ABSENTEEISM AND THE PERFORMANCE OF LEARNERS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN NKONDO SUB-COUNTY KAMULI DISTRICT

BY

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DECLARATION

I MUKAMA GODFREY MICHAEL, DPE/11959/61/DU do hereby declare that "Absenteeism and performance of learners in primary schools in Nkondo Sub County, Kamuli district" is entirely my original work and that it has not been submitted before to any university or institution of higher learning for award of a diploma in primary education.

Signed: Amm Jammma

Date: 28/09/2008

APPROVAL

This research report has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university candidate supervisor.

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my beloved wife Mrs. Mukama Susan Nairuba who kept on encouraging me to push on and my family members.

My parents Mr. Mulungu Vicent and Mrs. Mulungu Annastanzia Namwanje, brothers; Wambi Bernard, Isabirye Francis, Waiswa William and my sister Nangobi Mercalline for their encouragement and support towards my studies.

My dear friends Mr.Byakatolera Charles, Rev. Fr. Anatole Balikowa, Rev. Fr. Anthony Musana, uncle Mr. Ngobi Julius, Kiimpi Harunah and Aunt Aisha Nabirye, Olupot Martin Peter, Sekayiba Stephen and Bernad Gabula.

Staff members of Iringa Township primary school plus all Christians of Buseete Subcentre.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is hard to complete a task of research without any assistance from people who already have knowledge of it. On this role, I therefore, would like to extend profound thanks to the lecturer who taught me research.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title page	ei
Declarati	oni
Approval	ii
Dedicatio	oniii
Acknowl	edgementiv
Table Of	Contentsv
List Of T	ables vii
List Of F	iguresviii
List Of A	cronymsix
Abstract.	x
Chapter (One: Introduction
1.1.	Background To The Study1
1.2.	Statement Of The Problem2
1.3.	The Purpose Of The Study
1.4.	Objectives Of The Study3
1.5.	Research Questions
1.6.	Scope Of The Study3
1.7.	Significance Of The Study4
Chapter 7	Γwo: Literature Review5
2.0.	Review Of Related Literature5
2.1.	Introduction5
2.2.	How Domestic Work Affects Performance5
2.3.	Concept Of Time Management At School5
2.4.	How Poor Feeding Affects Performance6
2.5.	How Long Distances Affect Performance
Chapter 7	Three8
Research	Methodology8
3.0	Introduction 8

3.1.	Research Design	.8
3.2.	Sampling Procedure	.8
3.3.	Sample Size	.8
3.4.	Research Instruments	.9
3.5.	Research Procedure	10
3.6.	Data Analysis	
3.7.	Ethical Consideration	10
3.8.	Limitations	
Chapter 1	Four	12
Presentat	tion of Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings	12
4.0.	Overview	12
4.1.	Background of the Respondents	12
4.2.	How Domestic Work affect the Performance	12
4.3.	How Long Distances affect the Performance Of Learners	.14
4.4.	How Poor Feeding affects the Learners' Performance	.16
4.5.	Review	.18
Chapter	Five	.19
Summar	y, Conclusions and Recommendations	.19
5.0.	Summary	.19
5.1.	Conclusions	.19
5.3.	Recommendations	.20
5.4.	Review	.20
Referen	ces	.21
Appe		
Appe	ndix B: Questionnaire:	
	adix C: Acceptance Letter	

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1.1.	Respondents researched on	12
Table 4.2.1	Domestic work done by respondents	12
Table 4.2.2	Time allocated for domestic work	13
Table 4.3.1	Distance traveled by teachers and pupils	14
Table 4.3.2.	Means of transport used by respondents	15
Table 4.3.3.	Arrival time for respondents	16
Table 4.4.1	Respondents who feed at school	16
Table 4.4.2	Meals eaten daily by respondents	17

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.2.1.	Time ranges for respondents when doing their domestic work	13
Figure 4.3.1	Means of transport used by respondents	.15
Figure 4.4.1	Meals eaten daily by respondents	.17

LIST OF ACRONYMS

UNATU Uganda National Association of Teachers Union.

