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Original Article

### School Inspection and Learners' Achievement in Secondary Schools in Uganda: A Case of Kasese District

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**Keywords:**

Inspection,  
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School.

School inspection is a critical quality assurance mechanism designed to improve educational standards and ensure compliance with policies for better student outcomes. Although the government of Uganda has made significant investments in education with a focus on improving access, quality, and outcome, there have been noticeable deficiencies in learners' achievement manifested in the failure rate in the Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) countrywide. The study assessed the influence of school inspection on learners' academic achievement in secondary schools in Uganda, using Kasese District as a case study. A mixed methods approach was used involving convergent parallel design. A sample of 326 respondents was investigated from a target population of 850 respondents. Questionnaires were used as the main data collection tool. Pearson Correlation and Regression Analysis were conducted to establish the relationship between school inspections and learners' academic achievement. The study findings revealed that there was a statistically significant positive relationship between the effectiveness of school inspection activities and learners' achievement, with a Pearson correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.358$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). This suggested a moderate positive association, implying that as the effectiveness of inspection activities improves, learners' achievement also tends to improve. The regression analysis revealed a moderate relationship between school inspection and learners with  $R=0.391a$ . The study recommends enhanced effectiveness of school inspections by ensuring that inspections are comprehensive to lead to actionable improvements, and robust follow-up procedures to track the implementation of inspection recommendations to improve learners' achievement.

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**INTRODUCTION**

School inspection plays a pivotal role in the education systems of most governments across the globe, serving as a mechanism to ensure quality assurance, compliance with standards, and continuous improvement in teaching and learning (Mutabaruka *et al.*, 2018). Secondary education plays a fundamental role in preparing students for higher education, the workforce, and beyond. It is a critical phase where students develop essential skills, knowledge, and values that shape their prospects (Mutabaruka *et al.*, 2018). In Europe, inspection processes are used to assess and hold schools responsible for accomplishing goals related to student achievement and educational quality. Some educational stakeholders see inspections as a way to improve quality and student learning results (Ehren *et al.*, 2013). To stimulate school improvement, inspectors evaluate schools using an established set of standards and provide feedback on the school's strengths and flaws during inspection visits and reports (Ehren, 2016), and schools are supposed to take this feedback and rectify their deficiencies (Coe, 2002).

The history of school inspection according to Lyanga, & Chen (2020) essentially began in France during the Napoleonic era in the 18th century. Later, in the 19th century, the concept of school inspections extended to other European nations. In the case of England, Her Majesty's inspectorate conducted the initial inspection services and was accepted as one of the methods of accountability in education (Ofsted, 2013).

Chilangilo (2022) argued from an African perspective that inspection is an old notion in management in Kenya, with the main concept being authoritarian, aiming at capturing employees red-handed; a fault-finding mentality in administration; and a one-time fact-finding

exercise. As a result, in Kenya, school inspection appears to be considered a process of reviewing other people's work in order to guarantee that bureaucratic regulations and procedures are followed and loyalty to higher authorities is maintained (Chilangilo, 2022). However, this inspection perspective ignores the professional interests and demands of teachers. Inspection processes undertaken with this viewpoint in mind by both instructors and inspectors may be ineffective in promoting educational quality or improving teaching/learning in educational institutions. Tanzania's school inspection system is based on the educational evaluation of colonial authority, specifically the British method. Inspectors in Tanzania are responsible for monitoring instructors and their classroom performance (Grauwe, 2007).

In Uganda's education system, the inspectorate is one of the organs of the Ministry of Education structure. Education in Uganda is considered a key driver for national development, and the role of school inspection in shaping learners' academic achievement cannot be understated (MoES, 2016). In 2008, the Ugandan government formed the Directorate of Education Standards (DES) within the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoE&S) to conduct school evaluations, capture the best practices, and then share them with the education system and other stakeholders. The goal of developing an inspectorate structure in the Education Management System now places the Directorate of Education Standards (DES) fully responsible for setting standards, ensuring quality, and evaluating educational performance (MoES, 2013). The inspection process aims to assess the effectiveness of schools in delivering quality education by evaluating factors such as pedagogical procedures, curriculum implementation, resource utilization, and overall

school management (MoES, 2012). In secondary education, particularly in Kasese district, the impact of these inspections on learners' achievements has garnered significant attention.

