under or 35 years of age and the teachers worked until their compulsory retirement age of 60 years.

The average household sizes for parents and teachers were 6.2 and 5.9, respectively. In both groups, the minimum household size was 1 person, while for the parents and teachers the maximum household size was 14 and 12 people, respectively. These results mean that teachers' household sizes were slightly smaller than those of parents. This is logical because most of the employed people, teachers inclusive, are aware on family planning, very cautious on number of children and associated relatives to harbour in a family and the like, unlike most of their counter parts who, in one way or another, believe that bigger household size bears human power which is useful for production. On average, the experiences of parents and teachers with the schools which the parents' children were attending were 13.8 years and 9.5 years, respectively. In both groups, the minimum experience was of 1 year, while for the parents and teachers the maximum the experiences were of 72 and 27 years, respectively. The other seven socio-demographic variables were recorded as categorical variables, and the results about them are presented in Table.2 in terms of numbers and frequencies.

Table 2: Socio-demographic variables of the respondents

Socio-demographic variables		Parents (n = 130)		Pupils (n = 220)		Teachers (n = 50)		All (n = 400)	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Home to school distance	2 km and above	69	53.5	97	44.5	34	68.0	200	50.4
	Below 2 km	60	46.5	121	55.5	16	32.0	197	49.6
Parents' education level	Primary education	122	94.6	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Secondary and more	7	5.4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Languages the parent spoke	Kiswahili	112	86.2	-	-	-	-	-	-
	English	18	13.8	-	-	-	-	-	-
Parents' employments status	Unemployed	20	16.8	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Employed	99	83.2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sex	Female	76	58.5	119	54.1	20	40.0	215	53.8
	Male	54	41.5	101	45.9	30	60.0	185	46.3
Marital status	Unmarried	30	23.4	-	-	5	10.2	35	19.8
	Married	98	76.6	-	-	44	89.8	142	80.2
School urbanization level	Rural	92	70.8	127	57.7	29	58.0	248	62.0
	Peri-urban	38	29.2	93	42.3	21	42.0	152	38.0

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4.2 Respondents' Perceptions on Parents Roles in their Children's Learning Process

As detailed in the methodology section of this paper, parents', pupils', and teachers' perceptions of the roles parents play in the learning process of their children in public primary schools in Bukoba District Council was measured using an index summated scale which comprised 16 items on which one would score a minimum of 16 points and a maximum of 80 points. The mean overall and median points scored by all the 400 respondents were 59.9 and 60, respectively. The minimum and maximum points scored were 40 and 76, respectively. Among the parents, pupils and teachers; the mean points scored were 59.0, 61.0, and 58.6, respectively. The median points scored by the same groups, respectively, were 58, 62 and 58. The overall points scored were checked for normality using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normality since the sample was greater than 50 cases and the test is a more robust than testing normality using a normal distribution curve. The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test are interpreted as follows: If the test is non-significant ($p > 0.05$), then the distribution is normal (Field, 2018). The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results showed that the points were not normally distributed (Kolmogorov-Smirnov = 0.066, $p = 0.000$). Because the overall points were not normally distributed, they were compared among the three groups of respondents using Kruskal-Wallis test, which is the model of choice in this case; if the variable had been normally distributed, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) would have been used.

Using Kruskal-Wallis test, the points scored were significantly different among parents (Med = 58), pupils (Med = 62) and teachers (Med = 58) at the 5% level [$H_{(2)} = 8.926$, $p = 0.012$). The three groups of the respondents were compared using a series of Mann-Whitney U test to compare the scores by parents and pupils, parents and teachers, and pupils and teachers to find out in which of those groups there was more difference, based on effect sizes. The aim was to get standardized test statistics to use with the respective sub-samples to compute effect sizes since Kruskal-Wallis does not compute them automatically. The effect size tells us how meaningful the difference between groups is; it indicates the practical significance of a research outcome. A large effect size means that a research finding has practical significance, while a small effect size indicates limited practical applications. Specifically, according to Field (2018),an effect size of ≤ 0.2 is small; an effect size of more than 0.2 to 0.4 is medium; and an effect size of greater than 0.4 is large. The formula for computing effect size, r, in this case is r = standardized test statistics ÷ $\sqrt{n}$, where r is the effect size, and n is the relevant sample. The results of the Mann-Whitney tests, together with the effect sizes calculated from them, are presented in Table 2.3.

