

**GOVERNMENT YOUTH LIVELIHOOD PROGRAM AND STANDARDS OF LIVING OF THE YOUTHS
IN UGANDA: A CASE STUDY OF MITYANA MUNICIPALITY LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed at examining the implications of the YLP of government on the standards of living of the youths: a case study of Mityana municipality, the study was directed by both the general and specific objectives which included the following to examine the influence of the government youth livelihood program on the standards of living of the youths in Mityana Municipality, to identify the challenges associated by the youth livelihood government program and to establish possible measure to mitigate challenges faced by the YLP. The study also used the qualitative method as the research design as well as 50 respondents were involved in this study to generate as much information as possible. They study found out that there is a close correlation between the youth's livelihood program and the standards of living of the youths in Uganda though the study concentrated on mityana municipality local government. From the findings, it indicated that political decentralization was the most dominant type of decentralization in mityana district local government standing at 60% followed by administrative decentralization, it shown that mityana district local government mainly received grants from the central government which includes both conditional and unconditional grants. This is represented by 70% of the total revenue for the district. Upon the recommendations, massive sensitization should be reinforced so as to enable clients change their mindset and desist from bad attitudes so as to embrace the program and pay back the money given for other beneficiaries to benefit.

Key words: government, youth and livelihood programs

Background of the study

The Youth Livelihood Program (YLP) is a program funded by the Government of Uganda, designed as one of the government's interventions in response to the country's high youth unemployment and poverty (Rashid et al., 2023). It covers all 146 districts of Uganda (including Kampala capital city office). The goal of program development (PDO) is to enable targeted youth to utilize their socio-economic potential and increase self-employment opportunities and income levels (Rashid et al., 2023). The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995)

defines youth as a person between the ages of 18 and 30 years. Uganda's youth population is estimated at 6.5 million, representing 21.3% of the country's total population (Allan et al., 2023). With an annual average population growth rate of 3.2% (1.3 million people), the number of young people in the country is projected to reach 7.7 million by 2015. The main demographic problems in Uganda arise from the age structure of the population rather than the overall size. population (Collins et al., 2023). Uganda has a very young population, which poses a major

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challenge in the short to medium term if not well planned and secured. Increasing employment rates and reducing youth poverty is a major challenge and high priority for the Government of Uganda (GoU) (Faridah et al., 2023). Uganda Vision 2040 recognizes that Uganda has a labor force that is largely underserved or unemployed due to inappropriate skills and the economy's slow ability to absorb labor; as a result, the large number of unemployed youths becomes a social and economic threat (Nelson & Christopher, 2022). The National Development Plan (2010/11 to 2014/15) identifies the promotion of informal skills and the support of start-

ups and youth entrepreneurship as part of the government's strategies to address the country's labor and employment challenges (Allan et al., 2023). The Ugandan government's overall economic goal is to transform the country from a peasant to a middle-income economy by 2025 (Kazaara & Christopher, 2023). The country has had an impressive and steady economic recovery over the past fifteen years with an average growth rate of 6.5%. To achieve this, the government implements various poverty alleviation programs among its population, which have received wide national and international support and recognition (Godfrey et al., 2023).

Statement of the problem

The Ugandan government's overall economic goal is to transform the country from a peasant to a middle-income economy by 2025. The country has enjoyed an impressive and steady economic recovery over the past fifteen years, with a growth rate averaging 6.5% (Ramadhan et al., 2023). To achieve this, the government is implementing various programs to alleviate poverty among the population, which have received wide national and international support and recognition (Vincent & Peter, 2023). Despite these programs, there are still gaps characterized by the continued existence of extremely poor and marginalized groups, especially educated and uneducated young people. The Youth Livelihood Program was expected to be the most viable means of remedying youth unemployment and poverty, but since its inception in 2014, statistics show that youth unemployment and poverty rates continue to be highly prevalent, adversely affecting the living standards of youth across the country (Oliver et al., 2023).

Objective of the study

- To examine the influence of the government youth livelihood program on the standards of living of the youths in Mityana Municipality.
- To identify the challenges associated by the youth livelihood government program
- To establish possible measure to mitigate challenges faced by the YLP.