UNEB Uganda National Examination Board

εf Summation of frequency

εfx Summation of frequency by mid class

ABSTRACT

Many politicians and educationalists argue that a lot of domestic work, long distances and poor feeding affect the performance of learners in primary schools, so the purpose was to investigate absenteeism and performance of learners in primary school in Nkondo Sub County, Kamuli district.

The objectives of the study were to find out how domestic work, long distances and poor feeding affect the performance of learners in primary schools.

The instrument that were used included; questionnaires, group discussion, interview and reading the available materials or data. It was carried out in six schools that covered 96 respondents that is six headteachers, 18 teachers and 72 pupils. The findings from the study revealed that pupils and teachers are absent during school hours because of the long distances they move from home to school everyday, poor feeding both at school and home and domestic work they do at home yet they are expected to be at school.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This chapter is about the background of the study, statement of problem, purpose of the study, objective of the study, research questions, significance of the study and definition of terms.

1.1. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The researcher thinks in Uganda the family sets the lifestyle and influences the life chances for the children in the sense that a family may be supportive, neutral or antagonistic to school education, especially in Africa where school education is relatively recent than for theirs where they could learn from one another hence no need for teachers.

The family may be supportive, neutral or antagonistic to school education in the following ways: -

In many parts of Uganda and Kamuli in particular, parents are so antagonistic to school education that here in Budiope and mostly in Nkondo Sub-County, parents assign a lot of work to their children during school days. For example "Mukasa, you wake up and milk the cows. After milking, you take cows for tethering, draw water for them and will take the milk to the milk vendors". This makes the learners to absent themselves from going to school and in addition they move long distances to school. Too much work and long distances to school make learners to attend irregularly hence affecting their performance.

Learners miss going to school because of domestic work such as fetching water, preparing food, looking after domestic animals. "Nakato you will fetch water and prepare food for your brother and sisters. Nakato said Mummy I will be absent at school. She said what is absent to me. I said fetch water and cook for your young sisters and brothers. Me I have gone in the garden also I come from there when I am tired". After all the president introduced free education whereby there is an automatic promotion even if you attend irregularly.

Children come from families which business oriented especially those whose parents or guardians are in restaurants. They may tell them to miss one or two days and fry chapatti or serving food to customers. For example "Daddy If I don't go to school Mr. Kulaba will beat me, I will not fry chapatti tomorrow, said the child". Do you get scholastic material from there?

Where will you be getting the scholastic materials if you don't fry chapatti Daddy asked.

Some parents are neutral in that children in primary school are on automatic promotion hence not even providing lunch and scholastic material to their children. Parents also keep far away from teachers. Once the teachers, send pupils to get scholastic materials such as books, pens, pencils and meals, the pupils will sit at home for a full week without attending. It was this background that the researcher got interest to investigate the effect of absenteeism on performance of learners in Nkondo Sub-County, Kamuli district.

However, other families are good and supportive in that they avail all necessary school requirements to their pupils and making follow-up of their children right from school. Such a family can even afford a school uniform and at time give parked lunch and even escort them to school because of long distance or give them bicycles to ride to school. The value which each family attaches to school education, determines the motivation with which their children pursue such education.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Many politicians and educationalists like argue that it is a lot of domestic work and poor feeding, for example the headmaster asked "Ochieng why are you ever absent during school hours"? Ochieng answered "Sir my parents assign me a lot of work such as looking after animas, fetching water and sweeping the compound yet the distance is long. This example and others sited in the background of the study show the extent to which performance of learners in Nkondo is affected by absenteeism so the researcher wonders what really are the effects of absenteeism in primary school in Nkondo Sub-County Kamuli District.

This more theoretical concept provoked the investigator to carry out the study of "Absenteeism and the performance of learners in primary schools in Nkondo Sub-County, Kamuli District.

1.3. THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

To investigate absenteeism and performance of learners in primary school in Nkondo Sub-County, Kamuli District.

