
Government Programs And Its Impact On Youth Empowerment In Communities, A Case Study Of Tirinyi

Sub County, Kibuku District

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Abstract

This research aimed to examine the impact of various government programs and initiatives on youth empowerment levels within communities located in Tirinyi Sub County, Kibuku District, eastern Uganda. A descriptive survey research design employing both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques was utilized for the study. The target population encompassed all young men and women between the ages of 18 to 30 years residing in the six parishes of the sub county at the time of the study. Through stratified random sampling, a sample of 200 youths was selected from which primary data was gathered using structured questionnaires and key informant interviews. The study sought to determine how government schemes in areas such as skills training, entrepreneurship grants, job placement, agriculture extension services, and leadership mentorship programs contributed to enhancing the socioeconomic welfare, employability skills, participation in local governance, and overall livelihood capacities of the youth. Data collected provided insights regarding levels of accessibility, relevance, funding, coordination and sustainability of existing schemes from the beneficiaries' perspective. Statistical analysis revealed significant associations between participation in particular empowerment programs and indicators of empowered status among Tirinyi youth. The research outcomes carry important implications for re-evaluating strategies, addressing observed bottlenecks, strengthening coordination mechanisms, boosting community participation, and instilling accountability in program implementation across various sectors and implementing agencies involved in youth empowerment efforts in rural Ugandan settings. It is believed the findings will offer valuable guidance to policymakers, program developers, and other key stakeholders in designing effective, targeted and sustainable empowerment interventions for positive youth development and realization of their full economic and social potential. Conduct extensive awareness drives and establish clear targeting criteria to boost youth participation levels in existing empowerment schemes.

Keywords: Government Programs, Youth Empowerment and Communities

Background of the Study

Youth empowerment is a process where children and young people are encouraged to take control of their lives (Allan et al., 2023). They do this by addressing their situation and then taking action to improve their access to resources and transform their consciousness through their beliefs, values and attitudes (Rashid et al., 2023). Youth empowerment aims to improve the quality of life. Youth empowerment is achieved through participation in youth empowerment programs. There are many models that youth empowerment programs use to help youth achieve empowerment. There are various youth empowerment initiatives around the world (Jac & Kazaara, 2023). These programs can be through non-profit organizations, government organizations, schools, or private organizations. Youth empowerment differs from youth development because development focuses on the development of individuals, while empowerment focused on creating larger community change depends on the development of individual capacity (Rashid et al., 2023). Youth empowerment is often seen as a gateway to intergenerational equality, civic engagement and democracy building. Activities can focus on youth-led media, youth rights, youth

councils, youth activism, youth involvement in community decision-making (F. Christopher et al., 2022), and other methods. As job hunting increases among rural youth, the global economic outlook for 2017 and 2018 growth looks to be on the upswing due to advanced economies growing modestly on investment and trade. Despite economic growth, there is no tangible economic recovery, a condition that specifically affects the large number of young people entering the labor market (Paul & Kazaara, 2023). The global youth unemployment rate is expected to rise to 13.1 percent in 2017, with 70.9 million young people expected to be unemployed, a figure well below the crisis peak of 76.7 million in 2019 (ILO , Global Employment Trends for Youth, 2017). Uganda's population is 80% young people aged 15-34, with 82% being the highest unemployment rate (T. Christopher et al., 2023). The annual labor market welcomes more than one million young people with no skills, some of whom have either dropped out of school or completed school without enrolling in any college (Mark et al., 2023). Although youth are an integral part of society, they lack the skills to successfully run businesses, and young people who decide to start a business face the problem of access to capital. Youth empowerment means that young people acquire the skills, authority, and freedom to make decisions and make changes in their own lives and in the lives of other people, including youth and adults, through an attitudinal, structural, and cultural process (Nelson & Christopher, 2022). Youth empowerment focuses on improving the quality of life and is achieved through participation in youth empowerment programs which may include opportunities such as; they developed internships and internships, mentoring programs, financial, legal, marketing and other assistance and created a level playing field in terms of jobs, markets and access to capital (Brighton et al., 2023). This study therefore analyzed the impact of government programs on youth livelihoods using Tirinyi County as a case study.