Secondary education in Uganda faces several challenges, including overcrowded classrooms, inadequate teaching materials, and varying levels of teacher competence, and these challenges often impact learners' achievement. School inspections, when conducted effectively, can address these issues by identifying gaps and recommending actionable solutions (MoES, 2012). By promoting accountability and providing constructive feedback to teachers, inspections have the potential to create an environment that fosters improved academic outcomes (Micheal, 2022). The Directorate of Education Standards (DES) under the Ministry of Education and Sports is tasked with overseeing the inspection of secondary schools to ensure compliance with established educational benchmarks (MoES, 2016). The effectiveness of these inspections in influencing learners' academic achievement has been a subject of ongoing research and debate.

Recent studies have highlighted challenges in the current inspection practices. For instance, Bagaya *et al.* (2020) found that inspection practices in secondary schools in Western Uganda were perceived as largely ineffective, with inspectors often adhering to traditional notions of control rather than fostering improvement. Similarly, a study by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) (2023) emphasized that while inspections are a core mechanism for school improvement, their outcomes are highly dependent on context-specific factors, including the unique needs and challenges of individual schools.

Despite these challenges, the potential of effective school inspections to enhance academic achievement remains significant. When conducted with a focus on supporting teaching and learning processes, inspections can identify areas for development, promote accountability, and provide constructive feedback to teachers. This supportive approach can lead to improved

teaching practices and, consequently, better learners' achievement (Mutabaruka *et al.*, 2018).

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of school inspections on students' academic achievement in Ugandan secondary schools, with a focus on Kasese District. It looked at how existing inspection processes influence teacher quality, resource allocation, and overall student accomplishment. By analyzing the strengths and flaws of the current inspection system, the study hopes to provide insights into how school inspections might be optimized to improve educational outcomes in Uganda.

### Problem Statement

Ensuring quality education in secondary schools is a critical concern for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders across the globe. School inspections are a key mechanism for monitoring and improving educational standards, with the expectation that they positively impact learners' academic achievement (Micheal, 2022). In Uganda, school inspection is an indispensable component of the education quality assurance network and resources have been allocated to that effect. School inspections are conducted by the Ministry of Education and Sports, Directorate of Education Standards (DES) to evaluate the quality of education and provide feedback to schools for improvement (MoES, 2017). Research has shown that school inspections can have both positive and negative effects on teaching and learning (Ehren, & Shakleton, 2016). In Kasese District, school inspections are conducted by the District Education Office, inspectorate department. While some studies have investigated the impact of school inspection on school improvement (Matthews, & Sammons, 2019, Mugambi, & Wekesa, 2023, Gareth Evans, 2023), few have examined the specific effects on learners' achievements. Despite the regular conduct of school inspections in Kasese District, learners' achievements in secondary schools remain a concern. The district has consistently recorded low performance in national examinations, with some schools failing to meet the minimum standards. This situation may result in low

workforce productivity, high unemployment rate, increased poverty levels, high dropout rates, and increased dependency rate, among others, if there is no intervention undertaken. Based on the above, the study sought to examine whether school inspections lead to tangible improvements in learners' achievement and to identify the conditions under which inspections are most effective so as to provide insights into how school inspection policies can be enhanced to foster better educational outcomes.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Theoretical Framework

This investigation was led by Edwin Locke and Gary Latham's Goal Setting Theory, which was developed in the late 1960s. The theory proposes that specific and difficult goals, together with proper feedback, improve employee performance (Gelfand *et al.*, 2023). According to the notion, clear objectives encourage people to work hard, stick to their goals, and devise tactics to achieve them (Kim, & Latham, 2024). As a result, effective school inspections determine whether schools have established specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals for both instructors and students. Clear objectives guide instructional practices and learning activities, aligning them with desired academic outcomes (Micheal, 2022). In the context of secondary education, particularly in Uganda, Goal Setting Theory can be applied to understand how school inspections influence learners' academic achievement through the feedback given by the inspectors regarding adherence to curriculum standards and their effectiveness in delivering content. This may help teachers develop (SMART) goals for the students, create a sense of accountability, and set personal development goals, thereby improving their instructional methods to address the gaps and positively impact student learning outcomes.