1.4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was guided by the following objectives;

- i) To find out how domestic work affects the performance of pupils in primary schools.
- ii) To find out how long distance affect the performance of learners in primary schools.
- iii) To find out how poor feeding affects the performance of learners in primary schools.

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study was designed to answer the following questions;

- i) How does domestic work affect the performance of learners in primary schools?
- ii) How do long distances affect the performance of learners in primary schools?
- iii) How does poor feeding affect the performance of learners in primary schools?

1.6. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The researcher carried out his study in Kamuli district, Budiope County particularly in Nkondo Sub County as listed below;

Iringa Township primary school, Kigingi primary school, Immeri Primary school, Nkondo Primary school, Ndulya primary school and Iringa primary school. These schools were easily accessible.

It also covered how domestic work, long distances and poor feeding affect the performance of learners in primary schools.

1.7. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

- i) Pupils realized the importance of attending regularly to school so that they can perform better.
- ii) Further researchers to use this information for more research in related fields.
- iii) Headteachers, teachers and parents to improve in the way of feeding their \tag{children both at school and home.
- iv) Parents to give children more time to revise their books and do assignments by not overloading them domestic work.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter is about literature available on how domestic work affect performance concept of time management how poor feeding and how long distances affect the performance of learners in primary schools in Nkondo Sub-County in Kamuli District. The child learns many things at school. He is not expected to be taught English, mathematics, science and social studies only but he is also expected to be prepared socially, emotionally and morally for the society. It is one of the functions of the teachers to guide the pupils to be good adult members of the society.

2.2. HOW DOMESTIC WORK AFFECTS PERFORMANCE

Children are given a lot of work at home to do which make them to be absent from school and sometimes perform poorly for example pupils who come from drinking bars are given a lot of work to do during school days as frying chapatti, looking after animals and fetching water.

Because of such the child is already tired and eventually cannot concentrate which leads to poor performance. Ezewudu Edward (1983 page 25). Sociology of education reports that some children are asked to cook and fetch water.

2.3. CONCEPT OF TIME MANAGEMENT AT SCHOOL

The teacher checks absenteeism at school and sometimes punishes absentees to prevent pupils from being absent as it affects the performance of learners in that if you are absent at school and the teacher has covered a topic, she/he will not repeat for the absentees which leads to poor performance in primary schools.

There is even a saying that says "lazy dogs eat bones" meaning that if you are lazy, you miss a lot.

Ezewudu Edward (1983 page 25), sociology of education reports the reasons for pupils to be absent at school as; "My mother sent me to fetch water" I was sent to open the shop and sweep it". "I was cooking", "I did not wake up in time". "I had no food to eat" "I was bathing my sisters" said by John, Joan and Mary respectively.

In the teacher's code of conduct part 4, it states the headteachers should ensure that punctuality is observed by teachers and pupils and teachers should not engage himself or herself in personal business during school hours.

Castle E.B (1961-1965 page 126) state that: the causes of absenteeism of pupils at school are various. The ignorance of parents about the importance of education, Using children to herd cattle when they are expected to be at school, lack of cooperation between parents and teachers, all these influence irregular attendance at school.

According to Uganda National Association of Teachers Union (UNATU), on August 2008 states that the budget of 2008/2009 did not favour the teachers' salary. There was no increment on teachers' salaries. Yet they have introduced local service tax and high price fluctuation on goods and services. This will force teachers to engage in other businesses during school days to meet the demand of Uganda today. Hence the performance of the learners will be poor in primary schools.

Uganda National Examination Board regulations on conduct and supervision of PLE states that any candidate who comes after 15 minutes from the start of examination must not be allowed to sit for examination and this may affect the performance of the learners.

2.4. HOW POOR FEEDING AFFECTS PERFORMANCE

Poor feeding affects the performance of learners in that children in class learn on empty stomach because. Some children sleep without supper. When they go to school still they are not fed which affects the learners. When it comes to the season of mangoes, these children go far away to look for mangoes to eat, by the time they think of going to school, they are already late hence absenting themselves from afternoon lessons. This automatically affects the performance of learners in primary schools.

