

# Female candidates outshine males again



Shafic Ssemusu (left, GEE/ICT) and Lynette Nambatya Ayebale (right, HEntLit/ICT) of St Mark's College celebrate with their mothers after each scored 20 points in UACE. PHOTO/ABUBAKER LUBOWA

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BY DAVID WALUGEMBE

The 2025 A-Level results released on Friday show that female candidates continued their dominance by outperforming their male counterparts in terms of overall performance, despite being fewer in number.

The results released by the Uganda National Examinations Board (Uneb) saw an increase in the number of candidates at 166,400, dominated by male candidates, 93,636 (56.3 per cent), ahead of 72,798 females (43.7 per cent), a general increase of 17.2 per cent from the previous year.

During the release of the results, Mr Dan Odongo, the Uneb Executive Director, said female candidates proportionally performed better than their male counterparts, stating that the percentage of passes at the upper levels (3P and 2P) for female candidates was higher than for the male candidates and vice versa.

Mr Odongo added that female candidates significantly embraced sciences: Mathematics had 25,001 candidates compared to 19,863 in 2024; Physics had 4,688 candidates compared to 5,836 in 2024; Chemistry had 14,487 compared to 10,533 in 2024; and Biology had 14,697 compared to 9,619 in 2024, though the female-science performance was not as appealing as that of males.

He blamed this on "wrong interpretation of experimental procedures, lead-

ing to wrong data, failure to interpret the data obtained, or present the information graphically".

## The gender performance analysis

The general performance showed that more females scored three principal passes (3P) with 32,291 candidates equating to 44.6 per cent, compared to male candidates who had 36,615 (39.5 per cent) candidates.

Similarly, more females scored two principal passes, 20,393 (28.2 per cent), as compared to their female counterparts, who had 23,992 (25.8 per cent). Fewer female candidates scored one

**Impact.** This affirms the positive impact of continued investment in girl-child education; however, subject clustering remains gendered, with more candidates concentrated in the humanities than in sciences. We need to enhance equity and balance across future professional fields.

— Celestino Obua, Uneb chairperson

principal pass at 12,640 (17.5 per cent) compared to males, who had 19,198 (20.7 per cent).

About 11,692 (12.6 per cent) male candidates scored one subsidiary, which is slightly higher compared to 6,460 (8.9 per cent) female candidates.

It is crucial to note that only 590 (0.8 per cent) female candidates failed, compared to 1,301 (1.4 per cent) male candidates.

By subject, female candidates performed better in humanities subjects (History, Economics, Entrepreneurship Education, Christian Religious Education, Geography, Literature in English,

and Sub-Mathematics), while male candidates performed better in sciences (Physics, Biology, Chemistry, Agriculture, and Mathematics).

## The analysis of 2024

In the 2024 UACE results, 26,928 female candidates achieved three principal passes, compared to 27,410 males. Additionally, 16,962 females attained 2 principal passes, while 20,973 males reached the same level.

A total of 11,058 females passed with one principal pass, compared to 18,175 males, while 6,212 females achieved one subsidiary pass, compared to 11,538 males; and only 438 females failed the examination, compared to 1,194 males.

## Low numbers of female candidates joining UACE

Though there was a general increase in the numbers of candidates registering for UACE for both genders as compared to 2024, the trend showed a decline in the number of female candidates in joining UACE than the male, contrary to how it was in PLE and UCE.

The 2025 analysis shows a decline in the number of female candidates registering for UACE exams, while in the Primary Leaving Examinations and Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE), the female candidates had higher registration numbers than the males.

For instance, in the 2025 PLE exams, 428,324 (52.4 per cent) were female and 389,469 (47.6 per cent) male; and for UCE, out of 432,163 candidates, 227,871 (52.7 per cent) were female and 204,292 (47.3 per cent) were male, indicating that a few girls join advanced education, while many embrace PLE and UCE.

Odongo urged the need to pave for the ways of ensuring more females continue enrolling for UACE for the fair education as they are in PLE and UCE exams.

Similarly, Uneb chairperson Celestino Obua highlighted the need to ensure broader participation of both male and female candidates in science subjects, to enhance equity and balance across future professional fields, rather than sciences being over dominated by males.