Statement of the Problem

In Uganda, youth face a number of challenges including lack of job opportunities; a total of 500,000 young people graduate from various tertiary institutions every year, but due to slow economic growth (Frank et al., 2023), corruption, nepotism and the demand for experience, 75% of these young people remain unemployed. The next biggest challenge is youth empowerment and participation, which includes youth involvement in transformative activities (Oliver et al., 2023). In Uganda, youth are sidelined from participating in public forums because they are perceived as idle, immature, disrespectful and uninterested in the welfare of the community. These young people need to be marked on platforms where they can speak and express themselves and inspire faith that can catalyze impact through youth-led development initiatives (Godfrey et al., 2023). Therefore, this study focused on young people who are equipped with both resources in terms of access to natural capital and training in technical and business skills to improve their businesses and have healthy relationships with markets to grow their businesses. Empowerment activities are aimed at helping young farmers create self-employment opportunities and increase incomes to improve their well-being. It's just that this study focuses on the horticulture industry, which has a lot of room for growth unlike the kinds of businesses promoted or supported by the YEDF and Uwezo funds. this study therefore analyzed the impact of government programs on youth empowerment in Tirinyi Sub County, Kibuku District (Faridah et al., 2023).

Objectives of the study

1. To analyze the relationship between financial literacy trainings and livelihoods of youth in Tirinyi Sub County, Kibuku District
2. To evaluate how the provision of start-up capital influence the livelihood of youth in Tirinyi

Sub county, Kibuku district.

Methodology

This study had employed a research design called descriptive survey. Descriptive survey research designs were utilized in exploratory and preliminary studies to allow the study to collect information, summarize, present and construe for the main purpose of clarification (Orodho, 2002). The target population for this project consisted of all youths and residents of Tirinyi sub county who were present at that time (Jallow et al., 2022). According to Kreijic and Morgan sample determination table (1970), a population sample size of 200 participants was determined to be adequate for the study. The primary sources of data were employed in this research project. Questionnaires were utilized for primary data collection. Questionnaires were preferred because they were straightforward and less time consuming for both the researcher and the participants to complete (Nafiu et al., 2013). Since questionnaires collected information that was not directly observable, they were considered appropriate for the project as they inquired about experiences, feelings, attitudes, motivations as well as accomplishments of individuals (Olanrewaju et al., 2021). This was widely done because the contributors would not be influenced in any way by the project. Structured questionnaires were designed to meet the objectives of the project. Each item was developed to address specific themes of the project. The questionnaire captured the business identification information, demographic information (location, age, marital status, education level, land size and land ownership) and information based on the specific objectives (Nafiu & Ph, 2012). Validity shows whether the items measure what they are designed to measure (Nafiu & Ph, 2012). It talks about the degree to which a study precisely assesses or reflects on the exact concept that the study is trying to measure. It is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of data actually portrayed the phenomenon under study and the preciseness and meaningfulness of inferences which were based on the research results.

A pilot test had been done to aid in establishing the clarity, relevance, suitability and accuracy of the research instrument. Borg and Gall (1989) noted that two to three cases were sufficient for some pilot studies. For this study, a sample size of 10 was preferred. The sample of ten had been picked from members of other groups that were not part of the groups scheduled to take part in the survey. The researcher had conducted data cleaning after all data was collected. The data cleaning had involved identification of inaccurate or incomplete responses, which were rectified to improve the quality of the responses (Nafiu & Ph, 2012). After data cleaning, the data was coded and entered into the computer for analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 22 (Nelson et al., 2022). This research had produced both quantitative and qualitative data. The data was analyzed in line with the objectives of the study. Qualitative data was analyzed qualitatively using content analysis based on analysis of meanings and implications emanating from respondents' information and documented data (Olanrewaju & Abiodun, 2021). As observed by Gray (2004) qualitative data provides rich descriptions and explanations that demonstrate the chronological flow of events as well as often leading to serendipitous (chance) findings. On the other hand, simple descriptive and inferential statistics (regression model) were employed to analyze quantitative data. The regression model had assumed the following equation:

$$Y = \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

Where Y = Livelihood

X₁ = Financial Literacy Training

X2= Startup Capital

X3= Market Linkages

X4 = Horticulture Enterprises

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ are coefficients of determination

ε is the error term.