Ezewudu Edward (1983 page 25), Sociology education reports that "children attend irregularly at school because they are not fed properly. For example Mr. Kato interviewed some pupils from one family and these pupils said that sir for us at home we rarely eat supper at home, we were looking for food yesterday".

2.5. HOW LONG DISTANCES AFFECT PERFORMANCE

Some children walk long distances from their homes to school. This makes them to be tired all the time. It is not easy for learners who move long distances to attend regularly. By the following morning, the child is unable to move to school. It is more worse especially during rainy season whereby children are disturbed by the rain and they cannot move long distance when it is raining. Parents do not provide bicycles to their children or escorting them to school. And because of long distance from school to home, children reach home late in the evening at around 7:30 PM which is un-safe to the side of the child especially the girl-child. This will affect the performance of learners because by the time they come, they find their friends ahead.

For example Mr. Ebyaru asked "Kasuswa why didn't you attend yesterday, Kasuswa answered "Sir on Monday I arrived home late and I was very tired because I walk 10 km from school to home, so I woke up very late I could not come to school at that time.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the following was highlighted; research design, sampling procedure, sample size, research instruments, research procedure, treatment of data or data analysis, ethical considerations, limitation and review.

3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

The study used both qualitative and quantitative design. Qualitative design was descriptive involving tallying of data, and computing into figures, percentages, drawing charts, tables and graphs.

3.2. SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The researcher used different methods of sampling. He picked headteacher from each school, two class teachers, one from upper primary classes and another one lower primary classes. He also used one teacher who come far away from the school.

Pupils used were picked according to the classes, sex, and the distance they move from home to school. Four pupils (2 boys and 2 girls) were got from each section that is upper primary, middle primary and lower primary classes.

3.3. SAMPLE SIZE

The study covered 96 respondents, six were headteachers, 18 were teachers and 72 were pupils. The headteachers who were used, 04 were men and 02 were females al married and grade V teachers.

Headteacher were used because they have the data from the learners.

The teachers who were used were 18, whereby 07 were ladies and 11 were men. These teachers are Grade III teachers and they have saved at those schools for about 3-5 years.

The pupils were 72 including boys and girls in the ratio of 1:1. Their ages were from 9 years to 18 years. The schools that were sampled were;

Iringa Township, Immeri Primary school, Kigingi Primary school, Nkondo Primary school and Ndulya primary school. The schools are grade II and II schools.

3.4. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The study used questionnaires as major tool comprising of open-ended questions to enable the researcher to obtain detailed information from the respondents.

Interview and group discussion were used in order to get ideas from respondent which is reliable and without any bias. These were supplemented on by school attendances record books such as registers, teacher's attendance book, (Arrival) and pupils' daily attendance book.

The information required was collected through primary school. The researcher used newspapers, textbooks, (teachers' code of conduct, UPE manuals) and other related materials. Some written materials were got from Kampala International University Library, Kigingi coordinating center library.

Under questionnaire method, the researcher provided questionnaires to the respondents by ticking the correct answer they thought, and some questions were open —ended.

During the interview method, the researcher interviewed the respondents and he wrote the outcomes. This was due to mainly the respondent who could not write and read.

On top to the above methods, the researcher was provided with written documents or record books such as class registers, daily attendance book for pupils and teacher's arrival book.

Other written documents used apart from those ones mentioned above included, teachers code of conduct, Uganda National Examination Board rules and regulation of supervising PLE 2007, implementing Universal Primary Education manual and Uganda National Association of teacher's union August 2008. The researcher read those documents during his survey.

3.5. RESEARCH PROCEDURE

The researcher got a letter of introduction from Kampala International University which helped him to go to schools of study to get necessary information from the respondents.

The researcher approached the headteachers of schools where research was carried out for permission. He presented him self to the respondents were informed them what he wanted in a kind manner. He picked the respondents he wanted using both random and stratified sampling. He provided the questionnaires to some of them as others were interviewed especially those who could not read and write. The respondents who were picked were mainly classteachers on side of teachers, pupils who come from towns and villages. Those who come from their guardians and lastly those moving long distances like 2km - 6km. The headteachers from the above schools were interviewed. Finally the researcher requested the headtachers to avail him with school record books especially the class registers and teachers' arrival book.