### Empirical Literature

Learners' achievement refers to the measurable performance outcomes that indicate the extent to which students have accomplished specific

educational goals within instructional environments such as schools, colleges, and universities (Mugambi, & Wekesa, 2023). These goals often encompass cognitive objectives, like the acquisition of knowledge in subjects such as numeracy, literacy, science, and history, and the development of critical thinking skills. Academic achievement is commonly assessed through various methods, including grades, standardized test scores, and evaluations of skill proficiency. These assessments aim to capture a student's ability to meet established performance criteria and learning objectives (Mugambi, & Wekesa, 2023).

Gareth Evans (2023) studied how educational administrators perceive and react to inspection results in Wales in an effort to better influence policy development. The study found that participants were more concerned about inspectors' conduct than the decisions they made. While school leaders agreed that inspection was a necessary process for restoring and maintaining public trust, as well as improving student achievement, they were unanimous that inspectors did not communicate effectively with school staff, were overly authoritarian, and at times disrespectful. This fostered a 'we versus them' attitude among school leaders, instilling sentiments of rejection, defeat, tension, and terror. The study also demonstrated that both the inspector and the inspected engage in acts of fabrication, calling into doubt the effectiveness of inspection as a robust accountability system. Whereas the study was conducted in a foreign and established country, and focused on the general outcomes of inspection, the current study will be conducted in a developing country, focusing on the contribution of inspection to learners' achievement.

Furthermore, the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER, 2023) highlights that the impact of inspections on school improvement is contingent upon context-specific factors. This underscores the importance of tailoring inspection processes to the unique needs of each school, setting appropriate goals, and providing constructive feedback to foster



educational enhancement as well as learners' achievement. The current study partly responds to this finding focusing on Kasese District secondary schools by evaluating how school inspection processes have been applied in different contexts and their influence on the learners' achievement in those unique contexts.

Busingye (2020) assessed the influence of school inspections on the standards of teaching and learning in Uganda's lower secondary schools. The findings highlighted challenges such as inadequate funding, geographical constraints, and heavy workloads for district inspectors, which impede the effectiveness of school inspections. The study concluded that fostering strong relationships between inspection teams and teachers, alongside increased government investment in inspection activities, is essential for enhancing teaching and learning outcomes. The current study was a response to this call to establish the extent of engagement and coordination between the inspectorate team and the school stakeholders for improved learners' outcomes.

Additionally, a 2023 assessment by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) examined the regulations and procedures of school inspections in Ugandan secondary schools. The findings emphasized that the success of inspections in fostering educational development is greatly determined by context-specific factors, such as the unique needs and challenges of different schools. It proposed strong collaboration among stakeholders at various levels of the education system. The current study was a response to this call to establish the extent of stakeholders' engagement and collaboration at different levels of the inspection process for school improvement as well as learners' achievement.

Bagaya *et al.* (2020) examined inspection practices in secondary schools in Western Uganda. The research revealed that these practices were largely perceived as ineffective, with inspectors often adhering to traditional, control-oriented methods. The study emphasized

the need for a paradigm shift towards more supportive and developmental inspection approaches to foster meaningful improvements in teaching and learning. The researchers further explored the influence of secondary school inspections on lesson planning in Western Uganda. The findings indicated that inspections did not significantly impact lesson planning practices. The study highlighted the necessity for effective communication between inspectors and teachers before, during, and after inspections to achieve substantial improvements in educational processes (Bagaya *et al.*, 2020). The current study sought to examine the influence of school inspection on learners' achievement in secondary schools in Kasese District, which is an outcome of effective communication between inspectors and teachers before, during, and after inspections.

