
**Poverty And Its Impact On School Dropout; A Case Study Of Secondary Schools In Kangulumira Town Council
Kayunga District Uganda**

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Abstract

This qualitative study aimed at examining the role of poverty on school dropout among students in Kangulumira town council Kayunga district through examining the causes of school dropout, the impact of social and economic factors on school dropout and establishing strategies to reduce school's dropout among secondary schools in Kangulumira town council, Kayunga District. The study adopted a qualitative and quantitative survey design and it was guided by two theories namely Appadurai Theory and Label Poverty Theory with a population of 99 respondents who were selected and positively participated in the study of which 40 were teacher, 40 students and 19 were parents amongst some selected secondary schools from Kangulumira town council Kayunga district.

the study found out that school dropout is caused by students themselves, poor school rules and regulations, poor teacher and students' attitude, religious and cultural beliefs however it was also revealed that social and economic factors of the family has a strong relationship to school dropout. The study also revealed that 91 (92%) agreed that parents' decision do affect children retention in school however 8 (8%) disagreed with the factor. With respect to children of more educated parents are more likely to be enrolled 78 (78.8%) of the respondents agreed with the statement while 21 (21.2%) disagreed with the statement. With respect to once married, girls become part of another family and most likely to get pregnant or married before completing their schooling, 72 (73%) of the respondents agreed with the statement, 4 (4%) were not sure however, 23 (23%) disagreed with the statement. However, the study registered the strategies that could be put in place in place to reduce school dropout among which parents should develop positive attitude towards helping their children, the government to increase and provide more support to universal secondary schools and school to reaccept dropout students to learn again. The study furthermore made some recommendations to the government, schools and parents so as to improve students 'academic outcome and control school dropouts.

Keywords: Poverty, School and Dropout

Background of the study

The World Bank estimates that 1.29 billion people lived in absolute poverty in 2008. Of these, about 400 million people employed in absolute poverty in India and 173 million people in China (Faridah et al., 2023). 5 children live in poverty in the US. As a percentage of the regional population, sub-Saharan Africa, with 47%, had the highest incidence of absolute poverty in 2008. Poverty is fundamentally a denial of opportunity and opportunity, a violation of human dignity, meaning a lack of basic ability to participate effectively in society (Faith et al., 2023). It also means insecurity, powerlessness and foreclosure of individuals' households and communities (Ntirandekura & Christopher, 2022). It also means being prone to violence and often means living in marginal or fragile environments without access to water or sanitation. Robert McNamara, former president of the World Bank, described extreme poverty as a condition so limited by malnutrition, illiteracy disease, dirty environment, high infant mortality and low life expectancy (Jac & Kazaara, 2023). It was also

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noted that poverty is denying Ugandan children the opportunity to get an education, that is, free and secondary education introduced for standard 1 to 7 and 5.1 to higher level by H. E Yoweri. K. Museveni in 1996. for UPE and 2005 for USE. In February 2006, following the December 2005 general elections, the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government in Uganda implemented election promises to provide free secondary education to all students, statistics show that the school-age population immediately rose to 2 million (Suzan & Loving Kazaara, 2023).

The rapid influx of children into school after school fees and other fees were removed suggests that poverty was the main reason Ugandan children were out of school. However, in 2008, about two and a half years later, local media reported that more than one million children had dropped out of school at both primary and secondary levels (John et al., 2023). Assuming that many of those who returned to school with the onset of UPE and USE were children of the poor who could not even afford school fees, basic necessities or education (Victoria et al., 2023).

The report pointed out that it was these imbalances that were the particular problems of farming and pastoral communities and therefore recommended that dropout rates dominate and be addressed to curb the problem (Edgar & Moses, 2023). The research therefore seeks to find the role of poverty on school dropout in selected schools in Kangulumira Town Council, Kayunga District, Uganda.