Methodology

The researcher used both qualitative and quantitative research design. Qualitative shall include use of respondents' responses as themes that will be

developed based on the research questions. However, quantitative approaches involved use of descriptive statistics generated with frequency tables, graphs, and

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Charts. The study focused on a total of (40) respondents of whom 20 were youths, 10 Municipal Administrators both civil and political leadership, 5 officials of the Non-Governmental Organizations and 5 representatives from the ministry of gender, labour and social development. Such a population has the relevant information for the study. The study used the following data collection tools that was used during data collection at the time of the study as the researcher used both primary and secondary data as explained below: In-depth Interview guides were designed and administered to different key informants within the sample frame. They were mainly administered on the disabled and their employers. This instrument will be more appropriate in capturing their voices and concerns. The interview guide enabled the researcher to have a dialogue with respondents in a participatory manner in order to reflect their views. Self-administered questionnaire

was used to collect primary data where by a set of predetermined questions were designed to collect data from community members who was using both disabled people and community members. Respondents allowed filling the questionnaire and where possible the researcher helped them in filling the responses in case of those who would provide vital study information but with no formal education. The questionnaire method of data collection was used because of being cheap and that the method collects responses with minimum errors and high level of confidentiality since the respondents was allowed to answer the questions at their convenient time. Data from the semi-structured interviews was entered and analyzed using SPSS in form of tables, frequencies and percentages (Nelson et al., 2022). The percentage number of respondents according to variables were computed and presented in form of tables and graphs.

RESULTS

Table 1: Showing the different and forms of decentralization in mityana district local government

S/no	Type and forms of decentralization	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Political decentralization which takes the form devolution	60	70
2	Administrative decentralization which takes the form of delegation, deconcentration and privatization	30	25
3	Fiscal decentration which takes form of grants from central government, loan guarantees, donations and local revenue expenditures	10	05

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Source: Survey

From the findings above, it indicates that political decentration is the most dominant type of decentralization in mityana district local government standing at 60% followed by administrative decentralization at from the table above, it shows that mityana district local government mainly receives grants from the central government which includes both conditional and unconditional grants. This is represented by 70% of the total revenue for the district (Paul et al., 2023). Conditional grants are those monies given to the district to fund predetermined activities whereas unconditional grants are those monies given to fund any activity as may be deemed by the district authorities (Kazaara & Christopher, 2023).

Locally, the district only collects 30% of its revenue and this is attributed to low level of tax compliance, limited tax base and among other factors. The district also receives some contributions from donors including private individuals and non-government organizations that have the financial leverage to donate any materials including money. This is however, the least source of district revenue standing at only 10% as represented in the table above (Ronald et al., 2023).

90% have strongly agreed that there is a close relationship between the youth livelihood government program and the standards of living among the youths in Uganda but more so in mityana. 96% agreed that the youths have benefited from the youth livelihood program in mityana. 70% of the youth respondents accepted to have benefited from the youth livelihood program and their standards of living have greatly improved. This implies that on the average, there is a strong and close correlation between the youth livelihood program and improved standards of living of the youths in mityana municipality which strongly calls for efficient and effective government institutionalized and decentralized service delivery in the public sector 30% of the respondents revealed that government should invest more money in the youth's livelihood program in Uganda.

Table 2: Showing the challenges facing the youth livelihood program in mityana

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Delay in releasing funds	30	20
Political interference	15	10
Limited funds	0	40%
Bureaucracy	3	20
Corruption	2	10
Total	50	100