Table 3: Results of Mann-Whitney tests and effect sizes derived from them

Statistics	Parents (Med. = 58) vs pupils (Med. = 62)	Parents (Med. = 58) vs teachers (Med. = 58)	Pupils (Med. = 62) vs teachers (Med. = 58)
n	350	180	270
Test Statistic (Mann-Whitney U statistic)	11 957.500	3 229.000	4 417.500
Standard error	913.952	312.802	497.977
Standardised test statistic	-2.563	-0.067	-2.174
Asymptomatic Sig. (2-sided test)	0.010	0.946	0.030
Effect size (r) = $z/\sqrt{n}$	-0.137	-0.005	-0.132

In Table 3, although the differences in the scores by parents and pupils and in the scores by pupils and teachers were significantly different ($p = 0.008$ and $p = 0.041$, respectively), the effect sizes in the two pairs and in the group of parents vs teachers were less than 0.2, which means that the differences in all the three pairs were small. However, the apparent significant difference between parents and pupils and between pupils and teachers can be explained by the fact that pupils had a broader perception of their parents' roles at home and parents' follow-ups at school. Such parents' roles include reminding their school children (pupils) to work on their homework or assisting them to work on their homework, appreciating the school work that the child does well and motivating them to do more, making arrangements with a part time teacher for extra learning, providing them with school uniforms and other materials like books, pencils and pens, talking to children about school events or activities, encouraging them to work and study hard both at school and at home, being a role model, contributing for their school meals, contacting with the class teacher to ask about the pupil's progress, etc. Contrary to that, parents and teachers perceived the roles of parents in terms of such aspects as attending school meetings, collecting pupils' academic reports, contributing

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to pupils' school meals, attending teachers' call for the child's unwanted behaviour, and contributing to school construction programmes. The finding that differences in the points scored by parents and teachers did not differ is explained by the fact that both parents' and teachers' perceptions on parents' roles were more or less the same.

The findings above regarding pupils' and teachers' perceptions are in line with the findings by some reviewed studies for this paper which indicated that stakeholders; in this case parents, pupils and teachers; perceived parents' roles in their children's education differently as a result of socio-demographic factors. For instance, Grolnick & Slowiaczek (1994) show that parents' role is perceived differently by stakeholders. Even the very concept of parents' role is not commonly defined by scholars. Some researchers define parents' roles as the parents' dedication to a good deal of resources to the children's education (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994). It is also regarded as parents' activities performed at home or school regarding the children's education (Hoover-Dampsey & Sandler, 1997). Ryan et al. (2010) highlight that parent's role reflects parents' communication with the school staff regarding the students' education in addition to their involvement in academic events. Therefore, parent's role on the child's learning is mainly built upon interactions between parents and teachers, and parents and students (Morgan, 1992). Therefore, as parents' involvement in their roles is a multidimensional concept; perceptions by students, teachers and parents on what the roles of parents in the learning process of their children' are, are also complex.

4.3 Association between Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents and their Perceptions on the Roles of Parents in their Children's Learning Process

Cross-tabulation and chi-square tests were used to determine associations between socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents and their perceptions on the roles of parents in their children's learning, assuming the former would explain the latter. The assumed response variable - Perceptions on the roles of parents in their children's learning - was first grouped into lower perception (Lowest to 60 points) and higher perception (more than 60 to 80 points). The cut-off point was based on the median that was 60; hence the respondents were divided into two almost equal groups of lower perception (n = 208, 52.0%) and higher perception (n = 192, 48.0%) for obtaining more realistic cross-tabulation results, which are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Association between socio-demographic factors and perceptions of perceptions on the roles of parents in their children's learning process (n = 400)