He summarized all data he acquired from them both written and orally (interview). He appreciated and respected all the data got from them with regardless of sex, age, religion or race.

The researcher analysed the data by comparing responses from the questionnaires, finding their mean and mode.

Lastly the researcher, compiled his findings to hand in the final research report.

3.6. DATA ANALYSIS

All data collected was analysed by filling in his notices especially data from the interview. Other data was analysed basing on the background information and all information from respondents.

3.7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

The researcher got permission from the headteacher in order to be allowed to carry out his study. He respected all respondents regardless of sex, age, or race. He worked hand in hand with the respondents by appreciating their answers. The researcher was social and kind in that he used polite language.

3.8. LIMITATIONS

Carrying out research is not simple course, therefore the researcher faced a variety of problems:

Transport from his place to study environment was poor since some schools are located in remote areas where vehicles are not seen.

Finance to run all these activities was not enough though the researcher tried to be creative.

The respondents could not reveal all the necessary information required, they were hiding some data.

Finally the language barrier came in since some respondents could not understand English and researcher's language and this was both sides. The researcher could not understand their language they speak.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0. OVERVIEW

This chapter will cover the findings and discussion about how does domestic work, long distances and poor feeding affect the learners' performance in primary schools.

4.1. BACKGROUND OF THE RESPONDENTS

The research was carried out using 96 respondents as indicated in the table 4.1.1

The table 4.1.1 shows the respondents whom the researcher got from the information

Respondents	Male	Female	Total
Headteachers	04	02	06
Teachers	11	07	18
Pupils	36	36	72
Total	51	45	96

4.2. HOW DOMESTIC WORK AFFECT THE PERFORMANCE

The researcher found out the pupils and teachers are absent from school doing domestic work at home as tabulated.

Table 4.2.1 shows the domestic work done by pupils and teacher

Domestic work	No. of respondents	Percentages
Frying chapats	05	5%
Grazing animals	47	49%
Fishing	06	7%
Serving food in restaurants	09	10%
Shop keeping	06	7%
Garden work	21	22%
TOTAL	96	100%

In table 4.2.1, shows that pupils and teachers were absent from school because of domestic work. It was found out that most respondents graze their animals. Parents have a feeling that cows are more valuable than education. On the side of teachers, their salary payment is low so they tend to engage themselves in grazing their animals and shop keeping.

It was discovered that domestic work is done at different hours as shown in table 4.2.2.

Table 4.2.2 shows how domestic work is done at different hours.

Time range	Respondents
6:00am – 8:00am	13
9:00am – 11: 00 am	21
12:00 – 02: 00pm	11
Full day	51
Total	96

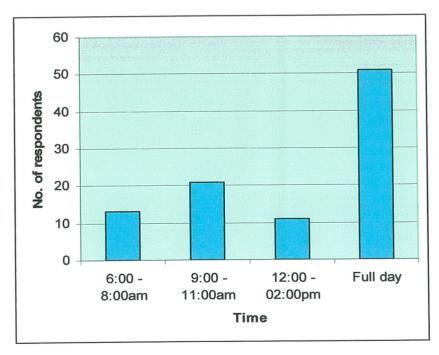


Figure 4.2.1 shows the time range in which respondents do their domestic work.

In figure 4.2.1, the highest population do their domestic work throughout the day and this forces them to attend irregularly at school. This implies that pupils and teachers are ever absent from school because they have to do their domestic work through out the day.

It was noted that these domestic work is given to them by their parents, guardians and husbands and wives. They said if they don't do domestic work, their parents and guardians will not provide the basic needs like clothe, food and education. Teachers and parents have a tendency of saying education for all whether you perform well or not, there is automatic promotion.