Source: Primary data

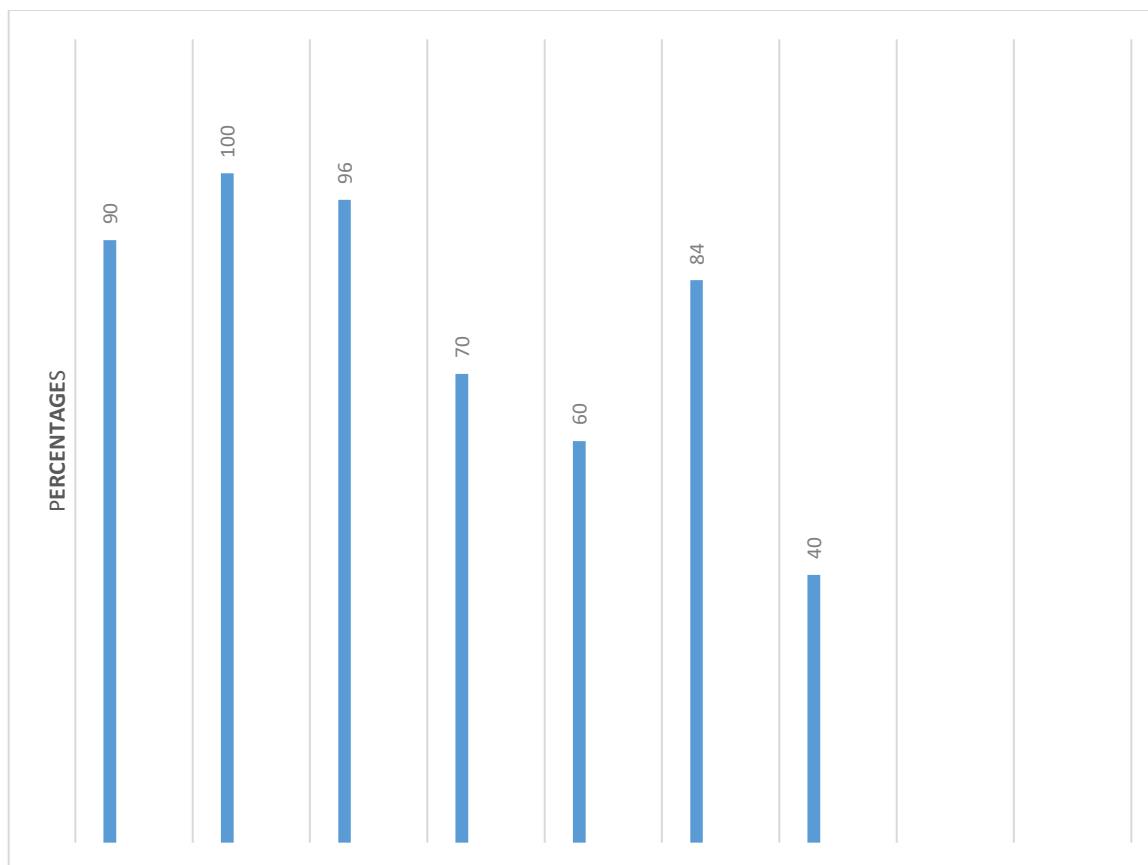
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From the above findings, it can be observed that the majority of the respondents strongly agreed (100%) that there a number of challenges facing the youth livelihood program in mityana district local government. 20% of the respondents agreed that there is a lot delay in releasing funds to the youths, 10% agreed that there is political interference in the youth livelihood program, while 40% agreed strongly that limited funding of the youth livelihood program is the big challenge making it the biggest as all the youth groups are unable to access the funds as request while other groups miss out on the funds. This is most likely to adversely affect the service delivery more in the public sector so to fail the meeting of the objectives of the decentralized policy of Uganda and those of the youths in mityana municipality.

Figure 2: The graph showing whether youth livelihood government program leads to improved standards of living of the youths.



Source: primary data

From the above table, it can be observed that the majority of the respondents strongly agreed (60%) that there is a close correlation between youth livelihood program and their improved standards of living. 60% of the respondents

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agreed, 30% agreed, 0% not sure, 05% disagreed while 03% strongly disagreed saying that since the program begun in the 2014, high levels of unemployment among the youths is evident as poverty among the youths escalates alongside high levels of crime rate in the municipality (Oliver et al., 2023). However, this implies that on the average, there is a strong and close correlation between improved standards of living of the youths and the implementation of the youth livelihood program of the government which has relatively improved service delivery in the public sector which strongly calls for efficient and effective government institutionalized and decentralized service delivery in the public sector (Faith et al., 2023). This is most likely to improve service delivery more in the public sector so to meet the objectives of the decentralized policy of Uganda is to achieve its objectives in totality.

Table 3: Showing remedies to the challenges that affect the youth livelihood program of the government

Responses	Male	Female	Frequency	Percentage
Increased funding	20	20	48	40
Elimination of Political interference	2	5	02	15
Privatization of the program	4	4		05
Flattering and leaning of the program	4	3		10
Improved intergovernmental relations	10	6	50	10
Enhanced fight against graft	5	4		20

Source: Primary data

The findings on the table above indicate that 20 male and 20 female respondents agreed that other factors such as increased funding is the most practical remedy to the failure of the program making it stand at 40%. Only 2 males and 5 females agreed that political interference from the political leadership affect the success of the youth livelihood program in mityana municipality standing at 15%. Only 4 males and 4 females proposed elimination of in-house system and be replaced by an external service provider or manager of the youth livelihood program through privatization such as an NGO or a private organization which will curb corruption and bureaucracy (Phionah et al., 2023). This stands at only 4% of the total responses. The findings on the table above also indicate further that 10 males and 6 males agreed that by improving the inter-governmental relations, the youth livelihood program will become more efficient and effective so to be able to meet its intended goals. This stands at 10% of the total

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responses. These respondents were picked out of the sample of 40 which indicates 96% of response and only 04% were not accessible. The study reveals that 60% of the respondents were males whereas only 40% of the respondents were females. This has given a fair distribution of responses according to gender indicating limited bias in the selection process (Victoria et al., 2023).

