

NDA second best school in Uganda

Good news from the Sisters of Notre Dame mission in Uganda, East Africa.

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Govt names best schools in the country

Findings. Government says schools which admit best grades and have traditionally performed well in national examinations didn't appear in the top 100 schools.

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KAMPALA. Schools that excel in national examinations are over-rated and shine because they admit bright students but add little value to them, government has said.

"They depend on students who are very intelligent, can research on their own and are assisted by their parents during holidays but they don't add value to them during their time of study," said Ms Frances Atima, the principal inspector at Education ministry's

Her comments follow an extensive analysis of last year's Primary Seven and Senior Four results on government's behalf by Ark, a UK consultancy firm, based on admission grades for some 11,000 schools.

The survey showed surprise results, with little-known countryside primary and secondary schools ranked higher than traditional urban schools, mostly in central Uganda, which dominate in national examinations.

The performance of schools in national examinations helps guide parents on where to take their children to study and competitive schools, while focusing on producing academic stars, have profited by hiking tuition.

Ms Atima said the benefit of education must be the holistic development of the child and whereas

not admit the best candidates, they turn their students around to get the best out of them at the end of Senior Four.

None of the top traditional schools featured among 200 primary and secondary schools that the Education ministry says are the best in the country. This shows learning is not taking place in the so-called best schools, according to Ms Atima who singled out Gayaza and Nabbingo SS as examples.

Teachers' response

Ms Nakatte Kikomoko, the head teacher Nabbingo SS and chairperson of secondary school head teachers' association in the country, said she was aware of the report although she has not acclimated with the assessment tool used.

denics, they may be right because if a child joins with aggregate 4, they should be able to maintain after the four years," she said.

"But us who provide an enlarged curriculum don't fit in that category," she added.

A child who learns an international language at a school in addition to English would have gained beyond academics, she said.

However, Mr Patrick Kaboyo, the executive director Coalition of Uganda Private Schools Teachers Association, was sceptical on the method the ministry used.

"I don't believe a teacher can fail to add value to a good student. The research is skewed. Was it participatory? To what extent or was it in a closed environment?" Mr Kaboyo asked in an interview yesterday.

The government said it this time round used a "value-added method" to evaluate the contribution of every institution to the performance of learners and found that "schools which admit best grades and have traditionally performed well in national examinations didn't appear in the top 100 schools."

base their decision on where to enlist on the pass-rate but consider how their children are assisted to learn and grow skills.

This is the first time the ministry is using the value-added method based on the 2015 Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) and Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) results.

In the past, the directorate ranked best head teachers across the country but it says it has realised that the success of a school depended on teamwork resulting in a shift in the approach in schools' rankings.

The government previously evaluated a head teachers' professional and general conduct, inter-personal and public relations, ethical conduct, personal presentation, work behaviour (time-keeping and duty attendance), special personal attributes, response to client needs and service delivery as well as execution of assignments and

The Daily Monitor in Uganda reports that Notre Dame Senior Secondary Academy (NDA) in Buseesa is the second best school in the entire country. This ranking was determined after the Uganda Ministry of Education sought to determine which schools provide the most holistic development of their students. The ministry worked with Ark, a UK consultancy firm, to analyze criteria beyond national exam results, the typical measurement of success.

Sister Anita Marie Stacy, head teacher of NDA in Buseesa, explained that the idea behind the research was that the typical "best" schools enroll students that come from a background that is conducive to academic success. The students arrive better prepared and with more financial and academic resources than their counterparts at lesser-known, countryside schools.

Schools received a higher ranking in the research if they admitted students with average academic ability and fewer resources, but taught the students to perform well academically and taught life skills that are not measured in exams.

This humbling acknowledgment in the newspaper is a testament to the importance of "fostering the fullness of life!"