These studies collectively suggest that while school inspections have the potential to positively influence learners' achievements in secondary schools, their effectiveness is contingent upon adequate resources, effective communication, and systemic collaboration. Addressing these factors is imperative to harness the full potential of school inspections in enhancing educational outcomes.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was situated within the pragmatism paradigm, which holds that there are various realities and many distinct ways of reading the world and thus comprehending research (Kivunja, & Kuyini, 2017). A convergent parallel mixed study design was used, with both qualitative and quantitative methodologies used to gain breadth, depth of understanding, and corroboration of school inspection and student achievement (Creswell, 2009). This design was chosen because it is inexpensive, allows for quick data collection, and produces a comprehensive result that may be applied to a broader population (Cohen *et al.*, 2007).

The study targeted a population of 01 District Education Officer, 08 inspectorate officials, 34 headteachers, 34 deputy headteachers, 34 directors of studies, and 288 teachers in all the secondary schools in Kasese District, Western

Uganda. The sample for the quantitative component consisted of 326 respondents, including 30 Deputy headteachers, 30 directors of studies, and 288 teachers from 30 secondary schools Kasese District of Western Uganda. The sample for the qualitative component, on the other hand, consisted of 38 respondents composed of 30 Headteachers, 7 inspectorate officials, and 1 District Education Officer. The sample size was determined using Krejcie, & Morgan's 1970 table of sample sizes. The researcher used purposive sampling to select the District Education Officer, Inspectorate officials, headteachers, deputy headteachers, and directors of studies. The schools were selected using stratified proportionate sampling, and the teachers were chosen using simple random selection. Data was gathered using a five-point Likert scale questionnaire.

Establishing a Content Validity Index (CVI) for the instruments guaranteed the accuracy of the data. The scale CVI values of 0.903 and 0.950 for the questionnaire and interview guide, computed using the S-CVI/Ave technique, were all higher than the acceptable threshold of 0.70 (Amin, 2005), indicating strong content validity. The pilot test resulted in a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.925,

which was statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$ , showing acceptable internal consistency.

The Pearson Correlation test and regression analysis were conducted to assess whether there was a significant relationship between the effectiveness of pre-inspection, on-site inspection, and post-inspection activities and learners' achievement based on the UCE results. Thematic Content Analysis (TCA), which involves systematic coding and classifying data into themes and subthemes of text data in order for researchers to grasp social reality from the original meanings stated by key informants, was utilized to examine the qualitative data (Saldana, 2009).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Table 1 presents the results of the Pearson correlation between the effectiveness of school inspection activities and learners' achievement. The objective of this study was to determine whether there is a significant relationship between the effectiveness of inspection activities (across pre-inspection, on-site, and post-inspection phases) and the academic achievement of learners, as measured by UCE results.

**Table 1: Correlation between Effectiveness of Inspection Activities and Learners' Achievement**

			Effectiveness of inspection Activities	Level of learners' achievement
Effectiveness of inspection Activities	Pearson Correlation		1	.358
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000
	N		288	288
Level of learners' achievement	Pearson Correlation		.358	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
	N		288	288

The Pearson correlation coefficient between the effectiveness of inspection activities and learners' achievement is 0.358, with a p-value of 0.000 (which is less than the significance level of 0.05). This indicates a moderate positive correlation between the two variables, meaning that as the effectiveness of inspection activities increases, there is a tendency for learners' achievement to also increase. In other words, schools where inspection activities are perceived as more

effective also tend to have better learners' achievement, as reflected by the learners' UCE results. The significance value (0.000) suggests that this relationship is statistically significant, meaning it did not occur by chance.