Table 4: showing the remedies to the challenges that are faced by the youth livelihood program

Remedies to the factors affecting NWSC include:	Male	Female	Frequency	Percentage
Increased government funding	20	20	48	40
Elimination of Political interference	2	5	02	15
Privatization of the program	4	4		05
Effective laws and policies for the youth	4	3		10
Improved governmental relations	10	6	50	10
Effective laws and policies against corruption	5	4		20

Source: Primary data

The findings on the table above indicate that 20 male and 20 female respondents agreed that other factors such as increased funding is the most practical remedy to the failure of the program making it stand at 40%. Only 2 males and 5 females agreed that political interference from the political leadership affect the success of the youth livelihood program in mityana municipality standing at 15%. Only 4 males and 4 females proposed elimination of in-house system and be replaced by an external service provider or manager of the youth livelihood program through privatization such as an NGO or a private organization which will curb corruption and bureaucracy. This stands at only 4% of the total responses. The findings on the table above also indicate further that 10 males and 6 males agreed that by improving the inter-governmental relations, the youth livelihood program will become more efficient

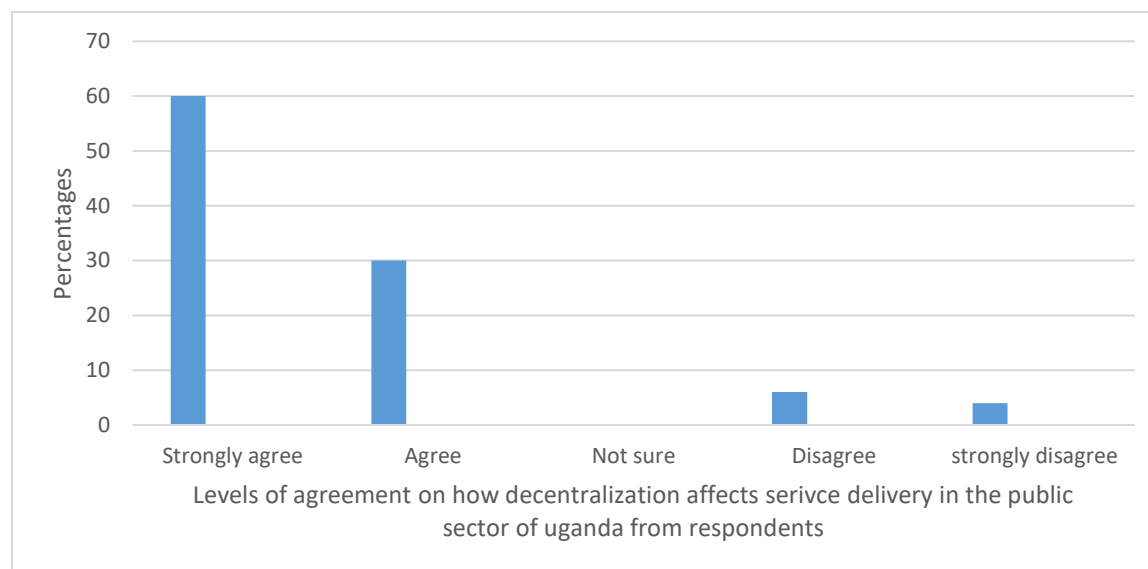
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and effective so to be able to meet its intended goals. This stands at 10% of the total responses (Zowena et al., 2023). These respondents were picked out of the sample of 40 which indicates 96% of response and only 04% were not accessible. The study reveals that 60% of the respondents were males whereas only 40% of the respondents were females. This has given a fair distribution of responses according to gender indicating limited bias in the selection process.

Figure 3: A pie chart showing the relationship between the youth livelihood government program and the standards of living of the youths by taking a case of mityana municipality local government.



From the pie chart above, the findings show that 96% of the respondents agreed that there is a correlation between the youth livelihood program and the standards of living of Ugandan youths as respondents have revealed. Only 4% of the respondents were not sure. While 4% of the respondents objected or were not sure. This does not however, distort the fact that the implementation of the youth livelihood program since 2014 has led to development of the youth or caused a change in the living conditions of the youths in Uganda and mityana municipality as investigated above (Allan et al., 2023).

Conclusions

The study concluded that 100% of the respondents are aware of the existence of the youth livelihood program and are aware of the work they do. This study further concluded that there are several challenges encountered by the program among which include political interference, poor funding curtailing the capacity of the corporation to dispense its mandate, negative attitude of clients leading evasion of paying back the money which poses a heavy financial threat to the program and the unfavorable legal environment which is deterrent enough and the problem of poor intergovernmental relations. The study found out that 96% of the respondents agreed that there is a close

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correlation between the youth livelihood program and improved standards of living of the Ugandan youths in mityana municipality.

Recommendations

The government should avail enough resources to enable the success of the program so as no youth group misses out on the money.

The government should facilitate fully all agencies involved in the program for efficient monitoring and supervision in Uganda including civil society so as to harmonize their efforts and initiatives. Massive sensitization should be reinforced so as to enable clients change their mindset and desist from bad attitudes so as to embrace the program and pay back the money given for other beneficiaries to benefit.

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