4.3. HOW LONG DISTANCES AFFECT THE PERFORMANCE OF LEARNERS

The researcher found out that pupils and teachers move long distance. As tabulated

Table 4.3.1. shows distances moved by teachers and pupils

Distance (km)	Frequency	(x)	Fx
		Mid –class	
Below 2	13	1	13
6 – 8	41	4	164
9 – above	30	7	210
	12	10	120
	ef 96		$\varepsilon f x = 507$

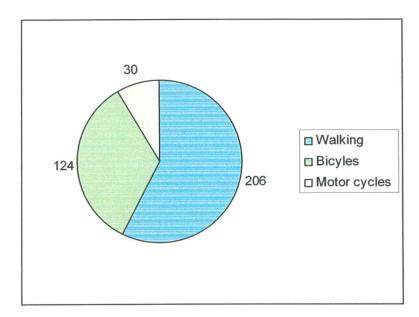
Mean
$$\underline{\epsilon f x} = \underline{507} = 5.3 \text{km (idec place)}$$

From table 4.3.1 indicated that pupils and teachers move an average distance of 5.3km from home to school making the whole journey as 10.6km. As a result, it is tiresome for the pupils and teachers to move that long distance for the whole week, hence some days are missed creating poor performance in learning.

Further more the means of transport used by teachers and pupils when going to school is tabulated in table 4.3.2.

Table 4.3.2, show the means of transport used by the respondents

Means of transport	No. of respondents	Degrees
Walking	55	206°
Bicycles	33	124°
Motorcycles	08	30°
Total	96	360



In figure 4.3.1, shows the means of transport used by 96 respondents when moving to school.

In the table 4.3.2, it was found out that many pupils move on foot (walking) implying that parents are poor they don't afford bicycles and others do not care about their children the end result is that the pupils will not attend regularly since they are tired. With the long distance they move.

Those who are able to move to school were found that they arrive at school at different time.

Table 4.3.3, showing the arrival time of respondents

Arrival time	Respondents
7:30cm – 8: 00 am	27
8: 00am – 9: 00am	46
9: 00 am – 10: 00am	23
Total	96

Most pupils and teachers arrive at school between 8:00 am -9:00am because of poor means of transport and long distances they move and some go to the extent of arriving at school at 10:00am - after missing some lessons. Parents think that children are for the president, so he should provide everything including transport.

4.4. HOW POOR FEEDING AFFECTS THE LEARNERS' PERFORMANCE

It came to the notice of the researcher that some pupils and teachers are fed at school while others do not eat at school as indicated in the table 4.4.1.

Table 4.4.1, shows how poor feeding affects the learners' performance

Meals	Respondents	Percentages
Yes	28	29%
No	68	71%
Total	96	100%

From the table 4.4.1., indicates that most pupils and teachers do not eat at school. Parents claim that the government should provide lunch for their pupils and teachers. They think that all their responsibilities should be carried out by the government.

Further, it was also discovered that the meals received by the respondents are indicated in the table 4.4.2

Table 4.4.2., scores of the meals eaten daily

Meals eaten daily	No. of respondents
One	36
Two	29
Three	17
Four	14
Total	96

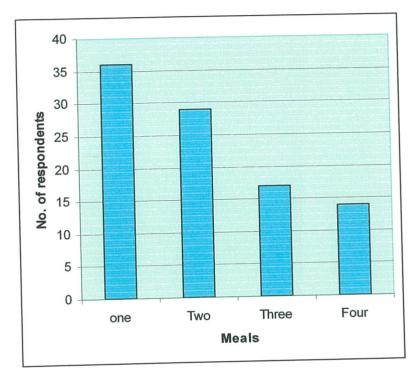


Figure 4.4.1 shows the meals eaten by 96 respondents daily.

The highest number of respondents eats only one meal which forces them to absent themselves from school by looking for fruits in the forests. Parents and guardians pay deaf ears to their children, by denying them from food because of their ignorance.

Finally, the type of food eaten at school was beans and posho, porridge, mangoes and left-overs while at home they eat potatoes and greens, millet and fish, posho and groundnuts, rice and meat and cassava plus milk. The food eaten at school can not

encourage learners to attend regularly since most of them do not eat anything at school and misses supper at their home.