The results of this correlation analysis suggest that school inspection activities have a moderate, positive relationship with learners' achievement. This finding indicates that the quality and effectiveness of inspection activities may

influence learners' academic outcomes. In practical terms, this implies that when teachers and school staff perceive inspection activities as effective, whether through improved feedback, better resource allocation, or more targeted support, learners' achievement improves. This may be because effective inspection activities provide clearer guidance to teachers, highlight areas for improvement, and help ensure that necessary educational resources and strategies are in place. Also, when inspections are constructive, teachers may feel more accountable and supported, leading to improvements in teaching practices, which, in turn, enhancements learners' achievement.

However, while the correlation is statistically significant, it is only moderate in strength, implying that other factors such as teaching quality, classroom resources, and school leadership, among others, may also contribute to the learners' achievement. This result calls for future research that could focus on exploring these additional factors and their interactions with inspection effectiveness to provide a more thoughtful of the variables influencing learners' academic achievement in secondary schools.

These findings were supported by the respondents during interviews who observed that;

*The guidance given by the inspectors during inspection may gradually influence teachers' practice and, consequently the learners' achievement. However, the learners' achievement may not entirely be attributed to*

*school inspections because they do not have much concerning classroom activities, especially teachers' practice, and learners' achievement since they spend limited time in school.*

Other respondents observed that;

*Whereas inspections would have been essential in influencing learners' achievement, its influence is minimal given that the inspectors only identify gaps and offer no solutions. Some gaps identified require substantial resources like putting up well-equipped science and computer laboratories, which some of our schools, especially private ones, may not be in a position to obtain soon. Additionally, inspections are infrequent, inspectors may take a year or two without reaching our schools, and some inspectors do not assess teachers in the classrooms teaching as well as check learners' books, claiming that they have very limited time amidst huge numbers of schools.*

### **Regression Analysis on the Influence of School Inspection Activities on Learners' Achievement**

Table 2 presents the results of the regression analysis examining the relationship between the effectiveness of school inspection activities (pre-inspection, on-site, and post-inspection) and learners' achievement, highlighting the significance and impact of each inspection phase on learners' achievement.

**Table 2: Regression Analysis on the Influence of School Inspection Activities on Learners' Achievement**

<b>Model Summary</b>				
<b>Model</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
1	0.391 <sup>a</sup>	0.153	0.144	0.225
a. Predictors: (Constant), Mean Effectiveness of Post-Inspection Activities, Mean Effectiveness of onsite Inspection Activities, Mean Effectiveness of Pre-Inspection Activities				

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.912	0.317		2.874	0.004
	Mean Effectiveness of Pre-Inspection Activities	0.165	0.110	0.119	1.510	0.013
	Mean Effectiveness of Onsite Inspection Activities	0.353	0.121	0.232	.440	0.040
	Mean Effectiveness of Post-Inspection Activities	0.515	0.124	0.321	4.151	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Level of learners' achievement

The model summary in Table 2 provides an overview of the regression analysis, examining how school inspection activities impact learners' academic achievement. The R-value of 0.391 indicates a moderate positive relationship between the predictors (the effectiveness of pre-inspection, on-site inspection, and post-inspection activities) and the dependent variable, learners' achievement. This suggests that while there is a correlation, other factors might also contribute to learners' achievement. The R Square value of 0.153 implies that the model explains 15.3% of the variance in learners' academic achievement. While this is a meaningful relationship, it also indicates that a significant portion of the variance is influenced by other factors not included in the model. The Adjusted R Square of 0.144 adjusts for the number of predictors, slightly refining the explanatory power of the model. Lastly, the Standard Error of the Estimate is 0.225, which indicates the average deviation of the observed learners' achievement scores from the predicted values, showing the fit of the model to the data.

The coefficients in Table 2 provide further details on the contribution of each inspection phase to learners' achievement. The constant value of 0.912 represents the baseline level of learners' achievement when all inspection activities are perceived to have no effect. The coefficient for pre-inspection activities is 0.165, with a p-value of 0.013, which is less than 0.05, indicating that pre-inspection activities have a statistically significant positive effect on learners' achievement. This means that the effectiveness of

pre-inspection activities is significantly related to improvements in learners' achievement. The coefficient of 0.165 indicates a positive relationship, suggesting that where the teachers perceive pre-inspection activities as more effective, learners' achievement is high.