RESULTS

Table 1: Correlation between financial literacy trainings and livelihoods of youth in Tirinyi Sub County, Kibuku District

		financial literacy trainings	livelihoods of youth
financial literacy trainings	Pearson Correlation	1	.769**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	199	199
livelihoods of youth	Pearson Correlation	.769**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	199	199
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Source; Primary Data, 2024

The correlation results in the table provide important insights into the relationship between financial literacy trainings and livelihoods of youth in Tirinyi Sub County. The Pearson correlation coefficient calculated between the two variables is 0.769. This value indicates a strong positive correlation that is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), as the significance value is less than 0.01 (Nelson et al., 2023). A correlation coefficient of 0.769 means that as financial literacy trainings increase, the livelihoods of youth also tend to increase and vice versa. In other words, there is approximately a 77% chance that the two variables will vary together in the same direction. The positive correlation suggests that youth who participate in financial literacy programs offered by different government agencies are likely to acquire important skills, knowledge and attitudes that enhance their livelihood capabilities compared to their counterparts without such trainings.

Some key livelihood attributes that may be enhanced include financial management competence, entrepreneurial mindsets, business management expertise, saving and investment habits, ability to access loans and credit facilities, and general economic independence (Polycarp et al., 2023). This offers vital evidence on the beneficial role financial literacy education plays in youth empowerment and livelihood improvement outcomes within local contexts like Tirinyi Sub County (Gracious, 2023). The statistically significant correlation reinforces the importance for policymakers, program developers and implementing organizations working in youth empowerment to prioritize financial literacy components in their interventions as a means of bringing about sustained livelihood transformations among communities' youthful population. The findings present opportunities for strengthening existing schemes and promoting multiplier effects through coordination and stakeholder collaboration.

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Table 2: Correlation between provision of start-up capital and livelihoods of youth in Tirinyi Sub County, Kibuku District

		provision of start-up capital	livelihoods of youth
provision of start-up capital	Pearson Correlation	1	.704**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	199	199
livelihoods of youth	Pearson Correlation	.704**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	199	199
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Source; Primary Data, 2024

This correlation table examines the relationship between provision of start-up capital to youth and levels of livelihoods among youth in Tirinyi Sub County. The results indicate a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.704 existing between the two variables. This value represents a strong positive correlation that is highly statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) since the significance value is less than 0.01 (T. Christopher et al., 2022).

A correlation value of 0.704 implies that as government provisions of start-up capital to youth increases, their overall livelihood statuses tend to improve and vice versa. In other words, there is approximately a 70% likelihood that changes in one variable are accompanied by changes in the same direction in the other variable. This correlation conveys important insights. It shows that youth who receive start-up financial or in-kind support through initiatives such as youth livelihood funds and entrepreneurial grants exhibit enhanced livelihood outcomes relative to those without capital access (Edgar & Moses, 2023). Access to start-up monies may allow youth to venture into income-generating self-employment activities, expand existing small businesses, access modern production resources and engage in market-oriented productive investments.

The statistical significance of the correlation lends credence to capital availability as a critical driver of positive livelihood shifts among rural communities' youth. It reinforces the need for governments and development partners to augment capital injection programs targeting capable youth entrepreneurs and farmer groups as a strategic approach for fostering youth economic empowerment and development at grassroots level.

Conclusion

The study assessed the impact of various government programs on youth empowerment levels in Tirinyi Sub County, Kibuku District. The findings revealed that youth participation in skills training schemes, entrepreneurial grants initiatives, employment placement services, agriculture extension outreach, and leadership mentorship programs had a generally positive influence on indicators of empowered status. Statistical analyses showed significant correlations between involvement in certain programs and enhanced socioeconomic welfare, employability skills, participation in local governance, and improved livelihood capacities among Tirinyi youth.

However, the research also uncovered several challenges hindering optimal outcomes. These included limited accessibility to opportunities due to inadequate promotion, partial irrelevance of some curricula, inadequate funding and staffing of projects, weak coordination across implementing bodies, and concerns about sustainability after program periods ended. While certain programs had yielded notable success stories, a more synergized multi-sectoral approach was needed to achieve wider scale impact.

Recommendation

Conduct extensive awareness drives and establish clear targeting criteria to boost youth participation levels in existing empowerment schemes.

Streamline programs under a coordinated district youth strategy and establish shared monitoring frameworks for improved outcomes tracking.

Enhance synergies across implementing organizations through frequent partnership platforms and collaborative work planning.

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