Statement the problem

Uganda's policies should focus on improving household income if it is to reduce the early school leaving of its children. Current policies are ineffective in fighting poverty among its citizens, but school fee structures are increasing every day and increasing price volatility in the country has caused many dropouts (Oromo et al., 2023). If relevant ministries enact policies and programmes, Uganda will have fewer secondary school dropouts (Godfrey et al., 2023). Programs such as universal secondary education are believed to enroll large numbers of students from poor families, but schools under this program are not well facilitated and cannot compete with private schools where parents pay large sums of money for their children to study (Christopher et al., 2022). The study therefore investigated the role of poverty on early school leaving in Kangulumira Town Council, Kayunga District.

Specific objectives

1. To find the causes of school dropout in Kangulumira town council, Kayunga, Uganda.
2. To examine the impact of social and economic factors on school dropout
3. To establish solutions to reduce the schools dropout rate in Kangulumira town council, Kayunga District.

Methodology

This study used both qualitative and quantitative descriptive, survey methods to provide detailed information on the causes of poverty and school dropout in Kangulumira town council, Kayunga District, Uganda (Olanrewaju et al., 2021b). The study involved teachers, students and parents of the selected secondary schools in Kangulumira town council. The study sampled 40 students from four secondary schools, 40 teachers from the selected secondary schools and 19 parents amongst secondary schools in Kangulumira town council Kayunga district (Olanrewaju et al., 2021a). The study utilized research-devised tools such as self-administered questionnaires to collect data. This helped in avoiding

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losing some information and also saving time for data analysis and presentation (Anthony et al., 2023). A set of questionnaires were sent to students, teachers and parents to fill on their own will. The researcher visited the schools selected for the study for permission to carry out research on poverty and school drop out from the school administration (Suzan & Gracious Kazaara, 2023). The researcher after getting permission from school heads distributed the questionnaires to the sampled respondents. After collecting data, the researcher took questionnaires and interview responses for prior analysis and presentation. The frequency and percentages distribution are used to determine or display data on causes of poverty and school drop out of students (Faridah et al., 2023). Data was analyzed in form of tables, frequencies and percentages using SPSS & STATA (Nelson et al., 2022)

RESULTS

Table 1: Distribution of respondents on the causes of school dropout

No.	Causes of school drop out	Agree		Not sure		Disagree	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
1.	Lack of parental support	86	87	2	2	11	11
2.	Work to support family	91	92			8	8
3.	Cultural beliefs	78	78.8			21	21.2
4.	Lack of educational learning resources	72	73	4	4	23	23
5.	School rules and regulations	29	29.3	16	16.2	54	54.5
6.	Bullying	59	59.6	11	11.1	29	29.3
7.	Economic instability among parents	99	100				
8.	Covering long distance from school	89	89	3	3	7	7
9.	Peer influence	69	70	5	5	25	25

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10.	Early marriage	99	100				
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Source: primary source 2023

The first objective of the study aimed at finding out the causes of school dropout and the result of the study shows that majority 86 (87%) agreed that school dropout is caused by lack of parental support, 2 (2%) of them were not sure while 11 (11%) of the respondents disagreed with the cause. The second cause was work to support family and the results shows that 91 (92%) agreed with the cause however, 8 (8%) of them disagreed with the cause (Christopher et al., 2022). The third cause was cultural beliefs and the responses were 78 (78.8%) of the total respondents agreed with the cause while 21 (21.2%) disagreed with the cause.

The fourth cause was lack of educational learning resources and the study result shows that 72 (73%) of the total respondents agreed with the cause while 4 (4%) of the respondents were not sure with the cause however, 23 (23%) of the respondents disagreed with the cause. The fifth cause before respondents was school rules and regulations and the study responses shows that 29 (29.3%) of the respondents agreed to the cause while 16 (16.2%) were not sure with the cause however, 54 (54.5%) of them disagreed with the cause (Victor et al., 2023). Furthermore, 59 (59.6%) of the respondents agreed with the researcher that school dropout could be caused by bullying, 16 (16.2%) were not sure with the cause while 54 (54.5%) of the respondents disagreed with the researcher.