For on-site inspection activities, the coefficient is 0.353, and the p-value of 0.040 indicates that this phase has a statistically significant positive effect on learners' achievement. However, the beta value of 0.232 is relatively small, suggesting that while on-site inspection activities are beneficial, their influence on learners' achievement is more modest compared to other phases.

The most notable finding comes from post-inspection activities, where the coefficient is 0.515, with a highly significant p-value of 0.000. This suggests a strong positive influence on learners' achievement. The beta value of 0.321 further emphasizes that effective post-inspection activities have a substantial impact on improving academic outcomes. Post-inspection activities, such as feedback and interventions, appear to have the most direct and impactful role in improving learners' achievement. This suggests that when post-inspection activities are perceived as effective, they provide significant support to students and teachers leading to improved learners' achievement.

## DISCUSSION

The correlation analysis results show a statistically significant positive association



between the effectiveness of school inspection operations and learner achievement, as indicated by UCE scores. The Pearson correlation value ( $r = 0.358$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) indicates a moderate positive link, meaning that as the effectiveness of inspection activities improves, so does learners' achievement. These findings concur with Grauwe (2007), who posits that pre-inspection activities typically involve reviewing school documentation, identifying areas for focus, and setting expectations for the inspection process. The positive correlation suggests that when schools are well-prepared for inspections, they may take proactive measures to improve teaching quality, resource allocation, and adherence to educational standards, leading to better learner achievement (Grauwe, 2007). Given the aforementioned, it becomes evident that, whereas school inspections contribute to learners' achievement, its contribution is minimal, suggesting that there are other mediating factors such as teacher motivation, school leadership, and resource availability. Conversely, while inspections aim to improve education quality for learners' achievement, they may also create stress among teachers, encourage superficial compliance rather than meaningful changes, or highlight systemic issues without providing adequate solutions. Therefore, understanding these complexities is vital for making policy recommendations that ensure inspections serve as a tool for sustainable educational improvement for learners' achievement rather than a mere accountability measure.

Moreover, Chapman (2001) mentions that on-site inspections involve direct assessment of teaching practices, classroom management, and overall school administration. Effective school inspections can provide immediate feedback to teachers and administrators, promoting improvements in lesson delivery and curriculum implementation. The correlation results suggest that schools that receive effective on-site evaluations tend to perform better academically. Post-inspection activities, including feedback sessions, recommendations, and monitoring of implementation, play a critical role in sustaining

school improvements (De Grauwe, 2004). Therefore, schools that act on inspection recommendations are likely to experience a positive impact on learners' achievement, as suggested by the significant correlation found in the study.

The R-value (0.391) suggests a moderate positive relationship between the effectiveness of pre-inspection, on-site inspection, and post-inspection activities with learners' academic achievement. This aligns with studies by Ehren, & Visscher (2008), who argued that well-structured school inspections contribute to improved educational outcomes by ensuring accountability, promoting quality teaching, and encouraging school improvement efforts. However, the moderate correlation also suggests that while school inspections play a critical role in improving educational quality and learners' achievement, other variables contribute significantly to learners' achievement. Variables such as teacher competence, student socio-economic background, school leadership, and resource availability may play a substantial and complementary role in shaping learners' achievement. Furthermore, the correlation may not imply causation and high-performing schools may be already well-managed and well-resourced, making them more likely to perform better regardless of inspections.

