
Poverty And Its Impact On Students' Educational Attainment In Rural Areas: A Case Study Of Bulidha Sub-County, Bugiri District.

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Abstract.

Poverty is a state or condition in which a person or community lacks the financial resources and essentials for a minimum standard of living. Poverty stricken-people can go without water, proper housing, healthy food and medical attention. It is also a state where one lacks a usual or socially acceptable amount of money or material possessions. Global poverty is one of the pressing problems that the world faces today. The poorest in the world are usually undernourished, without access to basic needs such as electricity and safe drinking water; they have less access to education and suffer from poorer health. The purpose of the study was to determine the impacts of poverty on students' educational attainment in rural areas. The aims or objectives of the study were to find out the causes of consistent poverty in rural areas, to find out the possible measures of fighting poverty in rural areas and to find out the impacts of poverty in rural areas and how it affected students' education. The research was based on both qualitative and quantitative research designs and a sample of 45 respondents was used. The researcher used both simple random and purposive sampling techniques. Simple random sampling was applied on the classroom teachers and students where the respondents were picked randomly. The technique of the interview guide was used to get raw data by setting questions, which were put to respondents such as the teachers and parents who were giving answers directly as the researcher was noting the answers down. The questionnaire method was also used and in this format, the researcher collected data from the head teacher, classroom teachers, students and some few parents by setting a number of questions related to the objectives of the study using self-administered questionnaire to the classroom teachers, parents and students using printed questions. The classroom teachers, students and the selected parents filled the questionnaires and returned them to the researcher. By using this method, it enabled respondents to freely answer the questions and even consult where possible. From the findings, 36% of the respondents strongly agreed that structural inequality and lack of access to resources was one of the causes of poverty in Bulidha Sub County, Bugiri district. The government should give priority to the agriculture sector to fight poverty that is abundant in rural areas since most of the people in these areas depend largely on agriculture. It should provide them with loans, repair roads and regulate the prices of goods and services to increase the incomes of rural people thus fighting poverty.

Keywords: Poverty, Students, Educational and Attainment

Background of the study.

This study was based on poverty as the independent variable and student education as the dependent variable

Received: 14.03.2024

Accepted: 19.03.2024

Published on: 30.03.2024

(Vincent & Peter, 2023). Level of education was determined through; the number of early school leavers at different levels of education, which is at the secondary level from primary, the ability to own basic study materials and enrollment in higher education institutions (Mark et al., 2023). The US Census Bureau (2011) defines educational attainment as the term used to refer to the highest level of education an individual has completed (Anthony, Kazaara, & Kazaara, 2023). It is the successful acquisition of educational services provided in a cycle or any level of formal education by individuals who complete a particular course (Brighton et al., 2023). In relation to the above, the effective attainment of education requires the possession of sufficient learning materials, a conducive environment and competent teachers to look after them. The lack of

Statement of the problem.

According to (Victoria et al., 2023), an American linguist in his article "Educational responses to poverty", educational attainment and achievements were observed to be limited and compromised. Levin (2007) says that the effects of poverty on students are far-reaching and can lead to lifelong struggles, especially when young people do not receive a full education (Christopher & Micheal, 2022). Poverty and education are inextricably linked, as people living in poverty may drop out of school to work, leaving them without the literacy and numeracy skills they need for their careers (Faridah et al., 2023).

Years later, their children are in a similar situation, with little income and few options other than leaving school and working. The Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Education and Sports, has implemented a universal secondary education program in government-funded schools to make secondary education more accessible, especially for the increased number of students graduating from primary school, but there are additional costs for uniforms, books and pens, feeding and transport, especially in rural areas where a student may travel more than an hour a day by public transport and walk to school (W. Godfrey et al., 2023). The costs can be too high for the family, in addition to the money the family loses by not sending the child to work or even marrying at a young age (Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office, DMEO, 2020).

basic needs needed to ensure that students attend school effectively is called poverty. This study was conducted in Bulidha Sub County of Bugiri District in selected private and government secondary schools which are rural settings (Richard et al., 2023). One of them is a private school, Standard College High School in Bulidha County, Bilton Forest High School Government School in Bulidha County, Bugiri District. selected secondary schools (Anthony, Kazaara, Kazaara, et al., 2023). Many students do not have access to education in rural areas compared to urban environments, and therefore there is a need to find out the effect of poverty, which in rural areas is a major challenge for the education of students in some selected schools (S. Godfrey et al., 2023).

Received: 14.03.2024

Accepted: 19.03.2024

Published on: 30.03.2024

Specific objectives of the study.

1. To find out the causes of consistent poverty in rural areas.
2. To find out the possible measures of fighting poverty in rural areas.
3. To find out the impacts of poverty in rural areas and how it affects students' education.