With respect to economic instability among parents all respondents 9 (100%) agreed with the cause. With respect to covering long distances from school 89 (89%) of them disagreed with the cause while 3 (3%) of them were not sure with the cause however, 7 (7%) were not sure with the cause (Brighton et al., 2023). With respect to peer influence, 69 (70%) of the study respondents agreed with the cause, 5 (5%) of them were not sure while 25 (25%) of the respondents disagreed with the cause. The last cause was early marriage and the responses were 99 (100%) agreed to the cause.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents on the impact of social and economic family factors on school dropout

No	Statement	Agree		Not sure		Disagree	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%

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1.	Pupils whose mothers have not attained any level of education will most likely dropout of school	86	87	2	2	11	11
2.	Parental decisions do affect children retention in school	91	92			8	8
3.	Children of more educated parents are more likely to be enrolled	78	78.8			21	21.2
4.	Once married, girls become part of another family and most likely to get pregnant or married before completing their schooling	72	73	4	4	23	23
5.	Attaining bride price an escape route from poverty	29	29.3	16	16.	54	54.5
6.	Economic and social-cultural reasons of parents.	59	59.6	11	11.	29	29.3
7.	Monitoring by Parents regulate their activities	99	100				
8.	The opportunity cost of sending female children to school in rural areas, where girls are married quite early, is high because benefits of their schooling will not accrue to their parental household.	69	70	5	5	25	25

Source: primary source 2023

The second objective of the study aimed at examining the impact that family social and economic factors has on school dropout and the result shows that 86 (89%) of the respondents agreed that pupils whose mothers have not

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attained any level of education will most likely dropout of school, 2 (2%) were not sure while 11 (11%) of the respondents disagreed (Racheal et al., 2023). The study also revealed that 91 (92%) agreed that parents decision do affect children retention in school however 8 (8%) disagreed with the factor (Musaibah et al., 2023).

With respect to children of more educated parents are more likely to be enrolled 78 (78.8%) of the respondents agreed with the statement while 21 (21.2%) disagreed with the statement. With respect to once married, girls become part of another family and most likely to get pregnant or married before completing their schooling, 72 (73%) of the respondents agreed with the statement, 4 (4%) were not sure however, 23 (23%) disagreed with the statement. The researcher went further and revealed that 89 (90%) of respondents agreed with the statement, 3 (3%) were not sure however 7 (7%) of them disagreed with the statement.

The sixth statement was economic and social-cultural reasons of parents and 59 (59.6%) of the respondents agreed with the statement while 11 (11.1%) were not sure however, 29 (29.3%) of them disagreed with the statement. All respondents 99 (100%) of them agreed with the statement that monitoring of parents regulate students intention of dropping out. Lastly, 69 (70%) of them agreed that opportunity cost of sending female children to school in rural areas, where girls are married quite early, is high because benefits of their schooling will not accrue to their parental household while 5 (5%) were not sure and 25 (25%) of them disagreed (Anthony et al., 2023).

Table 3: Distribution of respondents on the solution to reduce school dropout in Kangulumira town council

No.	School dropout could be reduced if	Agree		Not sure		Disagree	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Fre q	%
1.	Massive sensitization	86	87	2	2	11	11
2.	Support of universal education programs	97	97			2	2
3.	Provision of Guidance and counseling services to students at schools	68	69	8	8	23	23

4.	Support to poverty reduction programs so as parents get jobs and pay for their children school fees	79	80	4	4	16	16
5.	Strict laws on raising of school fees	56	56.6	4	4	39	39.4
6.	School rules should support pregnant students	59	59.6	11	11.1	29	29.3
7.	Parent and community care responsibility	83	84			16	16
8.	Re-admitting of school dropout student programs should be put in place among secondary schools	79	79	1	2	19	19
9.	Government should increase on supervision of school activities and students attendance rates.	69	70	5	5	25	25
10.	Fight against early marriages	99	100				

Source: primary source 2023

The researcher thought of understanding the strategies that could be taken to reduce school dropout and the responses results shows that majority (86%) of them agreed that massive sensitization could be of help, 2 (2%) amongst them were not sure and 11 (11%) disagreed with the strategy. The study furthermore revealed that almost all respondents agreed that support of universal education program could be of importance however, 2 (2%) of the respondents total disagreed with the strategy.