The R Square value (0.153) implies that school inspection activities explain only 15.3% of the variance in learners' achievement. This finding is consistent with research by Chapman (2001), who argues that school effectiveness is influenced by multiple factors, including teacher quality, school leadership, parental involvement, and student motivation. While inspections provide external oversight and guidance, the actual implementation of recommendations and other in-school factors may have a more direct impact on learning outcomes. The relatively low explanatory power of the model suggests that educational stakeholders should not rely solely on inspection activities but should integrate other interventions, such as teacher professional development and curriculum enhancement, to improve academic achievement. Besides this, the inspection

activities in the different phases may not be implemented equally, thus, (pre-inspection, on-site, and post-inspection). This may cause disparities in their impact on learners' achievement. For instance, post-inspection activities such as follow-up support, policy enforcement, and resource allocation may be critical in ensuring that recommended improvements are implemented. Also, it becomes apparent that contextual variations may influence school inspection effectiveness. For example, the impact of school inspections may differ based on school type (public or private), geographic location (urban vs. rural), and existing institutional capacity. If inspections are to be a key policy tool for improving education quality and learners' achievement, they must be tailored to address the unique challenges faced by different schools rather than applying a one-size-fits-all approach.

Finally, the stakeholder perceptions of the inspection process have a big connotation with the effectiveness of school inspection. For instance, the teachers', school leaders', and students' view of the role of inspections in fostering academic improvement is indispensable in determining whether the recommendations of the inspection process will be accepted or rejected. If inspections are perceived as punitive rather than developmental, their effectiveness in driving sustainable school improvement as well as learners' achievement may be limited.

The Adjusted R Square (0.144) refines the model's explanatory power by accounting for the number of predictors, indicating a slight reduction in the variance explained after adjustment. This slight decrease reflects the possibility of additional variables influencing learners' achievement, which are not captured in the model. Similar findings have been highlighted by Rosenthal (2004), who emphasizes that while external evaluation mechanisms like inspections are essential, internal school factors such as teacher effectiveness and student engagement often play a more critical role in academic success.

The Standard Error of the Estimate (0.225) provides an estimate of the average deviation of actual learners' achievement scores from the predicted values. This measure indicates how well the model fits the data. A lower standard error suggests that the model makes reasonably accurate predictions, but since the error is not negligible, it reinforces the idea that other factors beyond inspection activities contribute to learners' academic achievement (Field, 2018).

According to the Education Act of 2008, the primary responsibility of school inspectors is to monitor student learning achievement. This component emphasizes the need for inspectors to implement curriculum management to ensure quality learning at the school level. In this sense, inspectors monitor the teaching and learning process to ensure student involvement and participation in concept understanding. This is consistent with Gentile's (2000) belief that supervision is important in enhancing educational standards; inspectors will know if sufficient instructional preparation has occurred when the teacher can construct a session that achieves the target. This means that whatever the teacher and students do throughout the session is relevant to the purpose.

Overall, these findings underscore the importance of school inspections in enhancing learners' achievement but also highlight the need for a holistic approach to educational improvement. Effective school management, teacher development, student support programs, and adequate resource allocation are all crucial in complementing inspection activities to optimize learning outcomes (Scheerens, 2015).

## CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that effective school inspections contribute positively to learners' achievement, though the strength of the relationship is moderate. This suggests that while school inspections play a vital role in improving educational quality, they should be complemented by other strategies, such as teacher professional development, student motivation programs, and enhanced parental involvement. This can make

school inspections become a more powerful tool in driving academic excellence and improving Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) results in secondary schools.

### Recommendations

Education authorities should strengthen inspection frameworks to ensure that school inspections are comprehensive, timely, and actionable. This includes training inspectors on modern evaluation techniques and ensuring that their feedback is constructive and leads to tangible improvements in teaching and learning.

Schools should be supported in implementing inspection recommendations. This could involve follow-up mechanisms, continuous professional development for teachers, and government support in addressing deficiencies identified during inspections, such as infrastructural challenges and materials like laboratory equipment to some public and private schools which are in dire need. Regular monitoring and evaluation should be conducted to assess the level of implementation and impact of the inspection recommendations.

Since effective inspection contributes to better learners' achievement, school administrators and teachers should be supported with professional development programs that align with inspection criteria. Training in areas such as curriculum delivery, classroom management, and assessment strategies can enhance teaching effectiveness.

Inspection processes should involve key stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and students, to ensure that feedback is holistic and that all perspectives are considered when making improvement strategies in schools.

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