Methodology

The research was based on a qualitative and quantitative research design. A case study was chosen as the most appropriate research strategy. Qualitative research design is descriptive in nature and allows the researcher to meet the objectives of the study. A statement was used to assign variables that were not adequately measured using numbers and statistics. A quantitative research design was used in the form of mathematical numbers and statistics assigned to variables that were not easily measured by statements or theme. These approaches allow the researcher to obtain and analyze relevant information about people's views on the effects of poverty on student education. The study was conducted in Bulidha Sub County of Bugiri District in some selected private and government secondary schools in the area. The study included Bilton Forest High School, Bulidha, St. Steven College and the community where members such as parents were used in a resource for information such as parents were used in a resource for information. These have helped in assessing the impact of poverty on the education of students in rural areas. The study focused on a category of people in selected private and government secondary schools and the community in Bulidha Sub District, Bugiri District, namely principals, class teachers, parents and students. These categories helped provide the required data for the study as they were either directly or indirectly affected by the study problem. The study included a total of 45 respondents; among the respondents were principals, class teachers, parents and students with a number of: 1 principal, 4 teachers, 15 parents and 25 students. This is the format the researcher used to collect data from the principal, classroom teachers, students and a few parents. The researcher asked classroom teachers, parents, and students a series of questions related to the objectives of the study using self-administered questionnaires using printed questions. The researcher edited each information after collection, at the end of the whole exercise, he coded it using calculator, SPSS & STATA tables, graphs and pie charts to summarize the data to make it more concise and accurate, to make it easier to analyze, interpret and more accurate to form a real conclusion (Nelson et al., 2022).

RESULTS

Table 1: Table showing results from the respondents about poor infrastructures and government corruption

	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative frequency
Strongly agree	18	40%	18
Agree	14	31%	32

Received: 14.03.2024

Accepted: 19.03.2024

Published on: 30.03.2024

Strongly disagree	7	16%	39
Disagree	6	13%	45

Source: Field Data, 2023.

From the table above, majority of the respondents strongly agreed that poor infrastructures and government corruption are a cause of poverty in Bulidha Sub County with 40% who strongly agreed, Bugiri district, and 31% agreed, 16% strongly disagreed while 13% disagreed. Therefore, the researcher was able to find out that poor infrastructures and government corruption is a major cause of poverty in Bulidha Sub County, Bugiri district (Paul et al., 2023).

Structural inequality and lack of access to resources

Table 2: Table showing responses by respondents about structural inequality and lack of access to resources being a cause of poverty.

	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative frequency
Strongly agree	16	36%	16
Agree	17	38%	33
Strongly disagree	5	11%	38
Disagree	5	11%	43
Not sure	2	4%	45

Source: Field Data, 2023.

The table above shows that 36% of the respondents strongly agreed that structural inequality and lack of access to resources is one the causes of poverty in Bulidha Sub County, Bugiri district.

Majority of the respondents, 38% agreed, 11% strongly disagreed, and 11% disagreed while 4% were not sure. The researcher was therefore able to conclude that structural inequality and lack of access to resources is a cause of poverty in Bulidha Sub County, Bugiri district (S. Godfrey et al., 2023).

Conflict and civil wars in different parts of the country.

The study also aimed at establishing whether poor infrastructures like poor roads, power and education services are a cause of poverty in Bulidha Sub County and the results are tabulated below;

Table 3: Table showing respondents' responses and civil wars in different parts of the country as a cause of poverty.

	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
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Received: 14.03.2024

Accepted: 19.03.2024

Published on: 30.03.2024

Strongly agree	15	33%	33%
Agree	13	29%	62%
Strongly disagree	8	18%	80%
Disagree	8	18%	98%

Source: Field data, 2023.

From the table above, majority of the respondents, 33% strongly agreed that conflicts and civil wars are a cause of poverty, 29% agreed, 18% strongly disagreed and 18% disagreed while 2% were not sure. Therefore, the researcher was able to find out that conflict and civil wars in different parts of the country is a major cause of poverty in Bulidha Sub County, Bugiri district (Vincent & Peter, 2023).

Table 4: Table for investing in infrastructure and public services

	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative frequency
Strongly agree	15	33%	15
Agree	12	27%	27
Strongly disagree	8	18%	35
Disagree	8	18%	43
Not sure	2	4%	45

Source: Field data 2023.

From the above table, majority of respondents strongly agreed with 33% saying that investing in infrastructure and public services is a measure of fighting poverty. The table also shows that 27% agreed, 18% strongly disagreed, and 18% disagreed while 4% were not sure. Therefore, the researcher was able to conclude that investing in infrastructure and public services is a possible measure to reduce poverty in rural areas (Collins et al., 2023).

Table 5: Table for promoting inclusive agricultural development.

Received: 14.03.2024

Accepted: 19.03.2024

Published on: 30.03.2024

	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative frequency
Strongly agree	13	29%	13
Agree	14	31%	27
Strongly disagree	10	22%	37
Disagree	7	16%	44
Not sure	1	2%	45

Source: Field data, 2023.