Socio-demographic variables		Two groups of perception		Pearson Chi-Square	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Phi-Value
		Lower (%)	Higher (%)			
Home to school distance (n = 397)	2 km and above	59.0	41.0	7.598**	0.006	0.138
	Below 2 km	45.2	54.8			
Parents education level (n = 392)	Primary education	51.8	48.2	0.001	0.974	0.002
	Secondary and more education	51.5	48.5			
Languages the parents spoke (n = 400)	Kiswahili	51.1	48.9	0.565	0.452	-0.038
	English	55.8	44.2			
Parents' employment status (n = 388)	Unemployed	47.7	52.3	5.256*	0.022	-0.116
	Employed	59.6	40.4			
Sex of parent (n = 400)	Female	45.4	54.6	5.997*	0.014	0.122
	Male	57.7	42.3			
Marital status of parent (n = 393)	Unmarried	47.4	54.6	6.982**	0.008	-0.133
	Married	61.3	38.7			
School urbanization level (n = 400)	Rural	41.5	58.5	28.650***	0.000	-0.268
	Peri-urban	69.1	30.9			

*Significantly associated at the 5% level; **Significantly associated at the 1% level; ***Significantly associated at the 0.1% level

A good perception was associated with higher frequencies since "Agree" and "Strongly Agree" were assigned higher scores of 4 and 5 points respectively. In Table 4, School urbanization level and perceptions on the roles of parents in their children's learning process were significantly associated at the 0.1% level (p = 0.000). On this finding, more respondents (58.5%) living in rural areas had higher perception compared to fewer respondents in peri-urban areas (30.9%) who had higher perception. This means that higher perception was more associated with rural areas. This is logical since many parents who live in urban areas are more engaged in economic activities which consume much

of their time and those living in rural areas will find it easier to engage in their children's education because they have schedules which can allow them time to do follow ups about their school children. This is supported by Terriquez (2007 that parents' job influences their roles in the learning process of their children. Furthermore, the pupils in rural areas commonly attend schools within their localities, hence making it easier for their parents to access their schools with ease, unlike their counterparts who may travel some kilometers to reach the schools where their children attend; thus this limits them from actively playing their roles. From the results, the null hypothesis that 'parents', pupil', and teachers' socio-demographic factors are not significantly associated with their perceptions on the roles parents play in their children's learning process' was rejected with respect to home to school distance, parents' employment status, sex of the parent, marital status of the parent, and school urbanization level because the p-values associated with them were ≤ 0.05.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study findings indicated that socio-demographic factors explain students', teachers' and parents' perceptions on parents' roles in the learning process of their children. The findings indicated that socio-demographic factors depend on context in such a way that the expected factors may turn out to be insignificantly related with perceptions because other factors are at play. On the basis of the findings, the conclusions and recommendations below were drawn.

From the findings that the overall mean and the median points scored by all the 400 respondents were 59.9 and 60, respectively, while the maximum possible score was 80, it is concluded that the respondents' perceptions were high. Also, on the basis of the findings that the median points scored by parents and pupils on the scale that was used to measure perceptions were significantly different, which was the case for the median points scored by pupils and teachers, it is concluded that perceptions on the roles that parents play in their children's learning process differ much between parents and pupils and between teachers and pupils which. As earlier explained, the plausible reason for the differences is that pupils had a broader perception on their parents' roles in their children's learning process at home and their follow-ups at school than both parents and teachers. Due to the findings that home to school distance, parents' employment status and school urbanization level were significantly associated with perception on the roles parents play in their children's learning process, it is concluded that if those factors are conducive, perceptions about the roles parents play for their children's learning process improve.

In view of the above conclusions, the following recommendations are given. Primary education stakeholders; including parents, pupils, and teachers; are urged to keep up their perceptions about parents' roles in their children's education process, which are already high. Education stakeholders such as teachers, public primary schools' committees, local government authorities at the village, ward and council levels, religious leaders and others should improve and sensitize parents to actively play their roles on their children's learning process and thus raise their perceptions on continuous bases. Education planners and local government authorities should scale-up interventions to reduce distances from home to school by building more primary schools.

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