4.5. REVIEW

The findings presented in this chapter showed that the performance of the learners is affected by domestic work, long distances and poor feeding. The next chapter will summarize the findings, drawing conclusion and make recommendations from the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0. SUMMARY

The researcher found out that the performance of the learners has been affected by poor feeding, domestic work and long distances, because parents are ignorant, antagonistic and neutral.

In table 4.2.1 pupils and teachers graze their animals, table 4.2.2, indicated that they do their domestic work throughout the day and table 4.3.1. showed that the average distance moved by respondents is 5.3km. From the figure 4.3.1 indicates that pupils and teachers use poor means of transport which force them to be absent and finally from the figure 4.4.1, indicates that pupils and teachers do not get meals at school.

5.1. CONCLUSIONS

The researcher found out the absenteeism of pupils and teacher are caused by domestic work at home, long distances they move and poor feeding at school and home.

Teachers do domestic work like fishing, selling shops, looking after animals, during school hours in order to meet his or her needs and some pupils are forced to stay at home to help their parents and guardians instead of being at school.

Long distances make teachers and pupils not to attend regularly since they use poor means of transport such as walking, bicycles and motorcycles at a lowest percentage making them very tired the following day and others reaching to school very late.

Finally when it comes to the point of feeding, this is very worse, pupils and teachers are not fed properly at school and even at home. They get one-three meals only a day making it difficult for them to attend the whole day at school.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

During the survey the researcher came up with the following recommendations;

- 1. The government should increase the teacher's salary as to make them to reduce attrition rate at school and in addition, it should construct staff quarters for teachers riding long distances.
- 2. Parents should be sensitized about importance of education and know their responsibilities towards school by providing proper meals at school and home, providing transport to their pupils and reduce overworking. Them during school hours not waiting for the government only.
- 3. More schools especially private schools should be opened up to cater for pupils who move long distances from their home to school- or if possible the government should open up more schools in the ratio of one village to one school.

Suggestions for further researchers

The researcher suggests that more work can be done to investigate about the following:

- 1. Late coming and performance of learners in primary schools.
- 2. Teaching of licensed teachers and performance of pupils at PLE results.

5.4. REVIEW

In this chapter, we looked at the discussion, conclusions and recommendations of how poor feeding, long distances, and domestic work force teachers and pupils to be absent at school during school hours hence affecting the performance of learners in primary schools.

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APPENDIX A: INTRODUCTORY LETTER



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Dear Sir/Madam.

REG. # DPZ / 1959 / 61 / bu

The above named is our student in the Institute of Open and Distance Learning (IODL), pursuing a Diploma/Bachelors degree in Education.

He/she wishes to carry out a research in your Organization on:

ABSENTEEISM AND PERFORMANCE OF LEARNELL IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN NKONDO SUB-COUNTY KAMULI DISTRICT.

The research is a requirement for the Award of a Diploma/Bachelois degree in Fd ication.

Any assistance accorded to him/her regarding research will be highly appreciated

Yours[Faithfully,

MUHWEZI JOSEPH HEAD, IN-SERVICE

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE:

Instru	ctions:
1.	Don't write your name
2.	Complete the blank spaces or tick where applicable
1.	Name of the school?
2.	How old are you?
3.	Where do you live? (Tick)
A.	Town
В.	Village
4.	What is your status at school. (Tick)
A.	Pupil
В.	Teacher
C.	Headteacher
5.	Gender
A.	Male
В.	Female
6.	State any four domestic work you do at home which makes you to be absent at school.

APPENDIX C: ACCEPTANCE LETTER

1RINGA TIS PIS 101BOX 151 THE ARECTOR KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL VUNLERSIT ROBOX 20000 KANSANGA KAMPALA-UGANEA TO WHOM IT MAY CONCER, Dear Sir/madam RE: ACEDTANCE LETTER FOR MR MULAMA GOOFKEY WILHAEL. REGAL DPE/11959/61/DU The above named Student of your Kniversity has been Jackepted To Jdo his Research accepted to in the above school of buch LUNDAGE STEPHE HEADMASTER 15/9/08 PAGA TOWNSHIP \$ 4500