From the table above, majority of the respondents agreed with promoting inclusive agricultural development with a percentage of 31, 29% strongly agreed, and 22% strongly disagreed and 16% disagreed while 2% were not sure. Therefore, the researcher concluded that promoting inclusive agricultural development is a significant measure in fighting poverty in rural areas (Allan et al., 2023).

Table 6: Ensuring a fair distribution of and secure access to land

	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative frequency
Strongly agree	24	53%	24
Agree	10	22%	34
Strongly disagree	6	13%	40
Disagree	5	11%	45

Source: Field data, 2023.

From the table above, majority of the respondents strongly agreed with 53% saying that ensuring a fair distribution of and secure access to land is a measure of fighting poverty in rural areas. 22% agreed, 13% strongly disagreed while 11% disagreed. Therefore, the researcher concluded that ensuring a fair distribution of and secure access to land is a significant and right measure in fighting poverty in Bulidha Sub County, Bugiri district (Victor et al., 2023).

Table 7: Table for improving social protection coverage in rural areas

	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative frequency
Strongly agree	14	31%	14
Agree	17	38%	31
Strongly disagree	5	11%	36

Received: 14.03.2024

Accepted: 19.03.2024

Published on: 30.03.2024

Disagree	6	13%	42
Not sure	3	7%	45

Source: Field data, 2023.

The table above shows that 31% of the respondents strongly agreed that improving social protection coverage in rural areas is significant measure of fighting poverty in rural areas, majority of the respondents, 38% agreed, 11% strongly disagreed, 13% disagreed while 7% were not sure. The researcher was therefore able to conclude that improving social protection coverage in rural areas is valid as regards to fighting poverty in rural areas, Bulidha Sub County, Bugiri district inclusive.

Table 8: Table showing results of respondents about low academic achievement as an impact of poverty in rural areas.

	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
Strongly agree	28	62%	62%
Agree	8	18%	80%
Strongly disagree	4	9%	89%

Source: Field data, 2023

From the table above majority of the respondents strongly agreed with 62% saying that poverty results into low academic achievement and is an impact towards students' educational attainment, 18% of the respondents agreed, and 9% of the respondents strongly disagreed while 11% of the respondents disagreed. Therefore, the researcher was able to conclude that low academic achievement is a huge impact towards the students' educational attainment (Anthony, Kazaara, & Kazaara, 2023).

Table 9: Table showing views by respondents about limited access to learning materials being an impact of poverty on students' educational attainment

	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative frequency
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Received: 14.03.2024

Accepted: 19.03.2024

Published on: 30.03.2024

Valid Strongly agree	21	47%	21
Agree	14	31%	35
Strongly disagree	4	9%	39
Disagree	5	11%	44

Source: Field Data, 2023.

From the table above, majority of the respondents, 47% strongly agreed that limited access to learning materials is an impact of poverty on students' educational attainment in rural areas, 31% agreed, 9% strongly disagreed and 11% disagreed while 2% were not sure. Therefore from the results above the researcher was able to conclude that limited access to learning materials is an impact of poverty that results into ineffective students' attainment in rural areas (Emmanuel et al., 2023).

Conclusion

The findings of this study have provided an insight into the impact of poverty on students' educational attainment in Bulidha Sub County in Bugiri district and its current status.

Poor infrastructures & government corruption, structural inequality & lack of access to resources, conflict & civil wars in different parts of the country, high unemployment rates, climate change in most areas especially rural communities where agriculture is a major source of income & food to the households and high population density are major causes of poverty in Bulidha sub county in Bugiri district in comparison with several studies carried out by various researchers.

In the bid to fight poverty in rural areas, the following measures are found valid as they tallied with results from different researches: Investing in infrastructure and public services, promoting inclusive agricultural development, ensuring a fair distribution of and secure access to land and its natural resources, improving social protection coverage in rural areas and lastly but not least ending all forms discrimination.

Received: 14.03.2024

Accepted: 19.03.2024

Published on: 30.03.2024

Recommendations

Stakeholders and the government should aim at creation of more employment opportunities to the people who are living in rural areas to provide them with sources of income to sustain their lives and make them able to provide basic life necessities to their children. This will enable learners from poor families' access educational services thus reducing recurrent impacts of poverty.

The government and stakeholders should ensure equal distribution of public (government) schools in both urban and rural areas to extend educational services equitably to all citizens.

The government should give priority to the agriculture sector to fight poverty that is abundant in rural areas since most of the people in these areas depend largely on agriculture. It should provide them with loans, repair roads and regulate the prices of goods and services to increase the incomes of rural people thus fighting poverty.

Linkage effects with in different sectors of the economy like Tourism, fishing and trade should be embraced to fight poverty among Sub County dwellers and providing better social services that would be costly to these people.

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Received: 14.03.2024

Accepted: 19.03.2024

Published on: 30.03.2024

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