The researcher went further and found out that 68 (69%) agreed that provision of Guidance and counseling services to students at schools is the best way while 8 (8%) of them were not sure however, (23 (23%) disagreed with the strategy. Another strategy proposed by the researcher was Support to poverty reduction programs so as parents get jobs and pay

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for their children school fees and the result shows that 79 (80%) of the respondents agreed with the strategy while 4 (4%) were not sure with the strategy however, 16 (16%) of them disagreed (Nelson et al., 2023).

Furthermore the study revealed that 56 (56.6%) of the respondents agreed that enacting strict laws against higher increase of school fees, 4 (4%) were not sure while 39 (39%) disagreed with the strategy. On schools rules supporting pregnant students 59 (59.6%) agreed with the strategy while 29 (29.3%) disagreed with the strategy. Furthermore more than half 83 (84%) agreed that parents and community care responsibility is the best strategy however 16 (16%) disagreed with strategy.

On re-admitting of school dropout student 79 (79%) agreed with the statement while 1 (2%) of them were not sure however 19 (19%) disagreed with the strategy. With respect to government increase on supervision of school activities and students attendance rates 69 (70%) agreed with the statement 5 (5%) were not sure of the strategy while 25 (25%) disagreed with the statement. Lastly, all respondents 99 (100%) agreed that fighting against early marriages is the best strategy to prevent school dropout among students in secondary schools (Godfrey et al., 2023).

Conclusion of the study

Causes of school dropout

Based on the results of the first objective of the study, conclusion is made from the whole findings. From the study, the major causes of school dropout were lack of parental support, work to support family and cultural beliefs. Majority of respondents believed that school dropout through the mentioned causes has been a challenge due to the above with in their societies. Furthermore, respondents agreed that lack of educational learning resources, school rules and regulations, bullying and economic instability as some of the other factors contributing to school dropout.

Impact of Family social economic factors on school dropout

Based on the second objective of the study, the conclusion is based on the whole findings and the results showed that family social and economic factors such as parents' level of education and decision to support student's dropout were seen as some factors associated with student's dropout. The study furthermore concludes that once girls get married they are believed to benefit the husband 's family and so the parents see no need of teaching a person who will not benefit them.

Strategies to reduce school dropout

The findings clearly indicate that school dropout can be prevented through massive sensitization about the dangers of school dropout, support to universal education program and provide guidance and counseling to students. Sensitization can be done by the government, schools, community and parents and the government is advised to scrutinize the need to support and facilitate universal education program so as students and teachers are equipped with the required school materials. The study also highlighted the importance of giving support to poverty reduction programs that can boost

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parents' income levels which can boost their capacity to support their students at school, enacting strict laws against higher increase of school fees which hinders financially unstable parent to pay for their children the required school fees, school are advised to have rules that support pregnant students at school, the community and parents were advised to take care, re-admitting of school dropout student and full responsibility towards students. The study also revealed that increasing supervision of school activities and student's attendance rate and addressing and reducing early marriages among societies could also be beneficial to reduce this vice among school in Uganda.

Recommendations

Since the findings of the study has revealed the impact of family social and economic factors that contribute to school dropout, parents are advised to take keen on their responsibilities as parents in raising a God-fearing citizen and child since God has the power and reason for all creatures.

The researcher recommends the ministry of education and sports to increase on the resources and teachers 'in universal education programs so as students do not get frustrated by the limited number of teachers and resources in these schools which could result to school dropout.

The study recommends the ministry of education and sports to recruitment more chief education officers to increase on the supervision of schools so as teachers perform their expected roles and reduce on unnecessary absenteeism among teachers.

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